



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 6 October 2009

NEW EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS TAKE LEAVE MANAGEMENT OUT OF THE 'TOO HARD BASKET'

Statement by Mr Peter Anderson, Chief Executive

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, says forthcoming new National Employment Standards (NES) can be used to help take leave management out of the too hard basket.

While workplace laws and some awards have previously recognised an employer's right to direct employees who accrue excessive annual leave entitlements to take some paid leave, it will now also clearly be recognised the nation's minimum employment standards.

As a result, the new NES, which take effect from 1 January 2010 will provide employers with a framework for driving co-operative new leave management approaches such as the *No Leave, No Life* program that target the colossal national stockpile of annual leave and its toxic impact on the wellbeing of business and employees.

While 123 million days of stockpiled leave worth \$33.3 billion is enough of a burden for business, new leave management approaches will also allow employers to access significant productivity gains and reduce the ancillary costs of leave stockpiling.

It has been recently reported that Australian employees take more sick days than their counterparts in other western economies. It doesn't take Sherlock Holmes or even Dr Watson to deduce that employees who take their annual leave are far less likely to take a 'sickie' due to fatigue or illness.

But effective leave management requires planning ahead and prudent employers should now be auditing their employees' annual leave practices in order to comply with the NES and especially its provisions around the issues of work and family.

Together, the cooperative approach of *No Leave, No Life* and the impetus provided by the new NES should provide a catalyst for an increasing number of employers to co-operatively implement the program in response to the chronic leave stockpiling that many of these audits are highlighting.

While reducing leave stockpiling is a win/win for employees and employers ACCI believes *No Leave, No Life* will also provide a boost for the domestic tourism industry which employs 480,000 people and is the life blood of many Australian communities.

Just as many of us will know people who stockpile unhealthy amounts of their annual leave entitlement, many will also be connected with someone employed in the tourism industry and we should remember them when we plan our next holiday.

More information is available on the No Leave No Life website at www.noleavenolife.com.

ACCI represents over 350,000 businesses in every State and Territory and all industries. Our network employs around 4 million employees, ranging from the top 100 companies to tens of thousands of small and medium businesses.

www.acci.asn.au

MR 128/09

LEADING AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS

ACCI

ACCI is Australia's peak business organisation. With a national network comprising 37 state and territory chambers of commerce and industry association it is the largest and representative voice for the prosperity of Australia's private sector.

Leave Stockpiling Information

- 123 million days stockpiled nationally.
- \$33.3 billion value to national leave stockpile.
- 73% of national leave stockpilers are likely to be managers and earn more than \$70K per annum.
- 71% of leave stockpilers nationally are likely to be male.
- 73% of leave stockpilers consider work/life balance to be important to their lives.
- 70% of leave stockpilers consider taking leave to be a good way to achieve work/life balance.

For further information:

Peter Anderson	Chief Executive	02 6273 2311 / 0417 264 862
David Gregory	Director of Workplace Policy	03 9668 9950 / 0417 052 390
Ben Carter	<i>No Leave No Life</i> Adviser	03 8662 5333 / 0403 457 631
Brett Hogan	Director of Communications	03 9668 9950 / 0407 273 884