



# ACT Government

## 2002-2003 BUDGET

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### **BUDGET PROVIDES FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

The 2002-03 ACT Budget funds initiatives to improve occupational health and safety and private sector workers' compensation, Industrial Relations Minister Simon Corbell said.

\$2.581 million is being provided over four years for implementing amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workers Compensation Act.

"The ACT Government is committed to a safe and healthy workplace environment - to maintaining and improving occupational injury prevention programs by ensuring the comprehensive enforcement and administration of occupational health and safety legislation," Mr Corbell said.

"\$1.24 million will be provided over four years to implement an Infringement Notice Scheme, allowing occupational health and safety inspectors to impose on the spot fines for particular breaches of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

"The scheme is an important enforcement strategy, and has proved successful in other states in improving safety and reducing deaths and injuries.

"A major task in implementing the infringement notice scheme will be rewriting 22 codes of practice to provide clearer direction on complying with the Act."

The Minister said \$1.341 million is being provided, with \$438,000 in the first year, for implementing changes to the Workers Compensation Act 1951.

"The amendments to the Workers Compensation Act make fundamental improvements to the operation of the private sector workers' compensation scheme. They shift the focus of the legislation from entitlements to injury management and rehabilitation."

The legislation comes into effect on 1 July 2002, and will:

- increase the number of workers and employers covered by the legislation;
- introduce compulsory requirements for employers, employees and insurers to develop rehabilitation plans;
- introduce a new benefits structure; and
- introduce a regulatory framework for providers, including insurers, rehabilitation specialists, medical practitioners, legal practitioners and insurance brokers.

Media Release



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The budget funding will be used for an ongoing education campaign, for additional staff to undertake regulation and for external audits of insurers and brokers to ensure they meet compliance requirements.

**Statement ends 25 June 2002**