

## Joint Statement on COVID-19

The Australian Workers Union (AWU), the CFMEU Mining and Energy Division and the Minerals Council of Australia (MCA) represent companies and workers in one of the fundamental sectors of the Australian economy.

Health and safety is the number one commitment of everyone in the Australian mining industry.

The resources sector employs more than 1 million Australians and is responsible for more than 58 per cent of Australia's export income. Mining also makes a major socioeconomic contribution to Australian communities through partnerships and local services.

The COVID-19 pandemic represents the most significant disruption to daily life since the Second World War.

The measures currently being undertaken to attempt to control the spread of the pandemic are unprecedented, and no aspect of Australian social life or the economy will remain unaffected.

This is as true for the mining industry as any other part of our economy.

Yet the continuation of productive activity in the mining industry is vitally important.

Australia needs the income and economic activity generated by the sector to fund initiatives for the benefit of all Australians.

There are many regional, local and remote communities which rely on mining both directly and indirectly whose sustainability would be threatened if governments took decisions which would drastically reduce economic activity.

In the context of this national crisis, employers and unions must work together to help limit the spread of COVID-19 whilst maintaining the highest possible degree of economic activity.

The safety and well-being of mine workers and the communities they live and work in are paramount.

It is also appropriate in light of the unprecedented challenge posed by COVID-19 that we all recognise the profound contribution currently being made by the many thousands of health workers throughout Australia.

Measures to address the COVID-19 pandemic must be based on an acceptance that the safety and well-being of the Australian community is the highest priority.

Within this framework, the safety and well-being of the resources sector workforce is non-negotiable, despite the myriad practical challenges now and ahead.

# COVID-19 STATEMENT



The AWU, CFMMEU and the MCA are united in their determination to implement strict COVID-19 health and safety protocols to keep people in work and sites operating where it is safe to do so.

Existing models of employment such as fly in, fly out (FIFO) and drive in, drive out (DIDO) should be maintained, provided the safety and well-being of mine workers and local communities is not compromised.

The AWU, CFMMEU and MCA have agreed that a range of COVID-19 protocols will be implemented dealing with the following matters:

- strict measures to minimise the risk of workers being exposed to COVID-19 in mining workplaces
- strict processes for encouraging self-isolation by workers
- comprehensive systems to manage any positive COVID-19 tests for workers at a mine site or who have been at a mine site. These will only involve quarantine at mine sites in exceptional circumstances
- appropriate travel and accommodation conditions for FIFO and DIDO workers
- education and communication with workers and local communities.

The AWU, CFMMEU and MCA have agreed to monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of these measures through regular and ongoing discussions at State Mine Safety Advisory Councils.

The MCA and resources unions also agreed to work together to minimise any long-term job losses in the industry as a result of COVID-19 and noted that employers are meeting medical costs associated with COVID-19 testing for workers.

The adoption of these policies will ensure that when Australia emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, a strong mining sector and a safe and healthy workforce will ensure Australia's speedy economic recovery is delivered for the benefit of all Australians.

In these tough times, the sector remains focused on operating safely as an essential industry which supports workers, families, local communities and Australia.

That is why the AWU, CFMMEU and MCA are united in their determination to ensure the sector can continue to be a critical part of the Australian economy.

As the overseas experience demonstrates, the health sector workforce will also face enormous challenges in the coming weeks and months and the dangers and burden of confronting COVID-19 will fall disproportionately on the shoulders of nurses, doctors and other health workers.

In dealing with our own challenges, we should recognise and support the contribution of Australia's health workers and others in the community who are in the frontline of dealing with the pandemic.

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