

Australian logistics software maker WiseTech announces 2,000 AI-driven job cuts

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WiseTech Global, one of Australia's largest technology companies, has announced it will slash up to 2,000 jobs over the next 18 months, in the most significant AI-driven mass firing in the country to date. This amounts to the destruction of almost 30 percent of the global workforce of the company, which produces software for the logistics sector.

The job losses will fall most heavily on software developers and customer service workers across the company's operations in 40 countries. This includes E2open, the American cloud computing firm WiseTech acquired last year for \$US2.1 billion, which may see its workforce slashed by up to 50 percent.

WiseTech CEO Zubin Appoo said 500 positions had already been eliminated since last July, declaring: "The era of manually writing code as the core act of engineering is over."

Executive chairman and company co-founder Richard White boasted that "individually, people can do far, far more work with AI than they could have done nine months ago" and that most software could be written by AI agents, with only a single developer needed to oversee the bots' output.

These comments, in line with warnings internationally about the devastating impact of AI on the software industry, points to the likely wave of white-collar job destruction, in Australia and globally.

The *Australian Financial Review* called the WiseTech announcement "the most conspicuous demonstration of how AI will reshape the workforce as its use becomes more widespread and sophisticated."

WiseTech shares surged more than 11 percent to \$A47.74 on the day of the announcement, after having plummeted 60 percent over the past seven months, in part due to concerns the company's products would be replaced by AI-coded competitors, or that it would be

forced to lower its price.

White outlined a different value proposition for WiseTech's big-business customers—his software would earn its sticker price by helping them slash jobs. He said the AI agents built into WiseTech's CargoWise platform would allow its customers to cut their own labour costs by 50 percent within the next two years.

In other words, the 2,000 jobs to be destroyed at WiseTech are only the beginning. The company's technology is being explicitly designed to facilitate the elimination of tens of thousands more jobs throughout the global logistics supply chain.

CargoWise processes an estimated 75 percent of worldwide customs transaction data and is used by 24 of the 25 largest global freight forwarders. The company's technology sits at the heart of global supply chains, giving its decisions enormous ramifications for logistics workers worldwide.

Appoo revealed that, in anticipation of this jobs bloodbath at customer sites, WiseTech had altered its pricing model to charge by the number of transactions processed, rather than the number of users. He noted, "products that monetise through seat fees, I think they are in trouble."

WiseTech's announcement is part of an accelerating global assault on jobs under the banner of artificial intelligence. The same day WiseTech revealed its plans, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA)—the nation's largest bank, which had just reported a record half-year profit exceeding \$5 billion—announced it would eliminate 300 jobs across retail, business, and institutional banking divisions, with the majority of roles impacted in technology.

CBA simultaneously unveiled its \$90 million Future Workforce Program, ostensibly a mechanism for training workers for roles transformed by technological

developments. The program also includes “career transition support for people impacted by workforce change,” in other words, redundancy pay for workers thrown on the scrapheap.

In reality, CBA is implementing a company-wide restructuring operation based on vast swathes of staff being replaced by AI, with existing employees to compete for jobs tending and training the algorithms. The program shifts responsibility for the consequences of mass sackings from the corporation onto individual workers, who are told they must re-skill or face unemployment.

The Finance Sector Union (FSU), effectively endorsed the restructuring, citing the Future Workforce Program as evidence CBA was “making positive steps,” and promoting illusions that its “transition” measures would support workers displaced by the cuts.

The FSU’s response is in line with the position taken by the broader union apparatus. Last month, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) signed a Framework Agreement with Microsoft Australia, supposedly to ensure “workers have greater say in artificial intelligence adoption.”

The ACTU-Microsoft deal is a mechanism for incorporating the unions into the destruction of jobs, giving the appearance of worker consultation while providing corporations free rein to implement AI-driven restructuring.

The federal Labor government’s National AI Plan, released in December 2025, follows the same trajectory, emphasising tripartite collaboration between governments, big business and the union apparatus.

Confirming the plan had nothing to do with “protecting workplace rights,” just two weeks after it was unveiled, Treasurer Jim Chalmers announced he would slash \$6.8 billion over four years from the budget by gutting the public service, specifically vowing to “unlock the full potential of AI in public service delivery.”

The National AI Plan, and the ACTU-Microsoft deal, were intended to signal a green light to corporations for sweeping job cuts. The gambit has been rapidly taken up, with hundreds of sackings already announced this month, including by Telstra and National Australia Bank, before the latest news from CBA and WiseTech.

This is in line with developments globally. Data compiled by RationalFX shows that 30,700 tech

workers lost their jobs worldwide in just the first six weeks of 2026, putting the industry on track to surpass the 245,000 tech layoffs recorded in 2025.

Amazon alone has eliminated 16,000 jobs in early 2026, accounting for more than half of all announced tech layoffs so far this year. Goldman Sachs has estimated that AI could displace 6–7 percent of the entire US workforce if widely adopted.

The WiseTech announcement starkly poses a fundamental question: Who will benefit from advances in artificial intelligence? Under capitalism, the answer is clear. AI is being deployed not to lighten the burden of work for all, or to expand leisure time and improve living standards, but to maximise corporate profits by eliminating jobs and driving down labour costs.

Workers cannot defend their jobs and living standards through the trade unions, which have demonstrated at every point that their role is to suppress opposition to the corporate onslaught and defend the capitalist system, under which every technological advance is used to deepen the exploitation of workers and increase the wealth of the financial and corporate elite.

What is required is the independent political mobilisation of the working class on the basis of a socialist program—the expropriation of the major corporations and banks, their transformation into publicly owned utilities under democratic workers’ control, and the reorganisation of economic life on the basis of human need. Only then can the benefits of technological advancement, including AI, be shared by all, not hoarded by a tiny financial elite.



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