

APPENDIX B.6 EMPLOYMENT

Summary

In 2015, the Employment portfolio reported 23 measures¹ with a total net regulatory saving of \$65.1 million per year.

The Employment portfolio continued to deliver on its strong commitment to the regulatory reform agenda in 2015, introducing a wide array of reforms. These ranged from implementing the government's employment service - jobactive – to better meet the needs of job seekers and employers to developing an online pay and conditions tool which allows Australians to quickly and easily check their pay and entitlements. Additionally, employees covered under the Comcare scheme now have access to a wider range of online forms and a simpler claim process. Self-insurers under the Comcare scheme have reduced administration costs as a result of longer licence periods and no longer have to undertake duplicated audits during the initial licence period. Both the Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency also continued to improve their reporting processes through streamlined data collection and the development of new online reporting mechanisms as well as enhancements to existing facilities.

¹ Measures counted here only include decisions with a regulatory impact. Measures with a zero regulatory impact have been excluded.

Regulatory measures reported since the 2015 Spring Repeal Day²

With an impact of greater than \$2 million

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| Employment/ Human Services | Removing duplication for job seekers ³ |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In July 2015, the Department of Human Services removed duplicate processes for job seekers who demonstrate they have met participation requirements.• Over 500,000 job seekers will no longer need to attend Personal Contact Interviews with Human Services, reducing the need to call the department or visit a service centre. Instead, job seekers will continue to report their participation activities online and periodically meet with employment service providers to meet participation requirements.• The Department of Human Services has estimated this change will lead to an annual saving of \$80.4 million in compliance costs which will be shared equally with the Department of Employment. |
| Employment | Introduction of jobactive |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On 1 July 2015, the government's employment service - jobactive – was introduced. Under jobactive, reporting requirements have been reduced and organisations delivering jobactive have greater flexibility to tailor their services to the needs of employers and job seekers. The new arrangements are already delivering improved services to unemployed Australians, better helping them to find employment.• The Department of Employment estimates that this will lead to an annual saving of \$39.6 million in compliance costs. This is in addition to savings of \$22.5 million announced in 2013 and 2014. |

² These measure descriptions relate to new decisions taken and reported between the Spring 2015 Repeal Day and 31 December 2015. Descriptions of regulatory increases or regulatory decreases generally capture those measures with a regulatory change in excess of \$2 million per annum.

³ The treatment of participation requirements was consistent with the Regulatory Burden Measurement (RBM) framework in effect at the point the decision was taken. Effective 30 September 2015, the Government amended guidance about the treatment of enforcement costs under the RBM. Further details on these changes, including the implications for assessing burden on job seekers, are outlined in the Regulatory Burden Measurement Framework Guidance Note (February 2016). See <https://ris.govspace.gov.au/files/2016/02/Regulatory-Burden-Measurement-framework-guidance-note.pdf>

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| Employment | Introducing an Online Pay and Conditions Tool |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May 2015 the Fair Work Ombudsman implemented the Pay and Conditions Tool. • The Pay and Conditions Tool is an online application that enables employers and employees, as well as members of the broader community, to check various employment related matters such as rates of pay, including penalties, overtime and leave entitlements. The Pay and Conditions Tool replaces the previous tool which was not accessible on mobile devices and incorporates a number of enhancements over the previous tool. • The Department of Employment (Fair Work Ombudsman) has estimated that this will lead to annual savings of \$2.8 million in compliance costs. | |
| Employment | Fair Work Act Amendment Bill 2014 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 27 February 2014, the Fair Work Amendment Bill 2014 amending the <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> (FW Act) was introduced in the House of Representatives. The Bill received Royal Assent on 26 November 2015. • To pass through Parliament, the negotiation period between the employer and the relevant union to reach an agreement on Greenfield negotiations was extended from three months to six months after which an employer can choose to apply for Fair Work Commission approval of the greenfields agreement. The intent of this change to the <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> is to ensure that greenfields agreements are negotiated subject to good faith bargaining requirements and negotiations do not delay or jeopardise investment in major projects. The Bill made additional changes to improve the Fair Work Laws, including not allowing applications for protected action ballot orders to be made unless bargaining for an enterprise agreement has commenced. • The Department of Employment has estimated that regulatory savings for the measure (previously agreed by OBPR to lead to an annual saving of \$70.1 million in compliance costs) have been reduced by \$39.2 million per annum. • The subsequent decision taken is recorded as an annual increase of \$39.2 million in compliance costs. | |

2015 regulatory measures, previously reported in conjunction with the Autumn and Spring Repeal Days

These measures below are reproductions of the 2015 Autumn and Spring Repeal Day overview descriptions and have not been amended.⁴

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| Employment | Improving workplace gender reporting (Autumn) |
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- On 25 February 2015, the Minister for Employment and the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women announced changes to workplace gender equality reporting requirements.
- The Australian Government is committed to increasing women's workforce participation and improving gender equality in the workforce. After extensive consultation on reporting requirements under the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*, the Government is streamlining the requirements to provide a sensible balance between the need for meaningful data and the burden placed on employers to report, and removing the most onerous of additional requirements.
- The Government will retain several elements of gender equality reporting that will preserve valuable data on gender equality in the workplace. The gender equality reporting framework will not change. Employers with 100 or more employees will still be required to report every year on gender equality indicators in their workplace. This includes providing detailed information on the gender composition of the workplace, remuneration of managers and non-managers, composition of governing boards, policies and objectives to promote equal remuneration between women and men, flexible work arrangements and sex-based harassment and discrimination.
- These reforms mean that employers will no longer be required to provide data that is considered to be onerous and less reliable. This includes information on the remuneration of CEOs or equivalent, or managers employed on a casual basis. In addition, employers will not be required to report on annualised components of total remuneration, the number of job applications received or interviews conducted and on extensions to parental leave.
- The OBPR has agreed that this measure will lead to an annual saving of \$6.9 million in compliance costs.

⁴ Measures reported in the Autumn 2015 Repeal Day overview reflected decisions taken (and reported) since the Spring 2014 Repeal Day (29 October 2014). In a number of cases, measures reported in the Autumn 2015 overview also represented decisions taken in 2014. The contribution of those measures to reducing red tape was captured in The Australian Government Annual Deregulation Report 2014.

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| Employment | Streamlining the Seasonal Worker Programme (Spring) |
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- On 18 June 2015 the Government announced changes to the Seasonal Worker Programme as part of its Northern Australia White paper “Our North, Our Future: A Vision for Developing Northern Australia”.
- Since 1 July 2015 new arrangements have been put in place to: remove the minimum stay requirement of fourteen weeks; simplify cost sharing arrangements by combining the employer’s contribution to each seasonal worker’s international and domestic airfare to a total of \$500; streamline application and reporting processes; and simplify the delivery of on-arrival and pre-return briefings.
- The OBPR has agreed that this will lead to an annual saving of \$2.0 million in compliance costs.

Further information

If you would like further information about the information provided here, please email Ms Jo Wood, Group Manager, Economic Strategy Group from the Department of Employment at jo.wood@employment.gov.au.