

MEDIA RELEASE

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Labor must prove it is serious on union corruption

*National resource industry employer group, AMMA (Australian Mines and Metals Association)
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Today's announcement by Bill Shorten and Brendan O'Connor on trade union corruption is an overdue and inadequate response to governance failures and criminality that are increasingly tarnishing Australia's trade union movement and harming hard working union members.

Mr Shorten claims that Labor has zero tolerance for criminality and corruption in the union movement, but actions speak louder than words. For more than two years the Opposition and their fellow addicts to union funding, the Greens, have held up essential reforms to how unions are governed and overseen by regulators.

These reforms would have made a real difference. As Labor has dissembled, prevaricated and blocked reform, they have unfortunately in effect run protection for the sociopathic fringe of the union movement that is robbing hard working union members and displaying wanton disregard for the law.

By repeatedly blocking the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment Bill 2014*, Labor has enabled parts of the trade union movement to perpetuate financial and administrative practices that would be completely unacceptable in corporate Australia.

The need to urgently beef up oversight and enforcement is clear. Recent days have seen the arrests of senior CFMEU officials in Victoria for alleged blackmail. This comes on top of evidence of:

- Officials and employees of the National Union of Workers (NUW) ripping off hundreds of thousands of dollars of member money to spend on jewellery, tattoos, dating websites and concert tickets;
- The destruction of union financial and other records that may have been sought by the Heydon Royal Commission; and
- Substantial misappropriation of funds not only in the HSUA, but also in other unions.

Following today's overdue and underwhelming acceptance that there are bad apples within the union movement that must be dealt with, AMMA calls on Bill Shorten and Brendan O'Connor to demonstrate they are genuine and not concocting a further stunt to delay reform.

If it is serious about reform and stamping out the 'bad apples', the Opposition should commit to urgently passing the new rules for the governance of registered unions and employer associations currently before Parliament when it resumes in the new year.

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