



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Australian Mines and Metals Association

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11 July 2007 (embargoed until 12 July 2007)

### Resources Sector Analysis of Coalition and ALP Workplace Relations Policies

With the prospect of a significant change to the workplace relations environment due to the upcoming federal election, Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA) has undertaken a detailed analysis of the workplace relations policies of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the Coalition. This document is called *An Analysis of Coalition and ALP Workplace Relations Policies* and applies a rating between zero and four to each workplace relations policy position of the ALP and the Coalition. The lower the score the less the policy meets the needs of the resources sector.

*'The results of the analysis highlight that the Coalition's workplace relations policies are far superior to the needs of the resources sector than the ALP's. The Coalition scored 22 out of a possible 28 compared with only 9 from the ALP'* Mr Steve Knott Chief Executive of AMMA said today.

This analysis was conducted over a three month period involving AMMA members, industry chief executives and senior IR practitioners from AMMA's Board Reference Group. This is representative of the resources sector's mining (hard rock and coal), oil and gas and allied industries.

Today's release of AMMA's *Analysis of Coalition and ALP Workplace Relations Policies* covers the following seven key policy areas:

- National Regulatory Framework
- Minimum Standards and Awards
- Agreement Making
- Agreement Processing
- Industrial Action and Compliance
- Unfair Dismissal
- Union Right of Entry

*'While the ALP has been given a significantly lower score, this is partly the result of key policy issues being left unaddressed – union right of entry, new industrial tribunal powers, secondary boycotts and compliance'* Mr Knott said.

AMMA acknowledges this by approaching the evaluation as a 'live' analysis; with updates being made to the score given to a particular policy area should further detail be released by the ALP or the Coalition.

The analysis indicates that there remains room for improvement for both parties to give greater flexibility in the application of restrictive minimum standards, greater protection from unmeritorious unfair dismissal claims and a true national approach to union right of entry and single IR system matters.

A balanced and objective approach has been taken during this analysis, recognising those instances where the policy positions of the ALP and the Coalition are equally satisfactory. This occurred in respect to agreement processing, where both parties substantially addressed AMMA's requirements but could improve their rating by making agreements effective from the date of signing.

*'A modern workplace relations system must provide business with certainty, so that they can invest in Australia's future with confidence. This can be achieved through protection from unlawful*

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*behaviour and a range of employment arrangement options that cater to the particular circumstances of individual businesses. The current workplace relations system is in a position to provide this and should be, at the very least, maintained 'Mr Knott said today.*

It is this type of system that will ensure that the resources sector and indeed businesses in general, continue to experience historical low industrial disputation levels, higher real wages outcomes, low unemployment, improved export earnings and the ongoing improvement to Australia's international investment profile.

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