



AMMA MEDIA RELEASE

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WEEK ONE AND MUA MAKING FAIR WORK A FALLACY

A decision by the MUA to proceed with a further round of disruptive strike activity in the oil and gas sector has highlighted the failings of the Federal Government's "Fair Work" regime in its very first week of full operation according to a peak resource sector employer organisation.

AMMA Chief Executive, Steve Knott, said despite all the fan-fare with which Fair Work Australia was introduced to the Australian business community - the Government had faltered at the very first opportunity it had to ensure "Fair Work Australia" was indeed fair and working.

"When a union like the MUA can hold Australia's offshore oil and gas vessel operators to ransom and continue to direct workers to go on strike in pursuit of unsustainable wage and allowance claims of up to \$90 000 per annum -on top of existing salaries of \$130 000 - you have to question whether the 'Fair Work' Act actually lives up to its title," Mr Knott said.

"It is abundantly obvious the MUA believes the Government's new industrial system will allow for exorbitant pay claims in the order of 70 - 100% to be accompanied with damaging industrial action."

Mr Knott said it had been immensely disappointing to see the Government refuse to use the powers it has at its disposal to enforce a cooling off period to assist the oil and gas sector.

"Such a move would allow the parites to continue to try and negotiate - without vessel operators being held to ransom and further damaged by senseless strike activity."

"It is as though the MUA are acting with impunity. The behaviour being exhibited by the MUA leadership suggests they are not interested in holding sensible negotiations. Their ongoing pursuit of a pay rise of up to \$90,000 for people already earning over double the average national wage is not only damaging the sector, it is having severe economic impacts on Australia's shipping sector," he said.

"If the MUA is successful in holding operators in the offshore oil and gas industry to ransom, other unions will follow, including blue water and offshore unions."

"At a time when Australia is looking to the resources sector to both create jobs and improve job security for hundreds of thousands of Australian workers, the leadership of the MUA appears determined to completely undermine this."

"AMMA calls on the Deputy Prime Minister to bring an end to this strike activity and send a message to the MUA that irresponsible pay claims and industrial action will not be tolerated in the national interest."

"Unless the Government takes decisive action now to stop the destructive activities of MUA then other Australian unions will follow and the words "Fair Work Australia" will become a fallacy.

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