



AMMA MEDIA RELEASE

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FEDERAL CABINET BEING URGED TO READ

While a range of Federal Cabinet Minister's appear to be tripping over themselves to get their hands on the latest literary offering of the Prime Minister, entitled Jasper and Abby and the Great Australia Day Kerfuffle, one of the nation's peak resource and energy sector employer organisations is urging they read a far more weighty document.

"While I'm sure the Prime Minister's book about his pet cat and dog will be highly educational and informative, it has become apparent over the last week that some members of the Government do not appear to know just what powers they have under their very own Fair Work Act," AMMA CEO, Steve Knott said.

"I would strongly encourage members of Federal Cabinet pick up a copy of the Act and read it, as it came into full effect just last week."

Mr Knott's reading recommendations follow a further outbreak of industrial disputation by the Maritime Union's militant Western Australia division affecting the offshore oil and gas sector.

"The claim made today by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office that she does not have the power to bring to an end to damaging strike action by the MUA against vessel operators in the oil and gas sector is wrong," Mr Knott said.

"There is a very clear pathway under Section 431 of the Fair Work legislation for the Minister to bring an end to the senseless and destructive conduct of the MUA,"

"For the Deputy Prime Minister's Office to suggest she does not have these powers indicates a lack of understanding of their very own laws, or an unwillingness to stand up to militant unions inflicting economic damage on an industry sector." Mr Knott said.

ENDS

NOTE:

1. Section 431 of the Fair Work Act allows the Minister to quickly make a declaration for strike activity to cease where it can be demonstrated the strike action will cause damage to an important part of the economy. This is not an arbitral process and requires no arbitration by Fair Work Australia or the Minister herself. The Minister just needs to be satisfied that the activity is causing serious damage to an important part of the economy.
2. See attached letter to the Deputy Prime Minister setting out how the Minister can make a declaration to end strike activity (Ministerial Declaration) under section 431 of the Fair Work Act.