



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## WELCOME FORWARD STEPS ON NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR OHS AND IR LAWS

Statement by Mr Peter Anderson, Chief Executive

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, has welcomed decisions today by federal, State and Territory governments to move closer to a single national industrial relations (IR) system (from 2010) and nationally harmonised health and safety regulation (from 2012).

The Workplace Relations Ministers Council has approved model harmonised OHS legislation. It also received formal referrals of IR powers from New South Wales and Queensland, completing referrals from all ALP States and Territories.

Commenting on these developments, ACCI Chief Executive Peter Anderson said:

“Although there are disagreements between the business community and governments on some aspects of workplace laws, we are currently seeing cooperative federalism take sizeable steps towards completing national frameworks for IR and OHS regulation that were commenced earlier this decade. This is a considerable achievement given our political and constitutional history.”

“Ministers are to be congratulated for keeping an eye on the national interest, and overcoming jurisdictional barriers that complicate legal compliance for employers, especially for companies that operate across State borders.”

“As much as today's steps represent good progress, governments need to make sure that both IR and OHS laws do not place unreasonable compliance burdens on business, including the majority of employers that still operate only in one jurisdiction.”

“National legal frameworks mean a greater diversity of businesses have to be catered for under the one system. This being the case, intergovernmental agreements that underpin these laws need to provide for workplace flexibility, not just rights and obligations.”

For further information:

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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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