



Media release

The Hon Gordon Rich-Phillips MLC

Assistant Treasurer
Minister for Technology
Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry

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Victoria calls for delay to national Occupational Health and Safety harmonisation

The Victorian Coalition Government has called on the Commonwealth to defer for 12 months the implementation of national occupational health and safety (OHS) harmonisation.

Assistant Treasurer Gordon Rich-Phillips said the Commonwealth had not provided the information needed to assess fully the impacts of the national laws on Victoria, and details of the package were still not finalised, despite the proposed 1 January 2012 commencement date.

“The Victorian Government supports the principle of OHS harmonisation, however we need to be able to assess the benefits and costs to Victoria, to ensure that the proposed package is in Victoria’s interests,” Mr Rich-Phillips said.

“As the Commonwealth has not provided that information, the Victorian Government has started work on a supplementary independent Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) to assess the impact of the proposed laws on Victoria. Victoria will not be in a position to proceed until a Victorian-specific RIS has been undertaken and evaluated. This is expected to take several months.

“Delays have occurred in the Commonwealth finalising key parts of the package. The model regulations were released three months behind the agreed schedule and are still not finalised; the final National Regulatory Impact Statement was released four months behind schedule, and does not quantify the impacts on Victoria as promised; and the draft Codes of Practice have only just been released this week, and will be open for public comment until mid-December.

“A 12 month delay will allow these issues to be addressed, and provide businesses with a greater opportunity to prepare for transition.

“The Victorian Government recognises the importance to businesses of adequate transition timeframes and is committed to ensuring Victorian businesses are given just that,” Mr Rich-Phillips said.

Mr Rich-Phillips noted that Western Australia has now also called for the implementation date to be delayed.

Media: Paul Price 0400 507 023

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