



# Construction Forestry Mining & Energy Union

## Construction & General Division

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### **CFMEU welcomes the end of the ABCC but wants coercive powers removed**

The CFMEU has welcomed the House of Representatives decision to vote to scrap the Australian Building and Construction Commission but remains concerned that its coercive powers will be transferred to another organisation.

CFMEU Construction National Secretary Dave Noonan said the ABCC was the last vestige of Work Choices, and its abolition was long overdue.

“The ABCC was set up by the Howard Government as part of an ideological attack on unions. It has been a \$135 million waste of money, serving only to try and intimidate union members who stand up for decent wages and safety,” Mr Noonan said.

“It has failed to tackle illegal conduct by employers, including the widespread use of sham contracting which cost the taxpayer billions each year.

“Labor has a clear mandate to end the ABCC, having promised to do so at the 2007 and 2010 elections.

“I congratulate Labor MPs, the Greens’ Adam Bandt and independents Bob Katter and Andrew Wilkie for finally getting rid of this flawed and biased body. It is now up to the Senate to put the final nail in the ABCC’s coffin.”

“The contributions by Liberal MPs during debate in support of the ABCC clearly show they can’t let go of Work Choices.”

Although supporting the abolition of the ABCC, the CFMEU remains concerned that the new investigative body retains the “coercive powers” which allow construction industry workers to be subject to secret interrogations. The powers will be retained for another three years.

“Construction workers will be subject to coercive powers that do not apply to any other sector. Construction workers should not have fewer rights than other workers,” Mr Noonan said.

Mr Noonan said recent revelations about the ABCC showed it had no place in a democratic society.

“Last year the ABCC admitted it had overstepped its powers and illegally interrogated 203 people,” Mr Noonan said.

“Last week the ABCC was forced to call an investigation into the failed prosecution of Victorian CFMEU officials John Setka and Matt Hudson. ABCC investigators admitted to having lost or destroyed evidence including audio recordings, and changed their own statements to the court.”

Mr Noonan said the CFMEU looked forward to continuing its constructive relationship with thousands of legitimate employers in the construction industry.

“The end of the ABCC will not change these relationships, and we look forward to working with employers to tackle the issues of safety, apprentices and creating a world-class building industry in Australia,” Mr Noonan said.

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