

Common Cause.

May 2026

CHECKIES: A 150-YEAR LEGACY

We have launched a landmark report looking at worker safety representation in mining as we celebrate 150 years since worker-elected Check Inspectors first entered the industry. In 1876, the Coal Mines Regulation Act gave coal miners in NSW the right to elect two of their workmates as safety inspectors – leading to today's Site Safety and Health Representatives and Industry Safety and Health Representatives. We are campaigning to extend this proven model beyond NSW and Queensland coal.

Fine out more: meu.org.au/checkies



\$5M WIN GIVES HOPE FOR BELL BAY

MEU members at Liberty Bell Bay are relieved at the announcement of a further \$5 million in federal and state government support for wages as discussions continue between administrators and potential buyers over the future of the Tasmanian manganese smelter. Tasmanian District President Ricky Gale and LBB delegate Brent Ashman joined a delegation to Canberra earlier this month to make the case for continued support for workers.



Find out more: meu.org.au

PIKE RIVER ACTIVISTS SPEAK OUT ON SAFETY

The MEU recently hosted special screenings of the new Pike River film around Australia alongside Pike River family members, commemorating the 29 miners killed in the 2010 disaster and the long fight for justice and accountability that followed.

Now officially released in cinemas, the film is a powerful reminder of the importance of strong mine safety laws and workers having the power to speak up about unsafe conditions. Pike River family members Anna Osborne and Sonya and Daniel Rockhouse attend the screenings and shared their experiences, including by speaking at May Day in Mackay.



DRILLERS FIGHT FOR FAIR PAY AT DENDROBIUM

MEU members working for Cougar Drilling at GM3's Dendrobium underground mine in the Illawarra are continuing their fight for fair pay and conditions as bargaining continues for a new EA. Despite performing some of the most dangerous and highly skilled work in the coal industry, Cougar's drillers at Dendrobium are being paid less than directly employed mineworkers on site. Members are standing together to close the gap and secure the wages and conditions their work deserves!

'YESTERDAY STORIES' ILLUMINATE MINING HISTORY

Mineworkers and community members gathered in Broken Hill earlier this month to launch Yesterday Stories historical videos, which tell location-based stories about the history of the mining industry and unions in the area. We are working with Yesterday Stories to release 100 historical videos linked to trails where people can watch the stories at the location. You can also watch the videos on our website – which will be updated over time.

Watch stories about strikes, shenanigans, tragedies and triumphs spanning over a century.

[Watch the videos here.](#)



CHINA COAL MINE DISASTER SHOCK



We join the global mining community in expressing our shock and extending our condolences to loved ones of more than 80 miners killed in the recent coal mine explosion in China's Shanxi province. We pay tribute to the workers who lost their lives and the first responders; and stand in solidarity with mining communities affected by the disaster. We are concerned about reports of safety breaches at the mine and recommit ourselves to lifting safety standards in the mining industry globally.

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