

A bulletin of Defend the Unions - Defend the CFMEU's Rank-and-File Committee / Issue 7, 27 August 2025

## FIGHTING ADMINISTRATION: ONE YEAR ON

### What does a CFMEU organiser do, and how are they restricted like no other union organiser?

Union organisers are trade union officials responsible for building membership, developing worker leadership, and achieving campaign goals. They achieve this by creating strategies, recruiting members, providing representation, and engaging in collective bargaining and advocacy.

They primarily work to expand union power, improve working conditions, and provide support to union members by facilitating communication and empowering them to collectively address workplace issues.

That is a text book definition. CFMEU organisers do all of that, but with a history of hostile employers, governments and legal barriers like no other union in this country:

From the Fair Work Commission (designed to slow union progress and members' EBAs with bureaucracy), the Building Code (rules to stifle organisers, even down to if you can have a sticker on your hard hat), the ABCC (policing body just targeting construction unions, with special powers and fines just for them), to tighter rules on the ability to strike or withdraw labour than anywhere else in the developed world, the CFMEU has to face them all.

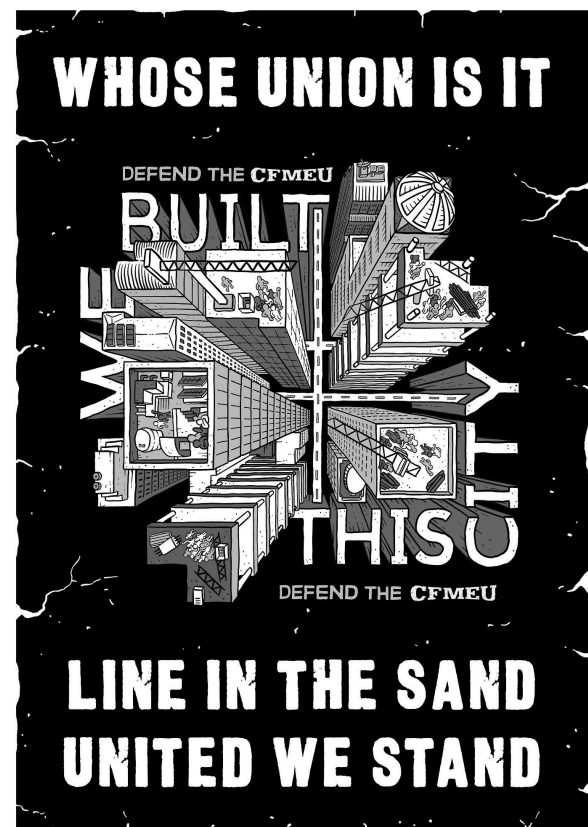
Our organisers have to apply for an ARREO (Authorised Representative of a Registered Organisation) permit, and be investigated and deemed to be a fit and proper person by a magistrate, just to be able to enter a work site where there's been a suspected contravention of the law (i.e not abiding by our EBA, safety hazards, injury or death). More often than not, organisers only learn about contraventions from members or HSRs. This is where we all have a role to play to keep our organisers up to date what's happening on our jobs.

Not to mention organisers are often stopped, questioned, blocked and have the police called on them, even when there is an injury or death. The

bosses' response to the recent death at Golden Plains Wind Farm prove how hostile employers can be: even when they have caused a situation where a worker dies, they will try to prevent the CFMEU from assisting workers there.

Now, under Administration, our organisers are under the microscope more than ever in our history, with special legislation that targets CFMEU organisers and rank-and-file members. A mere rumour or anonymous tip-off with no evidence, no investigation or right of reply can result in removal, never to work for a union or represent workers again. They can also face penalties personally of \$198k or more and the union can be fined \$1 million or more if an organiser crosses the Administrator.

This is why we need to support our organisers and take on the fight in ways they can't. Join DUDC today!



## Public housing is union business! Stop the ALP government's attack on the working-class

by 44 Flats United

The ALP State Government's proposal to demolish all 44 public housing high-rises across Melbourne (and an increasing number of walk-ups) is an attack on the working class that will displace over 10,000 people, rip apart tight-knit communities built over decades, and compound existing health problems experienced by some of the most marginalised people in our city.

Public housing residents across Melbourne are not new to the paternalism, lies, and deceit of the ALP. We know that the ALP left us and the rest of the working-class behind decades ago. Contrary to the myths being spun by Homes Victoria, the State Government's new real estate agent wing, and the Housing Minister, Harriet Shing, public housing residents have not been and will not be better off because of these 'redevelopment' plans.

Residents know that our forced displacement is only step one in the ALP's bigger plan to raze our estates to make way for their wealthy property developer and financial superannuation fund cronies to come in and make big bucks.

Independent studies show that retaining and retrofitting is a viable alternative to demolishing and rebuilding that will save billions of dollars and save over 1.5 million tonnes of carbon emissions from being released. As highlighted in the CFMEU's submission to the recent Parliamentary Inquiry, there is now an opportunity for Victoria to be the leading state to champion the retrofitting industry, which will preserve public housing and create more unionised jobs while aligning with the union's proposal for a super-profits tax to fund affordable housing.

To date, the ALP State Government still has not and will not show us the key documents that they say they relied on to justify the decision to demolish our homes. Baseless claims to justify state intervention is a tried and tested ALP manoeuvre that rank and file members would know too well.

Through the green bans movement, the CFMEU/BLF have a loud and proud history of halting the development of projects that threatened working-class communities, heritage sites, and the environment. By standing again with public housing residents, members can continue this legacy of protecting working-class communities, securing jobs, and upholding the union's tradition of fighting for justice and equality.

***Who is 44 Flats United (44FU)?** 44FU are a group of residents, former residents and supporters of public housing, organising against the State Government's decision to demolish the 44 high-rise commission flats and a growing number of walk-ups across Melbourne. We are guided by the principle that not one person should be left worse off because of this government's decision to demolish our homes, that public housing needs to be defended and protected for current and future generations to come and that on the unceded sovereign lands of First Peoples, no decisions should be made about the sale or leasing of public land until Treaties with First Peoples have been negotiated and finalised.*

Follow 44FU - help to amplify resident voices:  
[https://www.instagram.com/44\\_flatsunited](https://www.instagram.com/44_flatsunited)

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### Report from Victorian ALP Conference

An opportunity to pass a motion at the conference calling for the repeal of the Registered Organisations Amendment (the law that put us into administration, removed our officials and banned them for life) was blocked by back-room deals between other unions and the Administration. While we know it would have had little effect, we are disappointed that this chance to embarrass the Albanese Government, and to embolden others to speak out against this dangerous attack on the union movement as a whole, was missed.

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