

What can I do?

- Fill out a petition
- Show the film 'Constructing Fear' to your friends or at your workplace. 'Constructing Fear' is a documentary made by independent film maker Joh Loh and is free to download at www.constructingfear.com.au or is available from Community Solidarity.
- Join the community contact list you can receive emails, phone calls or SMS' about actions organised by the Community Solidarity.
- Put up a motion of support in your union, workplace or political party meetings.
- Lobby your local MP. Call, write or make an appointment to explain your concerns about the ABCC and its undemocratic powers.
- Attend rallies and protests called by unions and other groups that want to see the abolition of the powers of the ABCC.

COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY

Community Solidarity works with unions and community groups in order to scrap all of "Work choices" and to restore civil rights to construction workers by abolishing the powers of the Australian Building and Construction Commission.

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WE ARE NOT TERRORISTS



IS THIS FAIR?

- No one called for interrogation has the right to silence.
- Refusal to attend may result in 6 months imprisonment.
- The interrogations are secret.
- You may not be able to choose your own lawyer.
- And you can talk to no one, except an approved lawyer, about what happened to you – not even your parents even if you are under 18.

These are some of the laws that Australian workers face every day. These laws are aimed at construction workers however they apply to any one deemed to be part of the construction industry, this can include transport workers, cooks, cleaners, administration and even to people unrelated to the industry that the officers of the Australian Building and Construction Commission deem to be of interest.

These laws break international labour conventions. They are leaving ordinary workers and their families – who have done nothing wrong – living in fear.

RESTORE CIVIL RIGHTS TO ALL WORKERS

www.unionsolidarity.org



What is the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC)?

The Australian Building and Construction Commission was established by the Howard Government immediately after the Cole Royal Commission in 2005. Despite no one being charged with any criminal offence after the Cole Royal Commission its findings remained secret. The police force was originally known as the Building Industry Police Task Force. It has retained many of the powers of the Royal Commission without the public accountability. The inspectors of the ABCC were given wide ranging powers including the ability to interrogate people without trial and force people to not have the lawyer of their choice. These powers are similar to the powers given to police to investigate terrorism.

How have the powers been used?

Over fifty workers have been interrogated by this agency with their right to silence and other basic civil rights suspended. This includes the interrogation of a Melbourne University Academic who 'witnessed' a conversation between a union organiser and an employer while walking through the Melbourne CBD. Also minors can be interrogated with out parents present. Under the ABCC powers a minor can be imprisoned for six months for telling their parents what happened during an ABCC interrogation. This was made clear to a frightened seventeen year old during his ABCC interrogation.

What is current Rudd Labor government policy?

The current Rudd Labor government has decided to keep the ABCC until 2010 funding it to the tune of \$60 million dollars. Current government policy states that in 2010 all government agencies in relation to working conditions will be rolled into the new 'Fair Work Australia' agency. They have not however stated publicly that the powers of the ABCC will be abolished.

What should happen?

Unions and community groups have asked:

1. that the findings of the Cole Royal Commission be made public.
2. for the full restoration of full civil liberties be re-established for workers in the building construction industry.
3. that the \$60 million dollars that is funding this agency be used for more urgent purposes such as the appointment of more Workcover inspectors in order to stop the increasing deaths in the construction industry.



"I was scared I was going to jail. I wasn't able to speak to anyone outside the courtroom, wasn't able to use the phone. It was pretty daunting"

***Brodene Wardley,
Elected Safety Representative***

Brodene Wardley is a single mum with three kids, living over 150kms from Melbourne. Brodene learned how to drive a crane to provide a better life for her and her kids. She took on the role of health and safety representative at work to make sure every one went home at night in one piece.

She was approached in her role as an Occupational Health and Safety Representative after ten workers were involved in a potentially fatal near miss. Five months after this incident without the support of Brodene's employer the ABCC interviewed her for over two and a half hours without the right to have her lawyer speak or give her advise during the interview. She was not allowed to refuse to answer questions and could be jailed for six months if she discusses what she asked by the ABCC. In spite of this she spoke out and continues to fight for a safe working environment and her rights at work.