

PRESS RELEASE – MARCH 2007

BSCAA – The Responsible Contract Cleaners' Representative across Australia

The *Building Services Contractors' Association of Australia Inc* (BSCAA) is Australia's peak industry representative body for the building services industry. Our Association members include contractors for cleaning, security, facilities management and grounds maintenance.

The BSCAA provides leadership for members and the provision of a range of relevant and quality services. We seek to work with Government and other industry stakeholders to improve the professionalism of the industry and all those that participate within it.

It is the vision of the BSCAA to strengthen our status as the peak representative body for building service contractors, working in partnership with all the stakeholders to provide a cohesive environment to enable member companies to be secure, profitable and good corporate citizens.

Since the inception of WorkChoices (March 2006) there has been widespread allegations levelled against cleaning contractors, targeting CBD buildings nationally, which has created uncertainty amongst workers in our industry.

The BSCAA has been vigilant in keeping its members informed and up to date with all legislative changes and wage related matters in order to maintain the continuing integrity and professionalism of the contract cleaning organisations which it represents.

In conjunction with the introduction of the Workchoices Legislation, the Liquor Hospitality & Miscellaneous Union (LHMU) has run the "Clean Start – Fair Deal for Cleaners" campaign, targeting cleaning companies nationally in an attempt to get them to sign what is known as the "Responsible Contractors Policy (RCP)".

A majority of the principles put forward in the "Clean Start" campaign, are in accordance with the BSCAA Code of Conduct, and therefore agreeable by the industry body. The sticking point for the BSCAA in this campaign is the LHMU's attempt at manipulating the RCP to grant them greater powers than those afforded to them under the new Legislation.

When the main focus' of the RCP are upon the "Freedom of Association" and "Collective Bargaining" portions of the document, then one must question the LHMU's motives for undertaking such a strategic, vocal and somewhat expensive campaign. The BSCAA does not endorse the RCP in its current form as it believes certain elements of this document are inappropriate and that **BSCAA members are Responsible Contractors**.

Major contracting cleaning companies have been targeted in all Capital cities throughout Australia, and most of the activities conducted by the union in this campaign could cause irreparable damage to a relationship that is essential in a people based industry. Unfounded allegations levelled against prominent cleaning companies in front of major client buildings, illustrate the lengths that the LHMU will go to, to have the RCP signed.

Historically, the cleaning industry in Australia has been dominated by part time employees. A majority of the industry employees work to supplement their household income, or find that the hours of work do not inhibit other facets of their lives. Employees are paid in accordance with Award governed rates, rates which have been endorsed through Award and Agreement negotiations by the LHMU and the cleaning industry.

Chief Executive Officer of the BSCAA, Rick MacKenzie said, "BSCAA is a national non-profit employer organisation whose purpose is to foster and encourage the growth and development of the contract cleaning industry and to promote and protect the interest of its members."

Mr MacKenzie believes that at this time during the WorkChoices and Clean Start campaign, it was particularly poignant for the BSCAA to reiterate its "Industry Code of Practice" which is an integral part of the daily operations of our member businesses.

Important extracts from the "BSCAA Industry Code of Practice" are outlined below:

"The Building Services Contractors Association of Australia Inc (BSCAA) members commit to working with clients, employees and the community to building an industry where:

- Clients receive and pay for quality property services,
- Responsible organisations bid and win work based upon ethical contracting principles and reasonable returns
- Employees have access to secure employment with fair pay for reasonable work rates and safe working conditions".

"BSCAA members understand that their employees are their most valuable asset and our members:

- Engage employees on terms and conditions that are very consistent with both legal requirements and minimum industry and regulatory standards and are supported by the BSCAA; and
- Provide employees with appropriate training to enhance workplace skills improve workplace safety and improve the quality of service delivery."

"Our members are provided with ongoing industrial relations advice regarding wage rates, agreement making and auditing, so that they can ensure that their staff and their clients are getting the best deal," Mr Mackenzie said.

Mr MacKenzie also outlined the BSCAA strategy moving forward within the WorkChoices Legislation by stating that the Association has forged partnerships with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Office of the Employment Advocate and the Office of Workplace Services and will also continue to maintain dialogue with the LHMU.

"BSCAA is committed to lifting the professional standards of the cleaning industry across Australia and we look forward to the continued growth and development of the industry as we engage partnerships with Governments and clients to ensure safety, fair pay and conditions, and client satisfaction remain paramount," he said.

The BSCAA endorses its "Industry Code of Practice" as it already sets the industry standards for its members.

The BSCAA further endorses the Property Council of Australia's (PCA) Principle for Fair Contracting.