

Resource industry welcomes Coalition's IR policy details

AUSTRALIA's national resource industry employer group, AMMA, welcomes today's release of the Coalition's workplace relations policy. These measures will assist resource employers in securing investment, bringing projects to market, creating jobs and contributing to our national well-being.

"The Coalition policy is a substantial step in the right direction on critical workplace issues that are stifling the resource industry's ability to drive economic growth and job creation," says AMMA executive director, industry, Scott Barklamb.

- "AMMA welcomes the return of a tough cop to the beat through the restoration of the ABCC, which will address the completely unacceptable union militancy in the construction industry.
- "AMMA welcomes a more sensible approach for the making of greenfield agreements for new resource projects. This is critical for successfully bringing new project investment to Australia without the existing risk of irresponsible union tactics leading to cost escalations and delays.
- "AMMA welcomes reform of the out-of-control union right of entry laws that have allowed union salespeople to enter Australian workplaces on a daily basis to harass people to sign-up for membership – creating enormous disruption and lost productivity.
- "As we've consistently maintained on union entry, all that needs to be done is to finally honour Julia Gillard's 2007 election promise to retain a proven and effective system.
- "AMMA welcomes a greater focus on productivity in workplace level negotiations.
- "AMMA welcomes measures that will bring real flexibility back into Australian workplaces, building on the existing IFA framework created by the current Federal Government."

However, today's announcement is only a step in the right direction. Further reform will be required to restore Australia's international reputation as a productive, harmonious and low-risk place to invest and employ people.

"It is in our national interest to develop a workplace relations framework that allows Australia to sustain the benefits coming from the enormous growth within our resource industry," Barklamb says.

"The Coalition policy is a step in the right direction, but we would like the reforms to have gone further and more comprehensively addressed the triple threat to our international competitiveness - unsustainable wage escalations, a combative labour environment, and declining productivity.

"We need both our major political parties to have long-term answers to Australia's lagging productivity. The Coalition has now put forth sensible and balanced measures in this direction.

"The challenge has now been laid down to the Labor Government to also offer effective leadership and ideas to address Australia's productivity, competitiveness and employment challenges.

"If the government's answer lies in simply retaining the existing Fair Work Act, including all of its current proposals, this challenge will be manifestly failed."

IT'S GAME ON! AMMA's 2013 [National Conference](#) features a live, head-to-head 'Great Debate' between Workplace Relations Minister Bill Shorten and Opposition Shadow Minister Senator Eric Abetz. Taking place next Friday, May 17, this is a unique media opportunity following today's announcement.

For more information, contact AMMA media adviser Tom Reid via 0419 153 407.