

1998-99

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE  
AMENDMENT BILL 1999**

SUPPLEMENTARY EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Amendments to be moved on behalf of the Government

(Circulated by authority of the Minister for Employment, Workplace Relations  
and Small Business, the Honourable Peter Reith MP)

ISBN 064242857-3



9 780642 428578

29489 Cat. No. 99 2922 7 ISBN 0642 428573

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**OUTLINE**

These amendments would provide for additional steps to be taken by an employer prior to the development of a workplace program. The amendments would also require compliance for three reporting years before an employer would be eligible for the waiver of reporting requirements.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The amendments proposed to the Bill are not expected to have any significant impact on Commonwealth expenditure.

## **NOTES ON AMENDMENTS**

### **Amendment No. 1 – Schedule 1, item 1, page 5 (after line 26)**

This amendment formalises some of the requirements on employers in relation to the development of a workplace program. The amendment would add an additional subsection to the section of the Act that deals with the development of a workplace program (section 8).

The amendment would expressly require the employer to confer responsibility on a person within the organisation for the development and implementation of the program. The person within the organisation would have to have sufficient authority and status to properly develop a program and will also be responsible for the continuous review of the program.

The amendment would also make express the requirement for the employer to consult with employees (or their nominated representatives) of the employer, particularly employees who are women, before developing the workplace program.

### **Amendment No. 2 – Schedule 1, item 21, page 8 (line 20)**

This amendment would provide a limitation on the granting of waivers by the Agency. The Agency will still be able to issue a waiver on the application of the employer or of its own initiative but only if the employer has complied with the reporting requirements set out in sections 13, 13A and 13B for at least three consecutive reporting years.

The three consecutive reporting years may have accrued, in full or in part, before the commencement of these amendments. Three consecutive reporting years may also accrue from compliance occurring after the commencement of the section.