



A bulletin of Defend the Unions - Defend the CFMEU's Rank-and-File Committee / Issue 6, 27 June 2025

# FIGHTING ADMINISTRATION

## Hands off our Officials, Meetings, and Funds!

In light of Irving canceling the 25 June Victorian Branch Meeting, DUDC held a snap meeting to respond. At this meeting, rank-and-file CFMEU members unanimously carried a motion to hold a rally outside the CFMEU office before the July Branch Meeting to tell Irving and his stooges: **HANDS OFF OUR OFFICIALS, MEETINGS, AND FUNDS!** The wording of the motion was:

“This motion commits the attendees of this meeting to getting as many members as humanly possible to the next CFMEU Branch Meeting for a rally outside. We will invite the BIGs unions and all other supporters.”

**Rally 4:30pm, 30 July outside the CFMEU office: 540 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. Rally even if Irving cancels again!**

Remember that the office staff are on our side, be kind and courteous!

### DUDC Statement on the High Court Decision

Defend the Unions - Defend the CFMEU condemns the High Court's decision to uphold the administration legislation passed by the Albanese Labor government and the Dutton-led opposition last year.

The High Court has given its blessing to the government silencing and straight-jacketing any union or member-based organisation based on untested allegations and mud-slinging by the media. The High Court has given its blessing to unionists being arbitrarily black banned from the industry for life without any right or recourse to defend themselves. It starts with the CFMEU, but it could be your union tomorrow.

In school, we are taught that the High Court will soberly assess cases on merit, and prevent government overreach and the erosion of civil liberties. In reality, the High Court does the bidding of the MBA and their lackeys in parliament.

When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty. When we stand together and strike, the working class has the power to overturn governments. The High Court might be happy to waive through laws that pave the way for authoritarianism in Australia. But we won't cop it.

Cummo said you're only as good as your last blue, Defend the Unions - Defend the CFMEU ain't backing down and neither can you. 🦊



## Testing the limits

The High Court has sided with the political elite and the bosses, leaving no other legal challenge available to appeal the amendments to the Registered Organisations Act pushed through by the ALP and LNP last year.



Now, our organisers are about to test and be tested in the federal courts over the legalities of their sackings, demotions, and potential charges.

Esther Van Arend, OH&S Organiser, was sacked with no due process and no investigation in late November after going to a cinema and encountering journalist Nick McKenzie. They had words and by Monday morning McKenzie had already complained to the administration. Esther was sacked and put on a removed persons list, never allowed to represent workers or work for a union ever again.

Her first court hearing will be in the coming weeks or months. Her lawyers will argue that what was done was illegal and that she was unfairly dismissed. The case was supposed to be heard on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June but Mark Irving KC, the lead administrator, and his lawyers managed to cock it up and lodge it in the wrong courts...not bad for someone members are paying \$650k+ a year to pull apart the union and attack our organisers, like Esther.

Not only is Irving fighting for the wishes of McKenzie, he is also asking the courts to throw out Esther's case. He is using stand-over tactics and trying to drag it out, wasting members' money and costing Esther not just money but enormous stress. What Irving seeks to deny Esther is a protection held by every worker in the country (one against unfair dismissal), unless you work for or are a member of the CFMEU, apparently.

Joel Shackleton, aka Shaks, is the next cab off the rank. Shaks is a CFMEU organiser representing Vic members and heading up work in the union for First Nations workers; fighting against bosses committing fraud with black cladding.

This is when companies are set up to look like they are Indigenous-owned and managed but, in reality, are owned or managed by non-Indigenous people. They are happy to take advantage of procurement contracts with builders, especially on government projects.

The state government has initiatives to encourage principal contractors to use Indigenous businesses on state government funded projects. While it is not a requirement that Indigenous businesses hire First Nations workers, it is more likely that they will.

While there is no government regulator, there are NGOs that certify Aboriginal businesses. But, bad actors have been finding ways to abuse this system. So, it's been up to Shaks and the rest of the CFMEU to hold the line and make sure members are getting a fair go. They ensure that companies aren't getting away with cashing in off the back of government initiatives and opportunities meant to help Indigenous workers.

