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All political leaders should stand up to CFMMEU thuggery

AUSTRALIAN Resources and Energy Group AMMA is calling for a bipartisan commitment to retaining the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) following disturbing reports that Queensland Government safety inspectors are too fearful of “occupational violence” to enter construction sites controlled by the militant CFMMEU.

“Established in 2005 after the damning findings of the Cole Royal Commission, the ABCC has been the only regulator to make significant headway into addressing the law-breaking, thuggery, intimidation, violence and unproductive work practices that have plagued the building and construction industry,” AMMA Acting Chief Executive, Tara Diamond, said.

“The four year period from 2012-2016 under which Labor’s watered-down regulator was in charge saw a big resurgence in these unacceptable behaviours and practices.

“Since its reinstatement in 2016, the ABCC has once again worked tirelessly to clean up Australia’s building sites. Based on almost-daily reports of unlawfulness and intimidation, such as the concerning developments coming out of Queensland this week, clearly there is still much more work to be done.”

AMMA notes it is no coincidence that the worksites deemed too dangerous to enter by Queensland safety inspectors are those controlled by the super militant construction industry union, the CFMMEU, which has been fined more than \$15 million for recidivist law-breaking since 2005.

In recent weeks the ABCC has commenced multiple new proceedings against the CFMMEU and its officials for unlawful and threatening behaviour in Queensland.

This includes its pursuit of a CFMMEU official for allegedly obstructing and hindering a Queensland Work Health and Safety officer from undertaking his lawful duties at the Cairns Performing Arts Centre project. The union official is alleged to have put his face a matter of centimetres away from the WHS officer and repeatedly shouted “*you’re a f***ing dog!*”

Separately, the ABCC is pursuing two other Queensland CFMMEU officials for allegedly acting in an aggressive and threatening manner and calling a subcontractor a “*f...ing, dog, c..t*” during a site entry in Brisbane last year.

“Everybody has the right to a safe working environment,” Ms Diamond said.

“If this behaviour goes on even under the ABCC’s watchful eye, one can only imagine how far Australia’s building and construction sites would deteriorate if the ‘tough cop on the beat’ was abolished.

“AMMA applauds the Australian Government for its ongoing support of the ABCC and its work in making Australia’s building and construction sector more productive, safer and more lawful.

“The Federal Opposition should act in the national interest and reverse their policy to immediately dump the ABCC, effectively handing over Australia’s building sites to the CFMMEU, as soon as they were to get into office.”

MEDIA CONTACT: Brad Thompson, 0409 781 580