

# The new right to disconnect laws

## Insights from Dr Stefan Jooss

Working Australians now have the “right to disconnect”, allowing employees to ignore out-of-hours contact from their employers without fear of retaliation.

UQ Business School HR management expert Dr Stefan Jooss said the new laws came with a range of benefits but also potential challenges in practice.

“The right to disconnect protects employees who refuse to monitor, read or respond to contact or attempted contact outside their working hours, unless their refusal is unreasonable,” he said.

“In addition to this level of protection, the right to disconnect is hoped to improve work-life balance, increase well-being and productivity, and reduce burnout.

“For organisations, it might lead to higher levels of employee motivation, reduced turnover, and enhanced reputation, which helps in attracting talent.

“Some organisations have expressed concerns about productivity losses and business continuity, and employees might fear increased workload during work hours or negative consequences during performance assessments.”

Overall, Dr Jooss said the right to disconnect laws could significantly enhance employee health and well-being.

“In my view, it’s a positive development towards a fairer and more sustainable work environment, aligned with United Nations sustainable development goals #3 (good health and well-being) and #8 (decent work and economic growth),” he said.

Dr Jooss shared several strategies that companies could deploy to balance the new laws with the need for business continuity:

- Ensure there’s clarity around expectations in terms of working hours and ‘reasonable’ contact.
- Implement flexible work models.
- Draw on technology to complete routine tasks.
- Develop transferrable skills and cross-train employees.

**[Connect with Stefan Jooss to hear more.](#)**



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