

Thursday, 6 December 2012

Unions support Government moves to secure Australia's manufacturing future

ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver said today that the Federal Government's response to the Manufacturing Taskforce showed it understood manufacturing is a major job creator and a key part of Australia's future economy.

"Manufacturing employs almost one million Australians and is an essential part of our economy, now and into the future," Mr Oliver said.

"This investment in manufacturing will help ensure that we are able to compete internationally and provide good, secure jobs for manufacturing workers."

"We cannot and should not compete with the rest of the world on low wages, we need to do so on innovation and the quality of what we produce."

"To do this we need to encourage innovation and productivity improvements in manufacturing and get all parts of the industry working together."

The Gillard Government today announced more measures to support Australian manufacturing in addition to the anti-dumping measures announced earlier this week

A high-level group of business, union and research leaders, the Manufacturing Leaders Group, chaired by Boeing Australia and South Pacific President, Ian Thomas, will help Australian manufacturing seize the opportunities of the Asian Century. Mr Oliver will serve on the committee as deputy chair.

"This committee will continue the good work done by the Manufacturing Taskforce in helping set a long-term agenda for manufacturing," Mr Oliver said.

"We need to have employers, workers, researchers and government working together to ensure that Australia continues to have a high-value manufacturing sector, that can take advantage of growing markets in Asia.

The Taskforce saw business, unions, researchers and Government working together to set out a strategy for the future of Australian manufacturing. The Government wants to see this collaborative and strategic approach continue.

The Manufacturing Leaders Group will provide strategic advice to the Government; build better links between industry, the research sector and government; and promote improved capabilities to build more competitive firms and workplaces.

It will also assist the Government to implement its response to the Taskforce's recommendations.

The Leaders Group will focus on major productivity challenges such as building high-performance workplaces and engage with other parts of the economy such as capital markets and the mining, resources, construction and research sectors.

Media Contact: Ben Ruse 0409 510 879