



Public Accounts & Estimates Committee

Minister for Industrial Relations

20 June 2006

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS VICTORIA

OUTPUT GROUP

Innovative and High Performance Workplaces

Covers all industrial relations functions including :

- Private Sector and Public Sector policy units;
- information administration and compliance relating to long service leave, outworkers and child employment; and
- strategic advice on IR issues including delivery of infrastructure projects.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2005-06

Implemented new legislation to ensure fairer workplaces.

Major public sector agreements reached and delivered within wages policy.

Work & Family Test Case provisions incorporated into public sector awards.

Provided strategic advice and assistance in relation to the delivery of the Commonwealth Games.

Created Office of the Workplace Rights Advocate.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2005-06

Provided 23 grants under the *Partners at Work* and *Better Work and Family Balance* Programs.

Completed inquiry into pay equity.

Implemented new Child Employment Industry Code.

Implemented new legislation on broader entitlements for outworkers.

Created new industry councils following passage of Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors legislation.

Implemented improved long service leave legislation.

Promoted Better Work and Family initiatives.

WORKPLACE RIGHTS ADVOCATE

Workplace Rights Advocate Act commenced 1 March 2006.

WRA is an independent statutory office.

Tony Lawrence appointed as Advocate on 25 May 2006.

WRA has a number of functions and responsibilities set out in the Act.

WRA budget for 2006-07 is \$2.4m.

WRA currently investigating a number of complaints about IR practices.

KEY INITIATIVES 2006-07

Advocacy of better IR frameworks – develop appropriate response to changes in federal industrial relations laws.

Pay equity – develop strategies for addressing pay equity based on Pay Equity Report.

Improve protection for outworkers – implement new legislative protections.

Preparation for negotiation of major agreements in 2007 – including teachers and nurses.

Advice and assistance to departments and agencies on revised IR Policy statements – these set out the Government's policy on employment within the public sector.

KEY INITIATIVES 2006-07

Long service leave – provide advice to employers and employees on reforms to LSL Act.

Child employment – focus on streamlining administrative processes for permits.

Owner-driver legislation – establish and support new industry councils..

High Performance Workplaces – develop strategies to encourage cooperative and productive workplace cultures.

IN SUMMARY- PRIORITIES & CHALLENGES 2006-07

Advocate better industrial relations frameworks in Victoria.

Work to protect current federal award minimum conditions.

Provide information to employers and employees through the Office of the Workplace Rights Advocate.

Promote innovative workplace practices.

Promote cooperative public sector industrial relations.