



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

MEDIA RELEASE

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TAKING THE NO LEAVE, NO LIFE CAMPAIGN TO THE TOP

Statement by Peter Anderson, Chief Executive

Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) has written to Australia's top 100 Chief Executives Officers (CEOs), calling for the implementation of Tourism Australia's *No Leave, No Life* program across corporate Australia.

"The failure to take annual leave on a regular and planned basis is an entrenched blight on Australia's workplace culture, which is especially prevalent among executives, managers and professionals and which undermines the health of individuals and the bottom line of Australian business."

As Australia's peak employer group, ACCI is serious in its commitment to promote harmonious and productive workplaces. Accordingly, we have partnered with Tourism Australia to promote the benefits of *No Leave, No Life*.

"The statistics reflect the starkness of the challenge - an estimated \$33.3 billion or 123 million days of leave stockpiled and not taken by employees. These stats also show the problem is worse among senior employees with over a third of private sector leave stockpilers holding management positions."

"That's why ACCI is calling for those at the top of the corporate ladder to step up to the challenge and show leadership by auditing annual leave stockpiling in their businesses, ensuring that they and their executive team set good personal examples, and driving appropriate changes to workplace culture where it is needed."

Corporate Australia's response to the challenge of leave stockpiling should not be shaped only by the current economic climate.

"In good times and bad, staff and CEOs themselves will find a hundred and one reasons to defer taking leave. Best practice will see good managers working with employees to develop 'leave friendly' policies and programs such as *No Leave, No Life* which encourage and support them to overcome these reservations."

No Leave, No Life is also a positive opportunity for prudent employers preparing to comply with new legislative obligations contained in new National Employment Standards which commence on 1 January 2010. ACCI has highlighted to CEOs the potential benefits of reducing stockpiled leave in their business - including a healthier balance sheet and more cohesive and productive workplaces.

ACCI is also drawing business leaders' attention to the boost that taking leave in a planned way can give to the domestic tourism industry. A seven percent increase in Tasmania's visitor numbers in the June quarter of this year highlights the positive impact which can result from taking leave in Australia.

"Reducing the stockpile can have flow-on beneficial effects for the economy, and act as a stimulus measure in its own way."

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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.

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