

1 August 2014

Union right of entry laws save lives

Calls by the building industry to further tighten the restrictions for union officials to enter construction sites will lead to more injuries and deaths at work.

“186 Australians were killed at work in 2013. I have no doubt that number will grow even higher if union officials are restricted from entering building sites,” said ACTU Assistant Secretary Michael Borowick.

“In the first four months of this year alone, 46 Australians have been killed at work,” said Mr Borowick

“These shocking figures shows we should be strengthening workplace safety regulations not weakening them.”

Under current laws, union officials are only able to use their right of entry permit when they suspect a safety breach.

“The Master Builders Association is effectively trying to diminish the ability of workers to speak up for themselves in their workplaces.

Mr Borowick said the figures on workplace injuries and deaths speak for themselves.

“Around 600,000 Australian workers are injured every year, costing Australia more than \$60 billion dollars annually,” he said.

“We have workers climbing unsafe scaffolding, being exposed to asbestos, falling victim to bullying and being put in unsafe and stressful situations every day.

“Trying to restrict a union official from entering a worksite is a move to effectively silence a worker’s safety concerns.”

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