

media statement



Department to evaluate administration of clothing outworker code

The Office of Fair and Safe Work Queensland will conduct an evaluation of the clothing outworker code of practice, which has been in operation for more than nine months.

The evaluation, which will focus on the administrative aspects of the code, will involve key industry stakeholders such as unions, retailers, manufacturers and employer organisations.

Department of Justice and Attorney-General Associate Director-General Barry Leahy said the evaluation would incorporate feedback from the industry about implementing the code for the past nine months.

“The code was introduced to protect the rights of vulnerable and exploited workers in the clothing and textile industry,” Mr Leahy said.

“While our commitment to this goal is as strong as ever, we have also been listening to industry about practical matters relating to the code’s implementation.

“Through the evaluation process, we will work with businesses, unions and other stakeholders to ensure the code is practical and effective when applied.

“If there are ways to adjust the administrative aspects of the code without impacting on its aims and objectives, we are prepared to consider them.

“For example, some of the information required under the code can be captured in invoices and other business documents rather than the special forms that have been devised.

“It is important that affected businesses are aware of this.

“We will work through the issues with stakeholders to see if there are any ways to improve the code’s administration.

Mr Leahy said the code was modelled on similar laws in New South Wales and South Australia, which have been operating effectively with the support of business, unions and the general community, for several years.

“The Queensland code was developed and implemented after consultation with and advice from key industry stakeholders including unions and the Australian Retailers Association,” he said.

“Public submissions were called for during the consultation period, with advertisements placed in all major newspapers.

“All the organisations that responded during the public consultation phase were in favour of the code, including retailers.

“Everyone agrees that the protection of vulnerable workers is important. We are keen to find the most effective way to achieve this goal.”

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Mr Leahy said the evaluation would be conducted over the next months, with a report to be prepared for government when the evaluation was completed.

The Office of Fair and Safe Work Queensland is part of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

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