

MEDIA RELEASE

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IR appeals bench, PC review key to delivering on G20 growth target

AMMA (Australian Mines and Metals Association) – The resource industry's employer group

AMMA welcomes the IMF's call for labour market reform and says a new, independent IR appeals jurisdiction, followed by a Productivity Commission review into Australia's workplace laws, are critical steps to improving Australia's competitiveness and growth prospects.

"The IMF is absolutely right in that labour market reform will be critical to meeting the G20's global growth target of 1.8 per cent," says AMMA chief executive Steve Knott.

"Without a doubt, Australia's workplace relations laws can and should provide a much more supportive framework for economic and employment growth. For this to happen, the system must reflect the modern 21st century economy and labour market we operate and work within.

"Business confidence and jobs growth is synonymous with employers having confidence in the public institutions that underpin Australia's workplace system.

"An independent, separate IR appeals bench would help bring Australia's workplace system up to global best practice standards. It would restore employer confidence in the Fair Work Commission following employer concerns over decision making and leadership restructures in recent years."

The merits of a new appellate jurisdiction to sit above the Fair Work Commission was first flagged in the Coalition's *Policy to Improve the Fair Work laws* document, released before the 2013 election.

AMMA's advocacy for a proposed best practice IR appeals bench was last week supported by Australia's peak business group the ACCI (Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry):

"ACCI, like many of our members, has been concerned about conflicting appeal decisions from the FWC relating to the same issues, because an appeal process that does not deliver consistency and certainty ends up hurting business," ACCI chief executive Kate Carnell noted in a members communication last Friday (September 19).

"There is precedent for specialist appeals divisions both within Australia and internationally. Relevantly, there is precedent for specialist appeals divisions in industrial tribunals. ACCI believes we need a best practice appeals process that will deliver sound decisions and greater certainty and we should go for the best rather than accept the vagaries the current system delivers."

AMMA's comprehensive research paper into the new IR appeals bench matter can be [viewed here](#).

Productivity Commission Review

AMMA also welcomes increased momentum behind a forthcoming wide review into Australia's workplace system, to be conducted by the Productivity Commission.

"The Productivity Commission Review represents a 'once in a generation' opportunity to undertake a comprehensive review of our workplace system and ensure it properly supports where we want to go as a nation," Mr Knott says.

"With the backing and scope to deliver meaningful change, this process can bring about workplace reforms that will survive various political cycles and underpin economic and employment growth well into the foreseeable future."

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