

## Master Builders statement on CFMEU investigation

14 July 2024

The joint media investigation into the operations and underworld links within the CFMEU confirms what Master Builders has long known and called out – union representatives with a comprehensive disregard for the law and the industry it claims to represent.

Governments cannot turn a blind eye to this abhorrent and alleged criminal behaviour that we have seen displayed over the past few days.

Master Builders implores the Prime Minister and all state leaders to urgently explore all possible options to clean up this mess.

Our recommendations for urgent action are as follows:

- Establishment of a cross-jurisdiction police strike force to investigate the allegations which is sufficiently resourced.
- The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) to commence a review of CFMEU activities including whether recent EBAs were in fact genuinely agreed.
- ACCC investigation of activity that may be contrary to competition laws.
- At the very least, the Federal Government introduces legislation in spring sittings that increases the powers of the FWO to hold recidivist officials and unions to account. This should include a capacity to conduct reviews of whether officials and/or registered organisations should continue to hold their existing status and provide greater protection to complainants who are currently too afraid to come forward with evidence in fear of retribution.

The CFMEU accounts for less than 10 per cent of industry participants but their unyielding stranglehold on builders, subbies, and clients has gone on for long enough.

The investigation confirms what we have heard from builders on the ground, ongoing coercion and bullying tactics employed by union representatives to accept pattern EBAs conditions including who they can and can't hire on site.

It's clear the industrial relations system in building and construction is broken.

There have been four royal commissions, hundreds of court judgments, and dozens of other reports and independent inquires that forensically examined the unlawful and illegal conduct of building unions.

They all reached the same conclusion – there are problems unique to building and construction, and therefore there is a need for an industry-specific workplace regulator or specific rules for the industry.

Taxpayers and consumers ultimately pay the price through higher construction costs.

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