

Friday 4 May 2007

Fair and Astute Changes to WorkChoices

Statement by Heather Ridout
Chief Executive Australian Industry Group

“The changes to agreement-making announced by the Federal Government today are fair and astute measures that will allay the view within the community that more protection is needed to prevent unfairness.” Ai Group Chief Executive, Heather Ridout said today.

“We support the changes. Most Ai Group member companies will be unaffected because their agreements already easily meet the new fairness test. “

“No doubt there will be a cost to some businesses in some industries but importantly the fundamental architecture of WorkChoices is not affected. Agreement-making will continue to be a relatively simple and flexible process that will not impose an excessive compliance burden on companies”, Mrs Ridout said.

“The changes are broadly consistent with the position advocated by Ai Group during the development of the WorkChoices package whereby we proposed that workplace agreements (other than for higher paid employees) should be compared against award penalty rates and other key conditions to assess fairness.”

“Ai Group is a strong supporter of WorkChoices and the flexibility which it offers to both employers and employees in contemporary Australian workplaces. This flexibility has been preserved under the changes announced”, Mrs Ridout said.

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