

Time's Up Pay Up! – Unions in BHP Same Job Same Pay fight

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Australian Unions are taking on mining giant BHP in a fight over Same Job Same Pay rises for more than 1,600 labour hire mineworkers.

Hearings into BHP's challenge to Same Job Same Pay at its Queensland coal mines get underway in the Fair Work Commission in Brisbane today.

ACTU Secretary, Sally McManus, Mining and Energy Union General Secretary, Grahame Kelly and Queensland Council of Unions General Secretary, Jacqueline King are at the hearing to support the case.

The application covers more than 1,600 BHP labour hire workers in three Queensland Bowen Basin mines and were made under the Same Job Same Pay laws, brought in by the Albanese Government to stop companies using labour hire as a loophole to undercut wages in established enterprise agreements.

The Mining and Energy Union will argue that BHP labour hire mine workers do the exact same jobs as BHP's direct employees but are paid far less under the labour hire system.

BHP Labour hire workers are in line for annual pay rises of between \$10,000 and \$40,000 to match the pay of permanent employees if the Fair Work Commission makes orders to regulate labour hire arrangements.

The Same Job Same Pay laws have delivered essential pay rises for other mineworkers, flight attendants and warehouse employees. Workers in these sectors are at today's hearing to defend the laws.

Shadow Finance Minister, Senator Jane Hume has confirmed the Coalition does not support Same Pay Same Job laws and that will result in cuts to wages if the Coalition returns to office and scraps them.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary, Sally McManus:

"BHP made an annual profit in the last financial year of \$20.2 billion dollars.

"The only barrier to BHP paying workers fairly is the corporation's own greed.

"Whether it's Qantas or BHP, Australian unions are determined to stamp out exploitative labour hire practices; it is not okay to use loopholes to pay workers less by outsourcing labour.

"The big miners call these laws reckless and call on their best mate, Peter Dutton to tear them up if he wins the election.

"What is at stake here, is powerful national mining interests wanting to protect their \$253 billion in annual profits, at the expense of workers everywhere.

"These laws are getting wages moving for all workers and we will defend them."

Quotes attributable to MEU General Secretary, Grahame Kelly:

"We've seen major players like Qantas accept that the labour hire rort is no longer lawful or in line with community expectations.

“It’s very disappointing to see our biggest, wealthiest mining company BHP fighting tooth and nail to continue using labour hire to suppress wages. But we are committed to continuing the fight to deliver wage justice for labour hire mineworkers.

“Wealthy mining companies have clawed money out of workers’ pay packets over many years and it should be returned to regional families and communities.”

Quotes attributable to Queensland Council of Unions General Secretary, Jacqueline King:

“BHP’s challenge to Same Job Same Pay laws is an un-Australian act which flies in the face of a key initiative aimed at delivering real wage rises for regional communities and families.

“Our message to BHP today is – time’s up, pay up.”

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