

Offshore Alliance unions to pursue \$100,000 plus in back pay for Filipino workers

The AWU- MUA Offshore Alliance will continue to pursue a back pay claim for more than \$100,000 for Filipino workers employed on Maersk's oil rig off Western Australia.

"While we wait for the Fair Work Ombudsman's decision we will continue to try and unravel the mystery of who actually is responsible for bringing in these workers on the dodgy 456 Visa," Stephen Price, AWU Western Australia Branch Secretary said today.

"There is a complex mess of several different company names and sub-contracts here – all useful cover for plausible deniability.

"We are insisting that these Filipino workers all get their proper back pay – every last cent."

Mr Price said the Filipino workers have all decided to fly home after talking with the Ombudsman and with the Immigration Department.

"I sensed that some of them were quite concerned for the safety of families back in the Phillipines," Stephen Price said.

"Unfortunately it does mean that the Australian Federal Police will find it now almost impossible to garner any evidence to prove, or disprove, allegations made that a crime may have been committed – and money may have gone missing.

"We believe the AFP's human trafficking unit should have had the opportunity to speak to these workers and fully investigate what has happened," Mr Price said.

"The AFP have told the AWU about previous cases involving trafficked foreign workers where they have been unable to act to shutdown gangmasters because people have fled to the safety of their home villages."

The AWU-MUA Offshore Alliance will ask the International Transport Workers Federation to meet with the Danish global shipping and oil giant Maersk to discuss outstanding issues.

Last month Maersk posted record profits of \$5 billion after tax in 2010..

For further comment – Stephen Price 08 9221 1686 or 0417 006 101

Andrew Casey

National Communications Coordinator

The Australian Workers' Union

Level 10, 377 - 383 Sussex Street, Sydney, NSW 2000

p.02 8005 3333 | f.02 8005 3300 | m.0417 054 194

andrew.casey@nat.awu.net.au | www.awu.net.au

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