



29 June 2012

The Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and
Employment
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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Dear Committee Secretary

RE: INQUIRY INTO WORKPLACE BULLYING

The Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) is Victoria's leading and most influential employer group. An independent, non-government body, VECCI services 10,000 businesses each year.

Our membership base is diverse, with involvement from all levels and sectors of industry including:

- Manufacturing;
- Health and Community;
- Business Services;
- Hospitality;
- Construction;
- Transport;
- Retail; and
- Tourism.

VECCI is a member of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and industry (ACCI), which develops and advocates policies that are in the best interests of Australian business, the economy and the wider community. VECCI endorses the submission made by ACCI to the Committee.

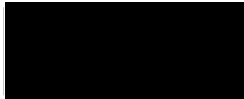
VECCI also has some additional comments. VECCI contends that bullying is not confined to the workplace and that any conversation about bullying ought to be comprehensive and extend to other areas such as cyber-bullying and bullying behaviour in schools. VECCI also submits that the Committee needs to ensure that what constitutes workplace bullying is identified and the community is educated about this. This would assist in scenarios where what could be capable of being characterised as legitimate and reasonable management action may be incorrectly regarded by an employee as being workplace bullying.

As to the terms of reference, workplace bullying is already comprehensively dealt with in Victorian legislation through a combination of OH&S and Crime Act provisions. The *Fair Work Act 2009* also includes provisions to respond to bullying-type behaviour.

VECCI otherwise notes that one of the terms of reference asks whether there is scope to improve co-ordination between regulators and supports analysis into this issue, particularly because business can be confronted by both OH&S and workplace relations regulators in relation to behaviour arising out of the same incident.

VECCI thanks the Committee for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely



Richard Clancy
Executive Director
Industry Policy and Workplace Relations Services