

Monday 20 March, 2017

## Statement from Australian Council of Trade Unions Secretary Sally McManus

Workplace safety is always at the forefront of Union's work, as it should be for all employers - such as construction company Grocon.

Grocon does not have the best record for workplace safety, with the most high profile recent example being the March 2013 collapse of a wall on a Swanston Street construction site in Melbourne which led to the death of three innocent passers-by.

This incident followed the death of a construction worker on a nearby Grocon site the previous month.

Following the Swanston Street incident, Grocon pleaded guilty in the Magistrates Court to a single breach of the workplace safety law, was convicted, and ordered to pay a fine of \$250,000 - less than a quarter of the maximum available penalty.

This compares with the almost \$4 million in fines levied on the CFMEU over a similar timeframe for protesting Grocon's record and taking action to stand up for worker safety on construction sites.

While it was not accurate to say "Grocon was fined \$300,000 for killing five workers," it is accurate to point out that the huge discrepancy in fines paid by the company and the CFMEU is a glaring example of the inherent unfairness in our industrial relations laws.

ENDS

**Media contact: ACTU Media 03 9664 7315**

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