



## Compliance Essentials e-bulletin October 2010

### Paid Parental Leave

Paid Parental Leave comes into effect January 2011; as of January 2011, employees who give birth or adopt a child may be eligible for up to 18 weeks' paid maternity leave. The payments replace the 'baby bonus' and any entitlement in this respect is in addition to any amount of paid parental leave agreed between an employer and the respective employee. As of 1 July 2011 organisations will be responsible for providing parental leave pay to employees who meet the scheme's eligibility criteria; employers can register for the Paid Parental Leave Scheme at Centrelink's Online Services. Where paid parental leave is applicable it is stated that funding will be made to employers in advance of the payment date to the employee.

Further information for employers, including registration, is available on the Centrelink website, (follow the link) [Centrelink](#)

### Consumer Law

Be ready for the changes in January 2011! The existing *Trade Practices Act* is in the process of reform, bringing Australia together under one legislative instrument to be known as *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*. Reforms contained in the legislation will be effective 1 January 2011.

What is the application of the revised Australian Consumer Law?

- Supply of goods or services – the legislative contractual obligations will apply to all contracts for the supply of goods to end-users and to all contracts for services, in both instances not exceeding \$40,000 value, including business to business transactions
- Sales or grant of interests in land
- Supply of financial products or services

Businesses may need to review their contract terms; be aware of the legislative provisions for unfair contract terms, consumer guarantees, extended warranties. The provisions also cover unsolicited consumer agreements, lay-by agreements and the introduction of national product safety obligations. Penalties and enforcement agreements for breaches are also amended.

A summary of the legislative changes are available in pdf format from the Australian Consumer Law website [Australian Consumer Law](#)

### Sexual Harassment in the workplace

As a follow on from our September e-bulletin, it is reported in the media that a settlement has been reached in the David Jones matter. The financial recompense, however, is not perceived to be a salve for damage to reputations.

The overarching message for employers is to ensure that their workplace is free from discrimination and that employee complaints are dealt with equably and on a timely basis.

*The contents of this document are for information purposes only. It is not intended to be advice and you should not act specifically on the basis of this information alone. If expert assistance is required, professional advice should be obtained.*

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