

Wednesday 16 January 2019

BHP, BlueScope end 100 years of secure shipping jobs

Corporate giants BHP and BlueScope have announced the end of a century of Australian-crewed iron shipping. 80 Australian seafarers on two vessels that carried iron ore from Port Headland in Western Australia to Port Kembla on the New South Wales south coast who are in the companies' supply chain have been sacked.

The sacked Australian workers will be replaced by exploited international crews paid as little as \$2 per hour.

The multi-national miners have destroyed an industry which provided secure fair-paying local jobs, while the Morrison Government has looked on and done nothing.

The conditions likely to be faced by the crews who replace them are appalling and have no place in Australia.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"For 100 years, iron shipping in Australia has provided good, secure local jobs for Australian workers – BHP's decision to end this long tradition seems to be motivated by greed.

"Good, steady jobs will be replaced by work on flag-of-convenience ships where pay can be as low as \$2 per hour and workers' rights are virtually non-existent.

"The Morrison Government's refusal to act on flag-of-convenience shipping means that BHP is getting away with destroying local jobs.

"The overseas workers who will be crewing BHP ships in future are likely to be exploited, underpaid and at risk of serious injury or death. This is the world of work that the Abbott/Turnbull/Morrison Government has created.

"We have written to BHP and BlueScope today calling on them to urgently meet with the ACTU and affected unions and immediately reverse this decision."

ENDS

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