



Commissioner for Children and Young People
Western Australia

All enquiries

Telephone: (08) 6213 2210
Email: leanne.pech@ccyp.wa.gov.au
Our reference: 11/8128

Paid Parental Leave Branch
Dad and Partner Pay Consultation
FaHCSIA
PO Box 7576
CANBERRA BUSINESS CENTRE, ACT, 2610

Dear Sir or Madam

Dad and Partner Pay Consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the *Paid Parental Leave: Dad and Partner Pay Policy Statement*.

Having previously made submissions to the Productivity Commission's *Inquiry into Paid Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave* and on the Productivity Commission's *Draft Inquiry Report Paid Parental Leave: Support for Parents with Newborn Children* I am pleased to see continued progress on implementation of the Paid Parental Leave scheme.

As indicated in a previous submission I welcome the Australian Government's recognition that early relationships and involvement with fathers¹ is in the child's long term interest and has benefits for their development and wellbeing and additionally the recognition that financial support is needed to ensure fathers have the capacity to take leave from the workforce.

I would like to make the following recommendations in regard to implementation of Dad and Partner Pay to ensure it achieves the objectives of:

- Reducing the pressures of caring and working on parents
- Increasing the involvement of fathers in the early months of a child's life.

Firstly, consideration is given to providing the Dad and Partner Pay in a more flexible manner, rather than as one instalment of two continuous weeks. More flexibility would allow the greatest capacity to achieve the aim of attachment between the father and

¹ Throughout this submission the term fathers is inclusive of fathers and partners

Caring for the future growing up today

child. For example, in some families this might be best achieved through the leave taken as one day a week over a longer period.

Secondly, financial support to fathers should be based on earnings prior to their leave. Given that Dad and Partner Pay is being provided at the rate of the National Minimum Wage by the Australian Government I recommend provisions in the final policy and implementation arrangement ensure employers retain existing employer-funded entitlements and support them to provide an additional amount up to the current earnings of the father. It is crucial to reduce the financial stress to a family while caring for a young child.

I welcome the opportunity to provide comment on the implementation of this important policy.

Yours sincerely



MICHELLE SCOTT
Commissioner for Children and Young People

7 October 2011