

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2005-2006 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING
2 and 3 NOVEMBER 2005**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Outcome 2: Higher productivity, higher pay workplace

Output Group 2.1: Workplace relations policy and analysis

Output 2.1.1: Workplace relations policy advice

Question Number: W616-06

Question:

Senator Marshall asked in writing “According to page 64 of *WorkChoices*: The Government’s workplace relations reforms, which aim to support a continuing strong economy with higher wages and more jobs, will have a major positive impact on Australian social and family life.

Please table the research, studies or surveys on the government’s IR changes which supports this claim.”

Answer:

The Productivity Commission has found that adoption of flexible workplace relations arrangements facilitated by previous workplace relations reforms has improved productivity performance. This is supported by other research both in Australia and overseas, including by the International Monetary Fund, which has found that increased flexibility and workplace bargaining increased productivity. Specific reference to this research is contained on page 6 of the Government’s Submission to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Legislation Committee Inquiry into the Workplace Relations Amendment (*Work Choices*) Bill 2005.

The Department’s Workplace Agreements Database shows that there has been an increase in the spread of flexible, family friendly working arrangements through federal certified agreements made under the provisions of the *Workplace Relations Act* (1996).

Between March 1997 and June 2005, employee coverage under current certified agreements increased for:

- part-time employment provisions from 27 per cent of employees to 77 per cent;
- paid family/carer’s leave from 8 per cent to 25 per cent;
- paid maternity or primary carer’s leave from 5 per cent to 41 per cent;

- paid paternity or secondary carer's leave from 4 per cent to 25 per cent;
- home-based work provisions from 3 per cent to 13 per cent;
- job sharing provisions from 3 per cent to 17 per cent;
- access to single days of annual leave from 6 per cent to 21 per cent;
- access to other leave for family or caring purposes from 0.1 per cent to 43 per cent; and
- purchased leave schemes from 5 per cent to 26 per cent.