

Media Release

Mr Danny Pearson MP

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WORKCOVER BILL TO PASS PARLIAMENT

The Allan Labor Government will get on with the job of modernising the WorkCover scheme, giving security to Victorian workers and businesses who use it and making sure the system is sustainable for years to come.

The *WorkCover Scheme Modernisation Bill*, supported by the creation of Return to Work Victoria, will now receive support across the Victorian Parliament – giving the scheme a new focus on injury recovery and the return to work for as many Victorians as possible.

Labor governments have always stood with workers injured on the job. That’s why the Cain Labor Government created WorkCover’s predecessor in 1985, and it’s why the Allan Labor Government is now modernising WorkCover.

WorkCover is no longer meeting the needs of those it was designed to support. Since 2010, WorkCover’s claims liability has tripled, mainly driven by the increased cost of weekly income support and many workers staying on the scheme long-term.

Health outcomes for workers get worse the longer they remain on WorkCover, and can lead to prolonged injury and unemployment – the longer a person is away from work, the less likely they are to ever return.

Once the Bill has passed Parliament, Return to Work Victoria will be established alongside the commencement of reforms – working with employers, unions, mental health and occupational health experts to pilot supports for injured Victorians and those experiencing work-related mental stress to return to work or training.

This will ensure Victoria’s WorkCover scheme is sustainable and fit-for-purpose, and will deliver better health outcomes for injured workers.

Quotes attributable to Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC Danny Pearson

“Labor built the WorkCover scheme to support workers, and only the Allan Labor Government will reform and modernise it.”

“We were clear that WorkCover is fundamentally broken – we’re pleased we can now get on with delivering these important changes, making sure our scheme can continue to support Victorian workers when they need it most.”

“There’s nothing safe about being sick – we’re helping workers return to their jobs and making sure WorkCover leaves no injured worker behind for many years to come.”