

Monday, January 20, 2025

‘New era for workers’: Unions welcome clean aluminium investment

The ACTU welcomes the Albanese government’s commitment of \$2 billion to build a green aluminium industry in Australia – an industry that will support thousands of jobs and drive deep reductions in climate pollution.

The \$2 billion in production credits would support Australia’s leading aluminium producers for every tonne of aluminium produced using renewable energy.

The announcement positions Australia to play a leading role in the global aluminium market for decades to come, supplying green metals that our trading partners need to decarbonise their own economies. This means aluminium smelters like the one in Tomago, NSW – which employs over 1,000 full-time workers – will be able to play an enduring and growing role in a decarbonising economy.

The commitment stands in stark contrast to the Coalition’s nuclear plan, which quietly assumes a serious decline in Australian energy use, with energy-hungry industries like aluminium left to flounder without the renewable power that would keep them going for decades to come.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O’Neil:

“Unions welcome the Albanese Government \$2 billion commitment to help transform Australia’s aluminium industry into a world leading renewable one, announced today.

“Australia is one of the largest producers of bauxite, alumina and aluminium in the world, and home to some of its best renewable energy resources and skilled workers.

“Together with this new support, Australia will be in a prime position to secure a world-leading export industry that supports well-paid and secure regional jobs, boosts export revenue and helps the whole world to reduce emissions.

“Peter Dutton opposes this type of positive industry policy, and is spruiking a nuclear energy plan that will cut Australia’s overall power supply, putting all energy-intensive industries and jobs at risk, especially aluminium.

“This announcement from the Albanese government secures a future of new jobs and renewed prosperity for smelter communities from Tomago, NSW, to Bell Bay, TAS, to Portland, VIC—communities and industries Peter Dutton seems ready to abandon. Dutton’s only economic plan for this country is to give business leaders free lunches.”

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Media Contact: Cameron Warasta (0447) 159 467