

ALCOA RESOLUTION

The International Transport Workers Federation, International Trade Union Council and the Australian Council of Trade Unions calls on affiliates of IndustriALL to recognise the following:

Background

- Australia currently has 'Cabotage' laws, which dictate that ships trading through domestic ports are to be Australian flagged and crewed as an essential domestic transport industry.
- Australian seafarers have been shipping alumina for smelting by Alcoa around Australia's coast for over half a century.
- The MV Portland has been engaged by Alcoa to ship alumina between WA and Portland in Victoria for the last 27 years.
- The MV Portland is due to dry dock for repairs and maintenance. Alcoa does not wish to pay the capital costs associated with this and intends to replace the ship with a foreign flagged and crewed vessel. The ship is due to be sailed to Singapore.
- Alcoa has been granted a temporary license from the Australian Government to allow them to replace the MV Portland with a foreign-flagged ship or 'Flag of Convenience' vessel. The intent of the scheme is to allow for international ships to perform small amounts of domestic shipping. ALCOA will be replacing an entire domestic route with a foreign ship.
- The new ship will be crewed by non-Australian residents being paid as little as \$2-an-hour. Furthermore that ship is exempt from all Australian taxation, workplace regulation and security requirements applicable to the MV Portland and its crew.
- For the past three weeks, the 19 crew onboard the MV Portland have not sailed the ship to Singapore because they were informed they would be forced to make way for a replacement 'Flag of Convenience' vessel.
- The Australian Parliament recently voting against the conservative government's Shipping Legislation Amendment Bill, which would have allowed foreign ships paying third world wages unfettered access to Australian domestic trade. Despite this, ALCOA has been granted a temporary license under the present system.
- The crew and the MUA were subject to Federal Court proceedings that have ultimately determined that the crew on board are in breach of Australia's Fair Work Act. As of 8 December 2015 both parties and are now subject to a Federal Court Injunction.

- The crew has refused to sail the vessel due to imminent Health and Safety concerns and are now potentially subject to contempt orders.
- Alcoa have already started to operate a replacement ship. This ship has already proven to be controversial, with the ship management embroiled in corruption controversy after documents showed those in control of the vessel had paid bribes in at least 3 countries to government officials.
- The ship is being used by Alcoa to attack and undermine the rights of Australian workers. Alcoa is also engaging in the exploitation of foreign workers on unacceptably low wages and conditions.
- This behaviour has been condemned by the ACTU and all affiliates.

Resolution:

This resolution calls on ALCOA to:

- recognise the great damage Alcoa are inflicting on Australian workers and the Australian domestic shipping industry via an extraordinary attack on their long standing and loyal Australian workforce.
- acknowledge the reputational damage it is inflicting on itself as a corporation that has operated in Australia with the goodwill of the Australian people for over 50 years.
- recognise that Australian seafarers on Australian ships have always carried this cargo for Alcoa in the Australian domestic shipping trade and should continue to do so in the future.
- adopt the recent direction of the Australian Parliament in voting down attacks on Australia's shipping industry and act to immediately secure the jobs of its Australian workers rather than destroy a key national industry.
- urgently meet with the ITF, IndustriALL and Australian Council of Trade Unions with in order to:
 1. Establish whether the recent actions of Alcoa in respect to the MV Portland represents a new international labour policy of the company in general and;
 2. resolve this dispute in favour of preserving Australian jobs by returning to the company's long standing practice of using Australian ships and seafarers to move Australian produced goods across the domestic coastline.