



Increases to workers compensation death benefits – backdated to 2007

July 25, 2008

Premier Morris Iemma today met with the CFMEU Workplace Tragedy Family Support Group to reaffirm his commitment to increase workers' compensation death benefits.

"The package of benefit improvements the Government will bring to the Parliament in the next session will be another significant advance for workers and their families," Mr Iemma said.

"The Government will legislate to increase death benefits, broaden the circumstances in which the benefit is paid and increase the lump sum paid to workers who sustain a permanent injury.

"These are practical improvements to help families.

"Improvements to the WorkCover scheme's financial position have allowed the Government to reduce premium rates to employers by 30 per cent, saving NSW businesses \$785 million per year," Mr Iemma added.

The benefit reform package will include:

- increasing the lump sum paid if a worker dies from a work related incident to \$425,000 (from \$337,700);
- broadening the circumstances in which the lump sum death benefit is available, by making it payable to the worker's estate (currently the lump sum is only paid if the worker had financial dependants); and
- ensuring that weekly payments for the dependant children of deceased workers are not reduced on the grounds of their having been partially financially dependant.

The improved death benefits will be paid to the families of workers who died as a result of their employment on or after 24 October 2007 and will provide greater financial certainty for these bereaved families.

"This is an outstanding package for NSW workers and delivers on my commitment to help families," Mr Iemma said.

"The WorkCover scheme's turnaround is testament to the Government's reforms to workers compensation, which provide greater support for injured workers and make it easier for employers to do business in NSW," Mr Iemma said.