



MEDIA RELEASE

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Construction workers must not be excluded from wage subsidies

The CFMEU National Construction division is calling for the expansion of the wage subsidy scheme to include workers in the building and construction industry who would be excluded under current rules, warning that many workers will miss out unless the scheme is changed.

“Construction workers are helping keep Australia moving during this crisis and need to be looked after in the event of job losses or shutdowns,” said Dave Noonan, CFMEU National Construction Secretary.

“Data from the ABS shows there are around 87,000 casual workers in the construction industry employed for less than 12 months who will be excluded under the proposed set up of this scheme if they lose work during this pandemic crisis.”

“No construction worker affected by shutdowns should miss out on support.”

“The Australian trade union movement has worked hard to convince the government of the need for a wage supplement scheme. Labor supported it, and we welcome the government changing its position to now support a safety net to protect workers.”

“However, the wage supplement is less than what is being paid in other countries and the CFMEU is concerned at the number of people in our industry who will miss out under the current set up of the scheme.”

“Casual workers in construction who are helping keep the Australian economy functioning should not be excluded due to arbitrary constraints.”

“Casual workers deserve a fair go and to be treated equally to other workers.”

“The union will also be vigilant to ensure employers don't rot this scheme or use it as an excuse to cut wages.”

“Construction workers are keeping the economy moving at a time of great uncertainty and the government must treat all workers equally and ensure the safety net is there for every single person who needs it.”

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