



The Hon Chris Hartcher

Minister for Resources and Energy

Special Minister of State

Minister for the Central Coast

MEDIA RELEASE

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FEDERAL LABOR MUST SHOW THE SAME CONCERN FOR HUNTER SMELTER EMPLOYEES

“We are obviously extremely concerned about the future of the smelter and the 600 workers whose futures, their jobs, depend upon the viability of the smelter, plus their families plus other businesses and the jobs that are associated with the smelter indirectly in Geelong.”

Greg Combet, Australian Financial Review 25 June 2012

The NSW Government is calling upon Federal Labor to save the 344 jobs at the Kurri Kurri smelter and the 100 jobs lost earlier this year at the Tomago smelter following reports the Prime Minister is set to announce a \$42 million package to keep open Alcoa’s Point Henry aluminium plant in Victoria.

Minister for Resources and Energy, Chris Hartcher said the Federal Government must offer the same package to the Hunter-based smelters with Federal Industry Minister, Greg Combet expressing ‘extreme’ concern for the jobs of the Geelong-based smelter employees.

“Greg Combet is citing the same cost pressures for the Point Henry smelter as he did for the Kurri Kurri and Tomago smelters, agreeing that the aluminium industry is under significant pressure due to the high value of the Australian dollar and low aluminium prices,” Mr Hartcher said.

“Why hasn’t the same offer been made to Kurri Kurri and Tomago? Why are jobs located in the Hunter of lesser value than those in Geelong?”

“Following Norsk Hydro’s announcement that it would be closing its Kurri Kurri smelter, Mr Combet said his Government would continue working to ensure the best outcome for workers at Kurri Kurri and their families.

“The best outcome would be keeping the smelter operational and the workers’ jobs intact.

“Mr Combet didn’t even lift a finger to save the jobs of the Kurri Kurri or Tomago employees within his own and neighbouring federal Labor electorates and yet he is scrambling to secure the jobs of those in the Victorian electorate of Corangamite - Labor’s most marginal seat.

“The NSW Government is imploring the Federal Government to come back to the table with an offer that will secure the future of the Kurri Kurri smelter and its 334 employees and the 100 Tomago employees, their families and local businesses associated with the smelters in the Hunter.”