



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Justice
Minister for Industrial Relations

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FLEXIBLE WORKPLACES NEEDED FOR MATURE AGED WORKERS

NSW Industrial Relations Minister John Hatzistergos said today that employers should consider creating more flexible workplaces to cater for the growing number of mature aged workers, particularly those with caring responsibilities.

Speaking at a *Caring works* forum in Sydney today, Mr Hatzistergos announced the completion of the State Government's Mature Age Carers in the Workforce Project.

"Our research highlights a growing need for workplace flexibility to assist mature aged workers in the workforce," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"Over the next 20 years our economic wellbeing will depend on keeping older workers employed as an impending labour shortfall will need to be met by retaining mature age workers.

"During the 1980s and 90s our workforce grew by 170,000 each year, but predictions indicate it will grow by only 125,000 for the entire 2020 decade.

"By 2016 over 80 per cent of labour market growth will come from people over 45."

Mr Hatzistergos said employers will need to adapt and provide flexibility to meet the needs of mature age workers, including those with caring responsibilities.

"It is vital that we initiate discussion about how businesses can better utilise this overlooked pool of labour and discuss ways in which the NSW Government can assist employers and workers with caring responsibilities in working together."

Mr Hatzistergos launched a DVD featuring two workplaces that have found success in employing mature aged workers with caring responsibilities.

He also released a focus group report called *Bringing out the Best* that provides an insight into the experiences, motivations, aspirations and needs of mature aged carers in relation to work.

"The NSW Government is committed to raising awareness among employers about the business imperative for employing mature age workers and that caring responsibilities are inextricably linked to many of those workers," Mr Hatzistergos said.

Kathryn MacMillan, from Nine2Three Employment Solutions, recruits mature aged workers with caring responsibilities in her own business and places others with clients.

“Older workers are great employees – they’re experienced, reliable, loyal, less likely to leave the job and have a low level of absenteeism,” Ms MacMillan said.

“Some businesses think that workplace flexibilities will not be reciprocated when the business requires it, but I have always found mature aged workers are very willing to accommodate the business needs when asked.”

The *Caring Works* DVD and *Bringing out the Best* focus group report is available at www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au

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