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Same job, same pay carve-out on cards for mining contractors

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Some mining and energy contractors could escape Labor's latest industrial relations changes using a new test being considered by the Albanese Government.

Workplace Relations Minister Tony Burke is weighing up the tweak to the "same job, same pay" plan after meeting a delegation of contractors led by the Australian Resources and Energy Employer Association.

The possible concession is being cast as a breakthrough which could ease tensions between the Government and industry groups over the second

wave of Labor's industrial relations reform.

The "same job, same pay" proposal – which the Government wants to legislate in the second half of the year — is designed to close a loophole that allows bosses to use labour-hire to undercut the wages of directly-employed staff.

ARREA wants the Government to consider a "multi-factor test" to ensure specialist contracting services aren't wrongly defined as labour-hire — and therefore caught up in the changes.

Steve Knott, chief executive of AREEA, said these services were "absolutely vital" to the continued prosperity of mining and

oil and gas operations across the country.

Minerals Council of Australia chief executive Tania Constable said the Government must recognise that service contractors "provide specific service, as opposed to labour hire which are businesses that exist to provide workers".