

MEDIA RELEASE

14 November 2002

NATIONAL POLICY LAUNCH ***MODERN WORKPLACE: MODERN FUTURE* – A BLUEPRINT FOR** **THE AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACE RELATIONS SYSTEM 2002-2010**

A Joint Media Statement By David Gray, President, and Peter Hendy, Chief Executive
Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Australia's peak national business association, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has today launched a policy Blueprint for workplace relations reform in Australia.

Modern Workplace: Modern Future is an historic initiative by Australia's employers and employer associations advocating labour market outcomes to further the national interest and well-being of all Australians.

It calls for a fresh and open-minded debate about labour market reform in Australia.

It identifies the fact that the much needed path to workplace reform commenced in the early and mid 1990s under a Labor and then a Coalition federal government. In the national interest, it calls for a renewed bipartisan commitment to the key principles that underpinned this reform effort.

It sets out the beneficial outcomes that have accompanied workplace reform over the past decade.

But it highlights just how complex and regulated the system remains.

It calls for a whole of government approach by policy makers, federal and state, to containing the total costs and burdens of employment regulation.

The Blueprint advocates and invites all stakeholders to share employers' national vision for Australia's workplace relations system:

“A workplace relations system that empowers employers and employees across the nation to work co-operatively and make decisions in their shared interests that lead to more jobs, higher living standards and a better future.”



The Blueprint rejects the notion of adversarial or ideological conflict between employer and employee interests. It advocates a system that gives full recognition to the shared interests of employers and employees.

The *Modern Workplace: Modern Future* Blueprint focuses on changing attitudes, as much as law; on managing change as much as making it; on job creation as much as employment rights.

The Blueprint addresses each major facet of the complex Australian workplace relations system – ranging from the nature of employment relationships, to the future role of federal and state governments, tribunals, standard setting, wages policy and work and family.

The Blueprint also audits the current system, analyses policy approaches and makes recommendations for change in the short, medium and longer term.

Importantly, it challenges not just governments and politicians but also employers, managers, executives, unions and employees to accept responsibility for better workplace outcomes.

In developing this Blueprint ACCI has garnered the support of business and employer associations across Australia, which represent over 350,000 employers of all sizes in all regions and in all industries.

What makes this Blueprint unique is that it is employers speaking out about employment in the modern workplace, and developing an integrated long-term vision for a world competitive workplace relations system.

This is not a plan by governments, academics or consultants. It is the vision of private employers and their business organisations – people involved every day in making and managing job opportunities and employment relationships.

ACCI is widely circulating the Blueprint throughout the Australian community, and internationally.

Employer associations will be communicating the key messages of the Blueprint into Australian workplaces, within their industry sectors and to local policy makers.

The blueprint will be supported by further specific initiatives, publications and activities by ACCI and member organisations over the coming months and years.

A summary brochure of the *Modern Workplace: Modern Future* Blueprint is attached.

A full copy of the Blueprint and accompanying material can be accessed on the ACCI website, www.acci.asn.au.

For further information:

David Gray, ACCI President	02 6273 2311
Peter Hendy, Chief Executive	0419 422 650
Peter Anderson, Director – Workplace Policy	0417 264 862