



MEDIA RELEASE

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'Tough Cop on the Beat' disappears in Wilcox Recommendations on ABCC

The resources sector says the adoption of the Wilcox Recommendations released earlier today will make a mockery out of the Rudd government's pledge to keep a 'tough cop on the beat'.

According to the Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA), Wilcox's recommendations are designed to directly weaken the current compliance regime in the industry, effectively removing the 'tough cop on the beat'.

AMMA Chief Executive Steve Knott said this would ensure any remaining laws were overseen by a weakened division of Fair Work Australia, unable to control the intimidation, industrial disputes and lawlessness that characterised the industry before the Cole Inquiry and the creation of the ABCC.

"On any given day, an industrial dispute on a construction site in the mining sector can cost upwards of \$3 million," he said.

"It's imperative that the industry has access to an independent body, which is able to quickly and effectively respond to unlawful activity on site."

Cole found that the only way to stamp out the lawlessness in the industry was to establish an independent body (a tough cop) to monitor, investigate and enforce adherence to the laws relating to the industry.

"If Wilcox's recommendations are implemented, this will no longer be the case," said Mr Knott.

"The terms of reference for this 'review' were fundamentally flawed from the beginning, failing to acknowledge or even consider the outcomes of the Cole Inquiry and the subsequent increases in productivity in the sector, and this is reflected in these recommendations."

"At a time when industry is calling on the Australian government to urgently re-assess its policy settings in order to stem job losses, reduce business costs and investment confidence, it would be reckless and irresponsible for the Government to press ahead and implement the recommendations."

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