



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Fines too small a price for worker deaths: We need industrial manslaughter laws.**

The CFMEU National Construction Secretary has called for industrial manslaughter laws to prosecute employers whose negligence and disregard for safety result in workplace deaths.

The union's call comes after a Sydney builder, Truslan Constructions, was fined \$450,000 following the death of a worker on a site where the union had identified serious safety breaches just days before the incident in October 2016.

CFMEU National Construction Secretary Dave Noonan said the fine showed that no financial penalty is sufficient for employers who ignore safety regulations and put the lives of workers at risk.

"This is a tragedy that was completely avoidable, caused by the blatant disregard for the lives of workers by a builder who put profits before safety," said Dave Noonan.

"Our sympathies are with the family of Iremar Da Silva who have been robbed of a father and husband. No family should have to go through what they have suffered."

"It is outrageous that the penalties are so low for builders who behave as though the lives of their workers are worth less than the cost of ensuring a safe workplace. In the absence of strong industrial manslaughter laws and the threat of prosecution there is little to hold renegade builders to account."

"A CFMEU organiser visited the site where Mr Da Silva was killed just 11 days before the incident. The organiser identified serious safety breaches requiring immediate action to rectify. These notices were ignored by the builder and a man is dead as a result."

"Every day, our organisers try to make worksites safer in an industry where too many builders blatantly ignore safety laws and put workers' lives at risk, knowing that if a somebody dies the worst outcome they face is a fine. For some it seen as just another cost of doing business."

"And under the government's union-busting laws the fines handed out for organising an industrial meeting or a safety visit on a site are more severe than for a builder who causes a death. It is shameful."

"It is time for strong industrial manslaughter laws and prosecutions to go with them to force

change in an industry that has offered excuses on safety for too long.”

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