

MEDIA RELEASE

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The evidence is clear – Senate must restore the ABCC now

AMMA – Australian Mines and Metals Association

AUSTRALIA doesn't need to wait for a Royal Commission to restore the rule of law in our construction industry and address alleged corruption and bribery within the CFMEU, we simply need the Senate to urgently pass the legislation to bring back the ABCC, says AMMA.

"Revelations of the last 48 hours should leave the Senate in no doubt that the bills to restore the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) must be passed," says AMMA executive director, policy, Scott Barklamb.

"The Cole Royal Commission found a culture of union lawlessness in the building industry that included circulation of 'approved contractor' lists, illegal striking, ignoring industrial agreements and failing to regard the views of union members and other employees on-site.

"We don't need another Royal Commission to know this is still happening.

"The ABCC noticeably increased productivity, increased compliance with our country's industrial laws and delivered a more equitable and harmonious Australian building industry.

"In less than two years, the ABCC's demonstrated success in cleaning up the sector has seemingly been thrown out the window, following the previous government's cynical and calculated decision to neuter the regulator and reduce penalties.

"This should be of no surprise. Industry strongly warned the former government that this move would see a return to industrial lawlessness and thuggery in our nation's construction sector.

"There may be many sound reasons to convene a wider Royal Commission into union corruption generally, but for the building and construction sector, the Senate urgently needs to respect the government's mandate for the return of the ABCC, look at the evidence and pass the bills.

"This week's allegations also underscore the opportunity to strengthen the referral of apparent criminality from the ABCC to law enforcement agencies."

CFMEU Response

"If the CFMEU is serious about stamping out violence, intimidation and illegality from its own ranks, it would stop opposing the restoration of the watchdog and support its improved interaction with the police," Mr Barklamb said.

"To genuinely protect the interests of its members, the CFMEU should be cooperating with the ABCC, not trying to stand in its way."

AMMA is Australia's national resource industry employer group and represents building companies and their clients across Australia's multi-billion dollar resource projects.

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