

Friday, 14 August 2015

Email bounce back – Hutchison Ports Workers jobs protected

ACTU President Ged Kearney and MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin are today meeting with Hutchison Ports Australia workers following the decision last night in the Federal Court to grant an injunction which protects their jobs.

Last Thursday night Hutchison tried to sack 97 of their 224 workers in Sydney and Brisbane by text message and email in a move which sparked a massive backlash from workers, unions and the broader community.

In the Federal Court on Thursday, Justice Rangiah agreed to grant a temporary order based on a lack of consultation by the company with its workforce that will remain in place until a full hearing in the week beginning August 31.

Workers are today returning to their jobs at port facilities in Brisbane and Sydney.

The union movement urges Hutchison management to come back to negotiating table to find a long term solution for the company and its workforce.

Unions reject suggestions from Hutchison that the company is reducing its Australian operations due to a lack of competitiveness as the company has been subcontracting existing work to other stevedores in a bid to give the impression that their workforce needs to be changed.

Union are seeking a fair and objective process where all labour data and modelling are put on the table to determine the true nature and scope of the problem.

Unions have condemned Employment Minister Eric Abetz for characterising the email and text sackings as an 'appropriate methodology' and have run online campaign to give Eric Abetz a taste of his own medicine and sack him by text.

Quotes attributable to Paddy Crumlin:

"The MUA has worked closely with senior Hutchison management in recent years to ensure productive, flexible, safe and reliable working arrangements which allowed the company to enter into a highly competitive market."

"Hutchison should know better than to treat their workforce like this. They are a major global player in container terminals and they know that mutual respect with your workforce delivers the best results."

"We urge Hutchison management to come back to the negotiating table and try to find a way through current circumstances which benefits both the company and its workforce."

Quotes attributable to Ged Kearney:

"With more than 800,000 Australians unemployed for the first time in 20 years, workers are right to question why the Abbott Government isn't standing up for local jobs."

"The Abbott Government needs to take action to stimulate the economy and reverse the devastating impact its austerity approach has had on economic growth, confidence and unemployment."

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