

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## All registered organisations can benefit from greater accountability

*Statement from Steve Knott, Chief Executive  
AMMA (Australian Mines and Metals Association)*

AUSTRALIA's national resource industry employer group, AMMA, welcomes the recommendation of the Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee that the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment Bill 2013* be passed into law.

The passing of this legislation would ensure all registered organisations, including trade unions and employer groups, are held to the highest level of accountability in their financial activities and corporate governance practices.

The introduction of a dedicated Registered Organisations Commission with investigative and information gathering powers would see all unions and employer groups governed and regulated to a standard consistent with Australian corporations.

In their dissenting report, the Labor Senators on the Education and Employment Legislation Committee have dismissed these laws as 'politically motivated' and rejected the notion that trade union officials should have similar responsibilities to company directors.

When many trade unions and employer groups turn over millions of dollars annually, we don't see a great distinction between the two categories of organisations.

In fact, given the high level of trust members of registered organisations often place in their officials to use their funds for appropriate purposes and in a socially responsible manner, perhaps this higher level of scrutiny from a dedicated regulator is even more important.

There is no logical argument that a trade union official handling millions of dollars of their members' funds should not have to disclose important financial interests just as a company director would.

It is both sad and wondrous that in 2013, the federal ALP would continue to oppose increased transparency for union and employer organisations on the back of recent cases of misappropriation of member funds.

This legislation will help restore confidence in the general public that unacceptable circumstances such as the Health Services Union (HSU) corruption saga will not be repeated.

Having been voluntarily incorporated under Australia's company laws for more than 95 years, AMMA has benefited from this heightened level of governance and reporting accountability and feels all registered organisations would similarly benefit from this move.

Like the reintroduction of the ABCC to tackle unlawful conduct in our building sector, any trade union that is committed to doing the right thing by their members, by the community and by their legal obligations, would have nothing to fear from this important move.

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