

**Joint Media Release**

**The Hon Tony Abbott**

Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations Leader of the House

**Senator the Hon Ian Campbell**

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer Manager of Government Business in the Senate

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**Productivity Commission Inquiry Into National Workers' Compensation & Occupational Health & Safety Arrangements**

The Productivity Commission will begin inquiring into possible frameworks for establishing nationally consistent arrangements for workers' compensation and occupational health and safety (OHS).

The Productivity Commission has been asked to identify frameworks that would achieve consistency across the State and Territory based workers' compensation and OHS schemes in a number of core areas, including regulations, benefits to injured workers, entitlement to compensation, premiums, insurance and obligations on employers and employees.

The Commission is also expected to consider alternative options to the current systems in place in Australia that will address the changing nature of the workforce and deliver better outcomes for businesses of different sizes, employees and the general community.

'This inquiry offers the opportunity for a comprehensive review of the existing workers' compensation and OHS arrangements,' Mr Abbott said.

'The current diverse State based arrangements impact on workplace safety, add cost to business and importantly do not treat injured workers and their families consistently.'

Senator Campbell said the Federal Government was committed to reform of workers' compensation and OHS arrangements and the Productivity Commission inquiry was the first step in this process.

'If Australia is to improve its competitiveness we need to reduce the cost to business in these areas and put in place arrangements that are consistent', he said.

Dr Gary Johns has been appointed Associate Commissioner to assist the inquiry.

'The inquiry will benefit from of Dr Johns' extensive experience in public administration, including ministerial responsibility for national workers' compensation and OHS under the previous Federal Government,' Senator Campbell said.

The Productivity Commission will soon release an issues paper and call for submissions from interested parties.

Terms of reference for the inquiry, set after consultations with State and Territory governments, are attached.

A copy of the terms of reference and further information about the inquiry can be obtained from the Productivity Commission's website at [www.pc.gov.au](http://www.pc.gov.au) or by applying directly to the Commission on (02) 6240 3239.

For media inquiries, contact

**Simone Holzapfel in Tony Abbotts Office 0417 656 668**

**Wayne Grant in Senator Campbells office 0407 845 280**