



## **AMMA MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Unions urged not to hold up safety reforms**

A recent union advertising campaign opposing Australia's move towards adopting a uniform set of national occupational health and safety laws has drawn criticism from the Australian Mines and Metals Association.

AMMA Chief Executive, Steve Knott, said the union sponsored radio campaign was a clear attempt to only delay the much needed reform but also point the finger of blame at the feet of employers.

"The union movement's assertion that the proposed national health and safety laws will somehow reduce the level of protection for workers as well as compromise the standards of occupational health and safety for millions of workers is ludicrous.

"The unions may not like to hear me say this, but it is actually in the interests of employers to ensure their highly valued and skilled employees and contractors have a safe work environment. That's why across the mining and resources sector we have seen tremendous advances over the last few years in terms of improving safety at workplaces across all of Australia.

"It is obvious that in running out this campaign some unions are not interested in Australia's move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by having a common set of rules that all Australian workers can be trained in and understand.

"It is antiquated thinking that supports an Australian worker being forced to learn and then operate within up to seven different sets of workplace health and safety laws.

"Most workers think it makes sense to have a uniform set of laws across all of Australia, just as do the majority of employers.

"But rather than being constructive, it would appear that these unions want to hold the process of harmonisation up while they work out the best way of ensuring they have the maximum capacity to interfere in and interrupt the operations of businesses as well as make money out of prosecuting safety incidents.

"One seriously has to question what their real motivations are here – their own interests or the interests of the workers they allege to represent?"