

Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 1 July 2015



Abbott not welcome in the Hunter

**Forgacs Shipbuilders Rally
12:30pm today
Williamtown RAAF Base
South gate entrance Medowie Road, Williamtown**

Forgacs shipbuilding workers will send a message directly to the Prime Minister today as part of his visit to the NSW Hunter region.

The workers and their supporters will welcome the Prime Minister with a mural of high-vis vests representing the 160 jobs that were lost at the shipbuilder last week.

“For as long as the Prime Minister is selling out Australian jobs, he isn’t welcome in the Hunter” said AMWU NSW Secretary, Tim Ayres.

“In the lead up to the last Federal election, you couldn’t keep Tony Abbott out of manufacturing plants. Now that he is decimating the industry, he wouldn’t be caught dead standing next to a manufacturing worker” he said.

Last week, Forgacs admitted that unless the government acted soon, the entire Forgacs shipyard would be shut by Christmas.

“160 workers lost their job last week and 350 are set to lose their jobs before the end of the year. Tony Abbott knew these job losses were on the horizon the day he came into office and he hasn’t lifted a finger to save them” he said.

The job losses at Forgacs will only add to the jobs crisis currently facing the Hunter region. Unemployment in the region is currently double the NSW average sitting at 10.9%.

“If the Prime Minister wants to make a difference, he can bring forward planned naval procurement contracts that could save jobs in our region” said Mr Ayres.

“Until he makes that commitment, he shouldn’t bother visiting the region” he said.

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