



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Citizenship
Minister for Regulatory Reform

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BOOST FOR WORKERS COMPENSATION COMMISSION

The NSW Government is set to increase the number of full-time arbitrators and Deputy Presidents appointed to the Workers Compensation Commission in a move that will boost the effectiveness of arbitration processes for workers and employers across the State.

NSW Attorney General, John Hatzistergos today said the Government has introduced legislation that will allow the restructuring of the Commission following an independent review by management consultants Bendelta recommending the appointment of full-time arbitrators.

“The Commission’s non-adversarial processes are at the leading edge of dispute resolution in Australia and in the last five years it has finalised on average 13 300 matters each year.”

“It is imperative that resources are adequately allocated so the Commission can continue to provide a fair and cost effective resolution service to injured workers and employers when it comes to workers compensation claims,” he said.

Mr Hatzistergos said that as part of the restructure, legislation will enable:

- Up to 22 full-time Arbitrators to be appointed to the Commission for a 5 year term;
- Two new positions of Senior Arbitrator to take responsibility for mentoring, training, and appraising the performance of other Arbitrators;
- Removing restrictions on the number of Deputy Presidents that can serve on the commission; and
- The appointment of two more Deputy Presidents to assist with hearing appeals against the decision of Arbitrators.

“Until now, contracted Arbitrators were chosen from a pool of 50 Arbitrators and were employed on a case-per-case basis to resolve disputes between workers and employees,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“As part of these reforms, full-time Arbitrators will be based in Sydney and will undertake approximately 85 per cent of the Commission’s work.

“This will provide for better quality service provision and a greater consistency in arbitral practices as there will be a smaller number of individuals dealing with a greater number of cases.”

Contracted Arbitrators will continue to hear cases in rural and regional areas.

Mr Hatzistergos said these changes will be evaluated after 12 months to determine whether additional full-time arbitrators or further resources are required.

Media Contact: Maria Iannotti 0419 507 123