



REVIEW INTO FABRICATED STRUCTURAL STEEL SAFEGUARDS

**AMWU SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION IN
RESPONSE TO THE INTERIM REPORT**

The AMWU

Representing 60,000 members nationwide, the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU) stands as the primary voice for workers across the engineering, fabrication, and metals manufacturing sectors.

Our vision is centred on a vibrant, resilient, and sovereign local manufacturing industry - one that builds Australia's future using Australian-made steel, aluminium, and critical minerals. Rather than exporting raw materials offshore only to buy back high-value finished goods, Australia must process and fabricate its rich natural resources right here at home.

By embedding locally produced inputs into major infrastructure projects, defence procurement, and clean energy technology, we can secure highly skilled, well-paid jobs, strengthen regional economies, and ensure our industrial base is powered by Australian hands, Australian resources, and Australian capability.

The AMWU submits that interim report into the fabricated structural steel safeguards should be binned.

Further the AMWU submits that the Productivity Commission be immediately abolished and all the investigative and safeguard powers transferred to the Anti-Dumping Commission.

The destructive and disposable Productivity Commission interim report

The Productivity Commission's findings in its interim report on fabricated steel safeguards - which concludes that no emergency safeguard measures are warranted - reveal the dangerous real-world impact of an out-of-touch, regressive institution. By dismissing the impact of growing foreign import volumes as mere market "adjustments" rather than an existential threat to sovereign capability, the Commission relies on economic dogmas that fail local industry.

The catastrophic real-world consequence of this hands-off economic philosophy is being played out in real time with the permanent closure of the Whyalla blast furnace, shedding over 500 direct, well paid and unionised jobs, devastating regional workers, and placing Australia's sovereign industrial foundation on life support. To treat domestic manufacturing as disposable in an era of heightened geopolitical instability and fragile global supply

chains proves that the Productivity Commission operates as a destructive, backwards-looking body - one whose ivory-tower economic models fail workers, destroy local communities, and actively undermine Australia's future.

The interim report should be binned immediately.

Stopping the waste of workers' taxes

Immediately abolishing the Productivity Commission is a win for the federal budget and a win for the workers whose taxes fund it. Year after year, over A\$41 million of public money is poured into this taxpayer-funded comprador class to produce hundreds of pages of bosses' propaganda. Working people are sick of watching millions of dollars get wasted on a permanent bureaucracy of spreadsheet-worshipping academics, while our industries, frontline services, public schools, and hospitals are starved of funding.

Shutting it down plugs a massive fiscal drain and frees up vital cash to be spent where it belongs: on policy and institutions that support our domestic industries and public services that keep this country moving.

Ending the delay to policy action for public good.

In an era where working-class communities are losing faith in an out-of-touch political class, the Productivity Commission serves as nothing more than a convenient shield for dogmatic and outdated political ideology. When workers demand urgent relief from the cost-of-living crisis, kicking the can down the road by ordering year-long 'independent inquiries' is policy failure.

This exhausting, elite-driven process is designed to wear workers down and delay real action. Eliminating this technocratic bottleneck forces elected politicians to take direct responsibility for their decisions, putting an end to the endless talk fests and clearing the deck for fast, decisive legislative action that delivers immediate relief on the ground.

Dismantling a neoliberal weapon used to attack worker rights and fair pay.

For nearly three decades, the Productivity Commission has acted as the ideological defence for big business, weaponising economic jargon to justify the exploitation of the working class. Under the guise of "efficiency," this body has systematically treated our hard-won penalty rates, job security, and safety standards as roadblocks to corporate profit.



Its reports have provided political cover to suppress wages, casualise and contract out workforces, and allow the wealthy to hoard the rewards of our labour and our nation.

By dismantling this teetering fortress of free-market bias, we remove a major institutional obstacle to economic justice, clearing the path to rewrite the rules in favour of strong union rights, fair pay, and a society that values workers over wealth.