



# TRANSCRIPT

## **ACCI CHIEF EXECUTIVE PETER ANDERSON ON ABC CANBERRA'S "ROSS SOLLY" PROGRAM - NO LEAVE NO LIFE - 6 OCTOBER 2009**

### **Holiday Hoarding Managers Urged to Take Leave Australian Workers have Stockpiled 123 Million Days of Leave.**

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Australia's leading business body says companies need to force some managers and executives to take annual leave.

It is estimated Australian workers have stockpiled 123 million days of leave worth more than \$33 billion.

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive Peter Anderson says 73 per cent of workers who stockpile leave are managers, executives or professionals earning more than \$70,000 annually.

"When you are in a position to exercise a bit more control over your working arrangements, you tend to get into an environment where you think that you're almost indispensable and there ends up being 101 reasons why you're not taking the four weeks annual leave that is provided for you every year," he said.

"We tend not to see this problem anywhere near as significant when it comes to the ordinary wage and salary earners who are more organised and used to taking their leave in an orderly way.

"It's really that level of people that are not governed by awards - that managerial area where there is some greater discretion in the hours they work or the way they go about their work - where the problem exists."

Mr Anderson says companies should take advantage of the Federal Government's new National Employment Standards which take effect next year.

"There needs to be some circuit breaker in that cultural problem - particularly with managers, professionals, executives," he said.

"The new laws make it very clear that in respect to all employment categories ... an employer has the capacity to direct the taking of leave where the direction is reasonable.

"It's a good opportunity to also look at what rights and responsibilities there are in respect to the annual leave stockpile problem."

Mr Anderson says stockpiling leave can have a very big impact on a company's bottom line.

"People right up the top of businesses see the stockpiling problem both from a HR [human resources] issue and also from the bottom line on the balance of the company books," he said.

“A very large stockpile is not good for the individual who is not taking leave but it’s also not good for the company because you’re paying out the leave at the rate of pay the person is on when they go on leave, not the rate of pay they were on when they accrued the stockpile.”

Mr Anderson says deliberately stockpiling annual leave is a misuse of the entitlement.

He says staff who refuse to take leave because of concerns about their job security are not providing a valid excuse.

“Annual leave is provided for a genuine business and welfare reason and that is so a person can refresh themselves,” he said.

“There is no evidence at all that you’re more likely to be dismissed if you’re on annual leave than you are at work - that’s a complete furphy.”