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Govt leadership vacuum as 100 workers sacked by midnight email

With yesterday's jobs figures showing that for the first time there are more than 800,000 unemployed Australians, Prime Minister Tony Abbott cannot sit back as job losses mount.

Australian Unions call on Mr Abbott to condemn the callous and unjustified midnight sackings of nearly 100 workers by Hutchinson Ports Australia.

This is the time for Mr Abbott to come out strongly against this corporate misbehaviour and show the Australian public that he will back workers and their jobs.

Waking up to find your employer has sacked you via email or text in the dead of night is no way to conduct a business and it's no way to treat a loyal and committed workforce.

The MUA utterly rejects the suggestion that the company is reducing its Australian operations due to a lack of competitiveness but is instead pursuing a strategy to introduce further automation without any discussion or consultation.

The Union is seeking a fair and objective process where all labour data and modelling are put on the table to determine the true nature and scope of the problem.

There is currently a picket of more than 100 workers at Gate B150 Sirius Rd, Port Botany (access via Foreshore Rd).

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver:

"Yesterday's alarming unemployment figures should have Tony Abbott looking for every way he can to support Australian jobs."

"There are more than 800,000 unemployed Australians looking for work – Mr Abbott cannot sit back as that number keeps climbing."

"Unions call on Mr Abbott to stand up for Australian workers and call out this disgraceful behaviour by Hutchinson Ports."

"The Abbott Government needs to take action to stimulate the economy and reverse the devastating impact its austerity approach has had on economic growth, confidence and unemployment."

Media contact: Carla De Campo, 0410 579 575