

ABCC *Campaign update*

June 2009

Scrap laws that put our lives at risk!

Construction workers are being hounded by the ABCC, over efforts to fix safety problems on jobs.

This time, the Government-backed enforcer ABCC has seized on an incident at the Flinders University Education building site in South Australia last year.

For weeks, workers had complained to the contractor, Hindmarsh Constructions, about what they believed was shoddy safety. But their complaints were ignored.

When a CFMEU organiser visited the site, his entry was obstructed.

Then the police turned up, asked a few questions and left. But a union presence on the site was resisted.

Hindmarsh locked everyone out of the job on Saturday May 31 – for safety reasons, the workers were told.

Sick and tired of Hindmarsh ignoring safety, the workers signed a petition – on a paper hand-towel from the toilets – for a Safety Committee and for the union to be involved. Management refused to accept the petition.

When the Union became aware of the workers' safety concerns, Safe Work SA was asked to visit the site. On Monday, prohibition notices were issued. The problems were then fixed and work resumed as normal.

ABCC undermines safety

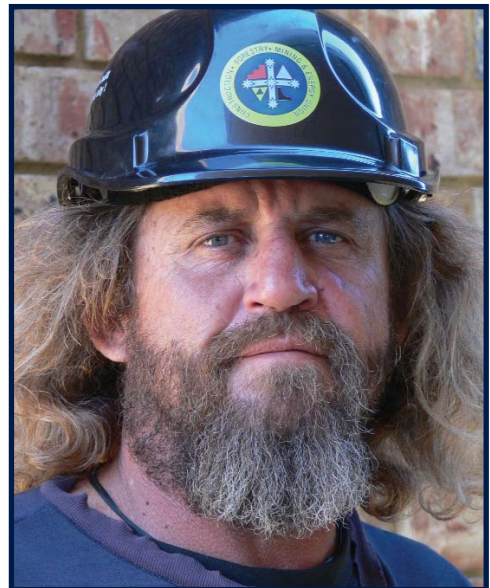
Then the ABCC arrived at the site and began nosing around. They want to know who said what about the safety issues and tried to haul workers in to answer questions.

The employer was not questioned about the Saturday lock-out or the safety problems, of course.

One worker, Ark Tribe, has been charged with refusing to answer ABCC questions and faces court, and a possible jail sentence, in the next few months.

The Rudd Labor Government refuses to recognise how its special construction laws and the ABCC are putting workers' lives at risk.

Demand an end to Federal Government laws that undermine safety and stop unions from looking after their members.



Ark Tribe is a rigger and rank and file member of the CFMEU in South Australia. He was working on the Hindmarsh job at Flinders University when a safety dispute arose last year.

Ark was summonsed for questioning by the ABCC.

The ABCC has now decided to charge him with an offence of failing to attend the interview at the appointed time.

Ark has to front court to defend the unreasonable charges.

If he has done something wrong, he is prepared to cop it, but he won't be treated unfairly.

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6 months' jail for failing to attend an ABCC interview?

ARK TRIBE has been charged with failing to attend an ABCC interview.

He is happy to go to a proper court of law and be treated like every other Australian with an opportunity to have a fair hearing.

He wants to work in a safe environment. He believes he has the right not to put himself at risk.

He is just doing what he believes in and has always done in his life — to Ark it's nothing special.

He just wants the same rights at work as other Australians.

Ark will face court in the next few months, charged with refusing to answer ABCC questions.

If found guilty, he could do six months in jail.



Ark at work.

'I'm prepared to go to court where I can be represented by the lawyer of my choice. I believe I have a right to a fair hearing.'

OHS problems raised at the Hindmarsh site —

- Plant operated by unlicensed workers
- Scaffold with improper access
- No access, egress signage
- Unusable amenities
- Lack of overhead protection
- No change rooms
- No clean drinking water
- No evacuation plan



But Hindmarsh Constructions has not been questioned by the ABCC about the safety problems or its decision to lock out workers.

STOP the discrimination against construction workers

Over 100 construction workers have been summonsed to answer questions by the ABCC about everyday work incidents, like the safety problems at the Hindmarsh Flinders University job.

They have no right to silence and cannot necessarily take the lawyer of their choice to the interrogation if they do attend.

If they refuse to answer ABCC questions, they can face up to 6 months in jail.

By keeping the ABCC, the Rudd Labor Government:

- ❑ Helps bosses get away with bad safety practices
- ❑ Stops workers from protecting themselves
- ❑ Stops unions from doing their job.

Take a stand for workers' rights in the construction industry.

Join the Australian Construction Unions' campaign at www.rightsonsite.org.au

Together we can change these laws so construction workers have the same rights as all other Australians.

