

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Time to consider deregistering the CFMEU and MUA

*National resource industry employer group, AMMA (Australian Mines and Metals Association)  
Statement by AMMA Steve Knott, Chief Executive*

THE federal government should seriously consider deregistering the CFMEU and the MUA after the unions this week threatened crippling and unlawful strikes at a national level.

These threats are an attempt to coerce prosecutors into dropping charges against 101 construction employees being pursued over illegal strikes in Perth in 2013. The threats must be scrutinised by the government and condemned by the leadership of the ALP and ACTU.

Government, employers and the broader community need to stand united. We cannot allow any group in our society to continually break the law and then threaten illegal strike action to force a government regulator to back down.

It is beyond belief that in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century the CFMEU, MUA and their respective members are oblivious to the fact that illegal industrial action may result in organisational and/or individual prosecutions and fines.

An avalanche of evidence in recent months highlights that it may be time to take away the privileges these organisations receive as registered industrial organisations. These privileges include default bargaining representation rights, extensive powers to enter worksites, special standing before the Fair Work Commission, and lesser fines and penalties than corporations.

Recent examples of illegal action include:

- Thousands of unionists walking off their jobs in Melbourne to protest against two senior CFMEU officials being charged with serious blackmail offenses uncovered by a Royal Commission;
- Hundreds of CFMEU members downing tools in Brisbane and rallying in support of a fellow unionist who was charged with assaulting a female building developer; and
- The Federal Court imposing penalties of \$151,000 on the CFMEU and a number of its officials for their role in illegal blockades during the Grocon dispute in 2012 – this came after the CFMEU agreed to pay Grocon \$3.55m in damages in June this year.

The FWBC Inspectorate has a record number of cases currently in court ([52 as of August](#)) and almost 90% of these cases have the CFMEU or CFMEU officials named as respondents. It is no surprise that Federal Court Judge, Justice Christopher Jessup, last month condemned the CFMEU's culture as one in which breaking the law has become normalised.

The threat from the CFMEU and the MUA is also the first sign of the damage that will be created by the planned amalgamation of the two unions. Legal action against construction employees has nothing to do with the maritime industry or the employers and wider community that will be harmed by any MUA strikes in support of their law-breaking mates at the CFMEU.

It is 2015, not the 1970s. If the militant minority of Australia's trade union movement continually refuses to recognise this, they strengthen the case of those who argue that deregistration is the only way to end their calculated and contemptuous law breaking.

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