



Tue 05 Mar 2019

Implementation Taskforce Established to Introduce Workplace Fatalities Laws

The State Government has commenced work on workplace manslaughter laws and the establishment of an implementation taskforce.

As part of the implementation taskforce, the Government has established a Workplace Fatalities and Serious Incidents Reference Group. The new Implementation Taskforce will be led by former Minister for Industrial Relations Natalie Hutchins, and comprises members from unions, business and victims' families.

In a recent submission to the State Government's Attorney General, the Hon Jill Hennessy, it was stated that CCF supports any initiative that will help to create safer workplaces in Australia. Whilst the CCF understands the tragic and longstanding consequences of a work-related death, it does not consider that it is necessary or desirable for the changes proposed to be introduced.

CCF considers that there already exist appropriate offences and adequate deterrent sentences to encourage duty holders to discharge their legal duties to ensure a safe workplace. In its' submission, the CCF further stated that Victoria will be better served by prosecuting appropriate offences pursuant to the existing reckless endangerment offence under the OHS Act or through prosecuting common law manslaughter charges in appropriate circumstances, particularly if it is felt that duty holders need to be encouraged to discharge their legal duties through the imposition of deterrent sentences.

Victoria already has the highest maximum penalties for breaches of its OHS Act in the country and the Victorian courts already dispense stern penalties for serious breaches of the Act.

Any death at work is both lamentable and tragic. It is vital that the range of solutions considered by, and developed through the taskforce, result in practical and fair safety outcomes for all industries and our community.

The CCF is committed working collaboratively with industry, government and WorkSafe in this regard and do our utmost to support its members to ensure that the work they undertake is as safe as is reasonably practicable and that our workers are afforded the highest level of protection.

Click [HERE](#) to view a summary of CCF Position Paper.