

Thursday 3 November, 2016

Statement on closure of Hazelwood Power Station

Statement from Ged Kearney, President, ACTU:

The news today that the Hazelwood Power Station is to close will hit communities in the Latrobe Valley hard. The union movement stands with these communities in this difficult time and is determined that workers in the Latrobe valley will not be forced to go through an extremely difficult process with no plan in place to secure their future employment and the future viability of their communities.

The ACTU has created a detailed blueprint for government action to help workers in industries that are changing and closing. This report is being launched next week. We call on state and federal governments to fully embrace its recommendations. This is a sector wide, cross-state jurisdictional challenge that can only be met with a national response.

The plan calls for strong action from the Turnbull Government to adopt a coordinated strategy to ensure that these workers have a secure future, and that any future closures or disruptions will not be met with the same uncertainty that the workers at Hazelwood have been forced to endure. To date we have seen little or no action from the Federal Government with respect to job creation.

It is not too late for the workers at Hazelwood but if government does not act soon the viability of communities in the Latrobe Valley that have relied on these industries as sources of employment for generations will be at risk.

No one can deny that many Australian industries are changing. In recent months thousands of workers have lost their jobs through closures in car manufacturing, the power industry and potentially more are to come in the steel industry. The challenge is therefore to government to ensure that these changes do not mean disadvantage for workers, their communities and their families.

ENDS

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