

MEDIA RELEASE

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PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION FALLS SHORT ON WORKPLACE REFORM

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THE PRODUCTIVITY Commission (PC) has failed employers, employees and the Australian community by giving our unnecessarily complicated workplace relations system a free pass and not properly considering how it should be fundamentally reformed for the future.

While recommending some useful changes to elements of our current employment laws, today's 1229 page PC report fails to deliver a proper plan for how our workplace relations system can best support jobs, productivity and competitiveness in Australia's 21st Century economy.

The PC fails to address how uncoordinated, excessive regulation is harming our competitiveness as a place to do business, invest and create jobs. Australia is the only country in the world to overlay awards, agreements, minimum standards and regulation of day-to-day relations between employers and employees. Unions are also artificially placed at the centre of our workplace laws when just 11% of private sector employees join them.

Australia's business community recommended a raft of positive ideas to the PC to genuinely reform our workplace relations system and expected the PC to deliver options for meaningful change. Anything less risks failing not only existing employers and employees, but young people whose future livelihoods hinge on this generation's will to properly address serious national challenges.

The PC's 21 pages of recommendations do contain some positive ideas that will improve our workplace relations laws and that will be supported by employers.

However, the PC needed to do more than blithely conclude our overall system is not in need of fundamental repair. It is very disappointing the PC appears to have made only piecemeal, uncoordinated recommendations across a limited subset of areas, rather than thinking about how our workplace relations system could be improved.

AMMA and its members welcome the Minister for Employment, Senator Michaelia Cash, opening a period for further input to government on how the PC's report and recommendations should be progressed. We will use planned roundtable discussions to further advocate the national benefits of more meaningful reform, as well as engage with the PC's specific recommendations.

AMMA will encourage the Turnbull Government to put jobs, investment, productivity, growth and our future living standards at the centre of how it proceeds following the PC report, and we welcome the Minister's prioritisation of these concerns as she released the report today.

Genuine workplace reform can deliver real benefits for Australia. For instance, [independent research](#) showed that key workplace reforms advocated by AMMA could support resource sector productivity growth of up to 5% and investment growth of 8%, add \$30.9 billion to Australia's GDP and create 36,000 additional jobs.

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