

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Shallow, sectional views on China trade deal damage national reputation**

*AMMA – Australian Mines and Metals Association*

AUSTRALIA's national resource industry employer group, AMMA, is calling on Bill Shorten and the Labor Party to rise above the superficial and dangerous misinformation campaign being waged against the China-Australia free trade agreement (FTA).

“Notwithstanding what he may owe unions after the weekend's stage-managed ALP National Conference, it's time for Mr Shorten and the ALP to rise above the politics of opposition and support this historic trade deal with our largest trading partner,” says AMMA CEO Steve Knott.

“This is an historic deal that will deliver greater economic prosperity and job creation for our country.

“Opposition to the FTA is coming dangerously close to xenophobia and can only threaten Australia's reputation as a mature, welcoming and stable place to do business.”

Mr Knott says it is especially disappointing to see Bill Shorten and the ALP support another round of misleading union rhetoric on the role of skilled migrants in this country.

“Despite the blatant mistruths being peddled by the union movement, this agreement makes clear that skilled overseas labour will only be used to supplement shortages in the Australian labour market, and represents no threat to local jobs, conditions and wages,” he says.

“It requires Chinese companies to be registered in Australia and therefore to comply with all Australian employment laws and market rates and conditions.

“The inference that these international skilled employees could be subject to inferior occupational health and safe standards is also untrue, mischievous and unhelpful.”

With resources investment under consideration in Australia falling by more than \$80 billion in the past 12 months, Mr Knott says the economy 'desperately needs the kick along that greater trade with China will deliver'.

He notes Trade Minister Andrew Robb is quoted in today's press estimating that a delay to the passage of the deal could cost the national economy \$300 million in the next year alone.

“Australia is operating in a highly competitive, global marketplace. It's time to stop acting like a remote island where we can all shove our heads in the sand and indulge 'fortress Australia' thinking,” Mr Knott continues.

“We need our politicians to rise above the hysteria and opportunism being sown by some of our unions.

“Any serious alternative Prime Minister would push back on shallow, opportunistic sectional views that threaten our ability to compete globally and secure new investment in Australia.”

Last week the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade published a [fact sheet](#) about the Free Trade Agreement, clarifying key aspects of the deal and debunking misconceptions.

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