

MEDIA RELEASE

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Unnecessary migration zone changes must be repealed

THE Abbott Government's move today to repeal the extension of the Migration Act to vessels servicing Australia's offshore oil and gas projects shows it is serious about reducing red tape and attracting further resource investment to Australia, says resource industry employer group AMMA.

The [Migration Amendment \(Offshore Resources Activity\) Repeal Bill 2014](#) seeks to repeal last ditch Gillard Government legislation designed to deliberately increase the regulatory burden on employers using essential overseas labour to temporarily service Australia's offshore oil and gas projects.

"The current legislation is a relic of the 2013 election year, delivered by Labor and the Greens at the behest of trade unions whipping up false panic on foreign workers," says AMMA executive director Scott Barklamb.

"It is set to force foreign nationals working on foreign-flagged ships in international waters to obtain an Australian visa. This is an extraordinary proposition, only possible through an equally extraordinary expansion of Australia's migration zone.

"Extending Australia's migration zone to regulate offshore activities in this way was never in our national interest. It is completely at odds with how offshore resource projects are built and regulated anywhere in the world."

Mr Barklamb says the current legislation, set to take effect from 30 June 2014, puts Australia at a competitive disadvantage as a place to do business in a critically important part of the offshore oil and gas sector.

"Labor's legislation introduced a radical change that massively expanded Australia's legal territory and targets highly specialised international vessels assisting with the laying of pipes and assembly of critical infrastructure in international waters," he says.

"It was an attempt by a dying government to deliberately impose punitive red tape for red tape's sake and pander to a union desire to control workplaces that were outside Australia's legal reach.

"Imposing unnecessary additional costs on this critical service sector will only delay the construction of mega oil and gas projects and damage Australia's reputation at a time when we need to demonstrate to international investors that we are a rewarding, productive and flexible place to do business.

"AMMA urges the parliament to pass this important remedial legislation as soon as possible and correct the short-sighted regulatory excess bequeathed by the previous government.

"Now is not the time to play petty party politics. It is time to make smart decisions that will support further investment and employment in Australia."

AMMA's [2013 submission](#) to the federal government detailed the detrimental effect of the provisions on Australia's resource industry, economy and employment.

MEDIA CONTACT: Kylie Sully | 0409 781 580 | kylie.sully@amma.org.au