

MEMBER UPDATE



24 November 2020

MESSAGE FROM GENERAL PRESIDENT TONY MAHER

Today, a meeting of our Central Council has made some important decisions regarding the future direction of our Division within the Construction Forestry Maritime Mining and Energy Union (CFMMEU).

Resolutions were passed with unanimous support, which:

- Offer our support and appreciation to outgoing National Secretary Michael O'Connor and condemn the actions of those who undermined his leadership; and
- Direct the Mining and Energy Division to withdraw our involvement in CFMMEU forums and activities and operate as an autonomous Union in the interests of our Members.

You can read the full resolutions below.

As a result of these decisions, I have today tendered my resignation as National President of the CFMMEU. I remain fully committed to my role as General President of the Mining and Energy Division.

Our General Secretary Grahame Kelly has also resigned his position as National Vice President of the CFMMEU. Our representatives will not participate in the CFMMEU National Executive for the foreseeable future.

My view, shared by our Central Council, is that there is no benefit in continuing in a national leadership role in circumstances where our biggest division has decided to simply use its numbers to bully and steamroll smaller divisions.

I have been part of the national leadership team since amalgamation in 1993.

I have worked alongside leaders like Michael O'Connor, who is the best National Secretary we've ever had, to build a strong and cohesive national Union to represent our combined membership. We have withstood enormous challenges and achieved great things together.

But the current state of the Union does not reflect the spirit of solidarity, consensus and shared vision that has been cultivated over the past decade. Rather, the CFMMEU has become impossibly divided and dysfunctional with no repair in sight.

The Mining and Energy Division has a proud history. We have been representing Mining and Energy Workers for over a century and we will continue to represent Mining and Energy workers well into the future.

I am confident we will navigate a path through the current difficult circumstances that puts the interests of you, our Mining and Energy Members, front and centre.

In the meantime, please be assured that it is business as usual for your National and District Officials and Staff – we are all here to support you.

Regards

Tony Maher
General President



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Resolution #1– Crisis in the CFMMEU

Central Council **RESOLVED** to:

- a) **NOTE** with **DISAPPOINTMENT** the resignation of Michael O'Connor as the National Secretary of the CFMMEU on Thursday 5 November 2020.
- b) **NOTE** our **DISDAIN** for those parts of our Union who have blatantly attacked the smaller Branches and torn down Michael's leadership; this is not the CFMMEU we signed up for and as a result we **SUPPORT** the **DECISION** of the General President and General Secretary to **RESIGN** from their positions of National President and National Vice President respectively of the CFMMEU.
- c) **NOTE** that since the Union was formed in 1993, the Mining and Energy Division has worked alongside the leaders of the other Divisions to build a strong and cohesive National Union that represented the Union's combined membership. Together, the Union has withstood enormous challenges and achieved great things. However, the current state of the CFMMEU does not reflect the spirit of solidarity, consensus and shared vision that has been cultivated over the past decade. Rather, the CFMMEU has become impossibly divided and dysfunctional with no repair in sight.
- d) **ADVISE** all Mining and Energy Delegates and Representatives that we are **DISCONTINUING OUR PARTICIPATION IN CFMMEU FORUMS**, unless specifically authorised by a resolution of the Central Executive or Central Council, as we navigate a path forward that puts the interests of our Mining and Energy Members front and centre.
- e) **ADVISE** all Members that the Mining and Energy Division will operate as an autonomous and independent Federal Union within the CFMMEU, until such time as our Quadrennial National Convention in March 2021 can determine our next steps.

Resolution #2 – Vote of Thanks to Michael O'Connor

Central Council **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** a **VOTE OF THANKS** to Michael O'Connor for his invaluable contribution during his time as the National Secretary of our Union, **OFFER HIM** and **HIS DIVISION** our ongoing and full support and **WISH HIM** great success as he concentrates on leading the Manufacturing Division.

Michael O'Connor has been the best National Secretary of the CFMMEU since its formation in 1993. Under his leadership, the Divisions have worked as a coherent and impactful National Union for the first time.

Michael has always taken a transparent and consultative approach to running the National Office, including the finances of the Union and had built the CFMMEU into a campaigning force that could make a real difference on issues that matter to our Members.

In his role as National Secretary, Michael has represented our Union tirelessly – within the broader trade union movement, in his capacity as a super fund director and in state and federal parliaments, where he has made sure our Members' issues are front and centre in the minds of parliamentarians. Michael has been a great supporter and strong advocate for mining and energy workers. We appreciate his attendance and participation in many events held by our Division.

We understand and respect Michael's decision to step down as National Secretary and concentrate on leading the Manufacturing Division. Nevertheless, his departure is an enormous loss for our Union.