

MEDIA RELEASE

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Boost for resource investment confidence as Coalition moves to restore ABCC

AMMA – Australian Mines and Metals Association

Comment on the *Building and Construction Industry (Improving Productivity) Bill 2013*

NATIONAL resource industry employer group AMMA says the Coalition's legislative bill to restore the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) is a positive move that will help secure the \$620 billion of new resource projects in Australia's investment pipeline.

"Ensuring the rule of law is applied on mega resource sector construction sites is critical to delivering the \$620 billion worth of projects currently in Australia's investment pipeline," says AMMA chief executive Steve Knott.

"Today's legislation demonstrates to the global investment community that the rule of law will be upheld in building productive infrastructure in Australia. It sends the message that the significant capital being invested into new projects into our country is not being taken for granted.

"The extension of the ABCC's jurisdiction to now cover the construction of offshore oil and gas projects, which operate in an ultra-competitive and high exposed marketplace, will help ensure a stable and lawful environment in which more nationally-significant projects can come to life."

With the ABCC established following recommendations of the Cole Royal Commission, Mr Knott says the previous Labor government erred when it ignored such findings and dismantled the watchdog in 2012.

"The ABCC has never been a political instrument, it was a law enforcement body specifically recommended by a Royal Commission. Any union complying with the law has nothing to fear from a tough regulator enforcing strong legislative compliance mechanisms," he says.

AMMA also welcomes the move to address unlawful picketing at building sites, in particular so-called "community picketing" which are often coordinated by building unions to deliberately evade legal regulation of their industrial activities.

"The rights of our nation's citizens to demonstrate peacefully in support of legitimate social and community concerns are too often undermined by a union 'rent-a-crowd' actually pushing industrial agendas and illegally disrupting important economic activity," Mr Knott says.

"It is well beyond time that those unions which regularly engage in anti-social militancy, thuggery and intimidation accept that they are not above the rule of Australia's workplace laws.

"The restoration of a tough regulator on Australia's construction sites is long overdue. The resource industry calls on all members of parliament to act quickly and decisively in supporting this legislation."

MEDIA ALERT: In his first public address since the introduction of today's legislative bills, Employment Minister Eric Abetz will tomorrow address leading mining industry figures at the 2013 AMMA Tasmania Conference.

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