



BUDGET 2009-2010 INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$569,000 to support national OH&S framework

Following an agreement with the Commonwealth Government last year, the ACT Labor Government is continuing its commitment to national OH&S reform, with an investment of \$569,000 over four years to support harmonisation of OH&S legislation and the establishment of Safe Work Australia.

Safe Work Australia is the replacement body for the Australian Safety and Compensation Council, and is responsible for driving national policy development on OHS and workers' compensation matters, in cooperation with the states and territories.

"This funding will support the work of Safe Work Australia which seeks to achieve significant and continual reductions in the incidence of death, injury and disease in the workplace," Minister for Industrial Relations, John Hargreaves said.

On 3 July 2008, the Council of Australian Governments signed an Intergovernmental Agreement to the implementation of uniform legislation, complemented by consistent compliance and enforcement. The Commonwealth has now established Safe Work Australia and the Safe Work Australia Council, which is being jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the states and territories.

"The ACT Government supports national uniformity of the OH&S legislative framework and a consistent approach to policy.

"In addition, Safe Work Australia will help co-ordinate and drive improvements in national workers' compensation arrangements.

"With research showing that over 140 000 Australians are seriously injured at work every year and more than 250 die as a result of work-related injuries, workplace safety reform is very high on the agenda for the ACT Government.

"Safer workplaces benefit everyone in the community - business owners, their workers, and the families of those workers, and it is incumbent on all of us to consistently strive to make all workplaces in the ACT safer.

“As a leader in workplace safety initiatives, the ACT Government will implement the *Work Safety Act 2008* later this year and will work cooperatively with the new Safe Work Australia Council to harmonise this and other OH&S legislation within a national model,” Mr Hargreaves said.

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Media Contact: Kim Fischer 6205 0300(w) 0434 020 498(m)