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The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Secretary

Inquiry into the Paid Parental Leave Scheme Bill 2010

Rio Tinto Australia has provided employees with paid maternity leave for nearly a decade. This was extended to both parents in 2006 when a total of eight weeks paid parental leave (and three days secondary carers leave) was provided to employees. In 2008, Rio Tinto increased the entitlement to 12 weeks (two months upon commencement and one month upon return) and one week secondary carers leave. This commitment has exceeded all prevailing state and federal government requirements.

Rio Tinto welcomes the Federal Government's Paid Parental Leave Scheme. Acknowledging the importance of this issue, the Group has recently extended its Policy and will now provide 4.5 months paid primary carers leave on full remuneration, as part of up to 24 months leave from work after having, or adopting, a child. This leave entitlement is complemented by a range of flexible employment options to support an employee upon their return to work.

Rio Tinto is committed to attracting, engaging and retaining a skilled and diverse workforce. We recognise the importance of family-friendly practices and flexible work programs to ensure our employees are supported by the business while they respond to the evolving demands of their personal lives. Rio Tinto believes the Government's proposed Paid Parental Leave Scheme will complement its commitment to this important area.

Rio Tinto is a leading international mining group with exploration, mining and processing activities spanning the globe. It supports diversity in the workplace as a fundamental principle of the way we work.

Yours sincerely

P M Davies
Chief Advisor Employee Relations