

Media Release

Mining and Energy Division – Construction, Forestry Mining and Energy Union



Union: Coal Industry's Dishonest Ad Campaign labelled a Sham

13 October 2009

One of Australia's largest Unions has today labelled the Australian Coal Association's (ACA) public relations campaign against the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) - a complete sham.

Speaking from the Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union's (CFMEU) annual National Conference at Tweed Heads, Queensland Mining Senior Vice President Stuart Vaccaneo said the ACA was trying to scare regional communities into thinking their jobs were at risk.

"The facts speak for themselves, coal mining industry employment will continue to grow over the next 20 years, not decline" Mr Vaccaneo said.

Across Australia 13 new mines will come into production by 2015, with \$23 billion being invested, and production growing by a massive 30% to 450 million tonnes per annum.

"BHP and Xstrata combined recorded 10 billion dollars in before tax profit last year from their Australian operations alone. Industry figures expose coal companies lightweight total investment in low emissions technology as *less than* 1% of profit – it's a sham.

"It seems as though coal companies are spending more time and money on this slick PR campaign to try to trick regional communities than they are on efforts to secure coal jobs through low emissions technology.

"That's what workers in the industry want, investment in new technology to secure their jobs into the future. What they don't want is a lecture from Ralph Hillman on what's good for them and their families" Mr Vaccaneo said.

The CFMEU has been pushing a strong campaign with both government and industry to protect coal jobs through more investment in low emissions technology projects such as carbon capture and storage. The Union is also working with the federal government to obtain specific assistance for a small number of mines with relatively high methane emissions or projects that are tied to power stations on long term low price contracts, so those jobs are protected.

The Union's campaign, supported by working families in Australian mining regions, is in stark contrast to the ACA's political interference in the CPRS through their multi million dollar sham ad campaign which deliberately targets the media in marginal seats ahead of the next federal election.

"The only time employment in the coal industry takes a turn for the worst is when coal company executives fail to plan for the future.

"Rather than spending money on this multi million dollar ad campaign based on a false premise, they should concentrate on fast tracking plans for low emissions technology to take real steps to secure regional employment" Mr Vaccaneo said.

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