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Renewable energy sector can create tens of thousands of secure jobs

Despite employing 27,000 people and being one of the fastest growing sectors in the economy, Australia's renewables sector has so far created too many insecure jobs, and action needs to be taken to ensure that its potential as a source of secure employment is realised.

The ACTU has released a new report, "Sharing the Benefits with Workers: A decent jobs agenda for the renewable energy industry", which outlines the rapid changes occurring within Australia's energy market and the need for national planning for the creation of secure employment.

Many jobs in the renewables sector to date have been short-term, insecure, and poorly paid, compared to equivalent jobs in carbon-intensive energy production.

The report details an agenda created by Australian unions which, if implemented, will improve the quality and security of jobs in the renewables sector and shift Australia towards a low carbon future – benefiting Australian workers and their families, as well as the environment.

Australian unions are committed to working in partnership with the renewable energy sector to ensure a successful energy transition that creates and sustains good quality and secure employment for Australians.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil,

"The renewables sector is expected to create as many as 45,000 jobs by 2035. Without proper policy to protect workers that's a huge number of workers whose employment will be insecure.

"The growth of the renewables sector presents potential for secure, local employment that the Morrison Government has failed to capitalise on.

"The sector is a massive opportunity for secure job growth, at a time when we urgently need more secure jobs.

"Unfortunately, successive governments and too many employers have chosen exploited and underpaid international labour over Australian workers.

"Workers have fought to make jobs in mining and energy safe and secure with fair pay and conditions. The way forward must be a just transition which ensures that when workers are employed in the renewable energy sector, these rights also apply.

"The Federal Government has a huge role to play here –using investment to create jobs and setting policy which provide certainty will be essential to ensuring secure jobs into the future.

"We shouldn't have to choose between good jobs and a safe climate. We can, and must, achieve both, and we're willing to work with the industry, governments and renewable energy investors and purchasers to ensure that renewable energy jobs are good jobs."

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