



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 5 December 2006

AMENDMENTS TO WORKCHOICES WELCOMED

Statement by Mr Peter Hendy, Chief Executive

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, has welcomed amendments made last night to the WorkChoices legislation that fix a handful of legal problems or unintended consequences that emerged during the first eight months of WorkChoices, as both employers and employees brought their employment practices into line with the new laws.

Although WorkChoices is a matter on which members of parliament hold different views, industry is pleased that during this parliamentary debate most members recognised that problems with legislation need to be fixed as and when they emerge, especially if unintended consequences arise.

These amendments, coupled with the High Court's decision of 14 November, will contribute to a smooth and effective implementation of WorkChoices and add certainty to the application of the new laws.

Uncertainties about the rate of payments for annual leave, personal leave and compassionate leave have been fixed, a temporary stand-down rule in the case of business operations being brought to a halt has been restored and rules governing employee requests for cashing out personal leave are now fairer. A number of other changes have also been made.

Industry is also awaiting new regulations proposed by the government which will prevent extra red tape when it comes to keeping records of working hours.

WorkChoices, which commenced in March, is a large and vitally important change to Australia's industrial relations laws. With increased employment and growth in collective and individual bargaining, it's showing early signs of working. But being a large change to workplace law and practice, its implementation needs ongoing review.

Employer bodies will continue to play an important role in bringing these implementation issues to the attention of the government and the parliament.

For further information:

Peter Hendy	Chief Executive	02 6273 2311 / 0419 422 650
Peter Anderson	Director, Workplace Policy	03 9668 9950 / 0417 264 862
Brett Hogan	Director of Communications	03 9668 9950 / 0407 273 884

MR 131/06

www.acci.asn.au

LEADING AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS