

Tuesday 24 July, 2018

## South32 locks out safety staff on eve of anniversary of Appin disaster

Mining company South32 has locked out workers responsible for monitoring gas levels and ensuring mine safety, a day before the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Appin mine disaster which killed 14 people.

The mine safety supervisors at Appin were locked out because they had stood up to management's attempt to force them to work for an extra 4 hours, with no extra pay.

South32 are forcing these workers to choose between going back to work and keeping other workers safe, and fighting for their own pay and conditions. No worker should be put in this position.

The union representing the safety supervisors, the Collieries Staff and Officials Association, has written to the NSW Department of Planning Resources Regulator to raise serious concerns about the safety of workers at Appin.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

"Management are using worker's safety as a bargaining chip, and forcing supervisors to choose between proper pay, and making sure their workmates are safe. This is abhorrent behaviour from an employer which clearly thinks it is above the law, and above common human decency.

"To lock out safety supervisor on a mine is reckless and shows that employers have been given too much power. Negotiations over pay should never make anyone unsafe at work.

"South32 is gambling with the lives of workers. We stand with the Collieries Staff and Officials Association – these workers want to go back to work, but we will never accept workers being told to work for free.

"This is what happens when bosses get too much power. They start thinking of workers as numbers on a page, and not people who deserve respect. We need to give power back to working people so they can be safe at work and get the pay rises they need."

**ENDS**

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