Now the media are creating a frenzy over Shaks and, with allegations leveled against him, he will be taken to court mid-August in an attempt to silence and attack another great organiser that does their job with union values and a commitment to delivering for the members.

## Queensland out the gate for 48!

On 19 June, the day after the High Court decision, CFMEU members across SE Queensland walked off the job and marched to the CFMEU office to protest the administration of our union. Each site held a vote on whether to stop work, and all votes were passed. Once at the office, workers voted to stay out for 48 hours. Work was stopped across Brisbane, Ipswich, Gold Coast, Logan, Scenic Rim, and Moreton Bay. Members shut down the Cross River Rail, Hutchinson's Queen St tower, and the Gold Coast Coomera Connector project.

Irving was terrified and threatened workers via text message. He has even gone so far as to advise the construction bosses that they should not pay workers who took action. Can it be any clearer which side he is on?!

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## The Rat Files: Murray Watt

### (Originally published in Hard Hat Bulletin)

This month hardhat is starting a new series – The Rat Files. This will shine the light on some of the more despicable characters from our favourite political party – the ALP. So hold your noses, have a bucket nearby and let's dive into the bottomless cesspit of no principles that is The Rat Files.

Murray Watt is Labor's ultimate yes man, having never worked a day of manual labour in his life (that's going to be a common theme in this series) he's obviously a perfect representative for Australian workers. Coming from working-class parents Murray worked hard and completed a degree in commerce and law and joined the young ALP. A sure-fire career path for anyone who wants to step on the necks of workers and elevate themselves into a cushy job.

Speaking of cushy jobs, Murray practised as a solicitor for 5 years before his years of

dedication and arse kissing got him a job as a public servant in the department of Premier and Cabinet and in a few years squirmed his way up to be the chief of staff for Anna Bligh. He then did a stint in the QLD parliament before Newman ended that. Not to be deterred, his ALP mates got him on the ticket to be a senator in the federal parliament which he entered in 2016.

And there he sat on his fat arse collecting a big salary until Albo came calling, needing an attack dog to go after the CFMEU. As minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, he led the charge against the CFMEU appearing in the media numerous times echoing the false charges of criminality and corruption in the CFMEU. When the liberals had a different approach to smashing the CFMEU he mocked it "Peter Dutton's reckless plan for the CFMEU would hand control of the union back to the very criminals we are beginning to remove. Deregistering the union would allow it to operate without ANY regulation, with the worst elements free to run rampant on construction sites again."

With the job done administering the CFMEU, he was promoted to Minister for Environment and Water after the 2025 election. He once again threw any principles or morals out the window immediately and listened to his donors from the fossil fuel industry, approving the disastrous North West shelf expansion. This project's emissions will outweigh Australia reaching net zero tomorrow, but apparently they don't count because the gas will be exported and burned overseas. Good thing climate change respects national borders, hey.

If you think Watt and his lack of principles are an exception, you'd be sadly wrong. The Australian Labor party is chock full of politicians who've never worked a day in their lives. With a name like that you might expect a few nurses, bus drivers or even a couple of tattooed bikie construction thugs in parliament. But no, it's full of people who joined an ALP student club while

they were studying at uni and quickly got cushy jobs in the ALP machine after graduation. These people have no idea what it's like to be a worker, it's all a game to them. Fuck the lot of them, they'll always sell out. Read Hard Hat, go on strike and I'll see you at the pub.

*Oscar Strahn*

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### **How to raise a motion and hold a vote on your job site.**

At a tool box meeting, communicate to your shop steward your motion you would like to raise.

In the tool box meeting raise your hand in general business and read out your motion

The shop steward should ask if anyone seconds the motion or wants to speak against it.

Then hold a vote with a show of hands.

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**Get involved with Defend the Unions—  
Defend the CFMEU by following the QR  
code below:**

