

AMMA rates the major political parties on IR

11 August, 2010

Despite the fact all political parties have tried to make their Industrial Relations policies a small target this election, the resource industry employer group AMMA has today released a comparison of their policies.

AMMA has released an Industrial Relations Policy Scorecard, which rates the latest industrial relations policies of all three major political parties Labor, the Coalition and the Greens.

The Coalition received the highest score, a total of 18 out of a possible 28, followed by Labor with 17 and the Greens with a dismal score of 8.

In 2007, AMMA developed seven key industrial relations policy criteria areas critical to the resource sector, which it maintains are needed in a modern industrial relations system, including:

- a national regulatory framework;
- minimum standards and awards;
- agreement making;
- agreement processing;
- industrial action and compliance;
- unfair dismissal; and
- union right of entry and access to records.

AMMA Chief Executive, Steve Knott, said it was disappointing neither Labor nor the Coalition intended to make any changes to the Fair Work Act (FW Act) during the next three years, if elected.

“AMMA has identified, through its members’ experiences, serious deficiencies with the operation of the FW Act. Its industrial agreement making options and processes are not conducive to maintaining or expanding workplace efficiencies, which have been achieved in the sector over the past decade of industrial relations reform,” Mr Knott said.

“As such, the ability of employers to engage directly with their workforce - where most efficiencies can be gained - is being eroded by the FW Act.”

Mr Knott said despite unwillingness to make any legislative changes, the Coalition came out ahead of Labor, due to its commitment to retain the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) and the Building & Construction Industry Improvement (BCII) Act. Labor’s position is to abolish the ABCC and repeal the BCII Act.

“With a record number of large resource projects either under construction or in their final planning stages, a strong stance on unlawful industrial action in the resource construction industry is essential to Australia’s economic interests,” Mr Knott said.

“With respect to the Greens’ policy, it does nothing to support either industry generally or the resources sector in particular, and fails to recognise any need for individual arrangements, contrary to the resource sector’s needs,” Mr Knott said.

To access the full AMMA Workplace Relations Policy Scorecard for August 2010 please visit:

<http://www.amma.org.au/home/publications/2010AMMAIRScorecard.pdf>