



ATTORNEY-GENERAL  
THE HON ROBERT McCLELLAND MP

10/17627, AG-MC10/12502

Mr Geoff Lake  
President  
Australian Local Government Association  
8 Geils Court  
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear <sup>Geoff</sup> Mr Lake

29 OCT 2010	
ALGA MAIL	
ITEM No:	731
DATE RECEIVED:	2 NOV 10
FILE No:	

Thank you for your letter of 1 October 2010 advising of the Australian Local Government Association's resolution encouraging the Australian and State Governments to act to ban all forms of inappropriate discrimination on the basis of age or age related impairments.

The Australian Government takes age discrimination very seriously and is committed to ensuring that all Australians are able to participate in Australian society, regardless of their age. The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* prohibits age discrimination in many areas of public life, including employment and the provision of goods, services and facilities. The Act applies throughout Australia and is intended to promote a change in people's attitudes about the contributions of older people to society.

On 30 September 2010, I introduced legislation to establish a dedicated Age Discrimination Commissioner in the Australian Human Rights Commission to advocate for the rights of all Australians and to promote greater awareness about age discrimination. The Commissioner will engage with stakeholders to tackle discrimination in workplaces and in the community, promote respect and fairness and tackle the attitudes and stereotypes that can contribute to age discrimination. The Government has committed \$3 million over three years to fund this position.

The new Commissioner is part of the Government's *Delivering for Seniors* package, which includes \$100 million in new commitments for mature age people. The Package also includes *More Help for Mature Age Workers*, which will provide skills assessments and training for up to 7500 existing workers aged 50 years and over.

*Delivering for Seniors* builds on the Government's *Productive Ageing Package* (\$43 million over four years) announced in February 2010. Services under the *Productive Ageing Package* commenced on 1 July 2010 as *Experience+*, which provides practical help to mature age people to stay in the workforce, to move confidently between jobs, and to gain the skills and

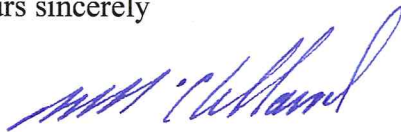
qualifications they need to supervise or mentor other workers. *Experience+* includes access to free, professional career advice for people aged 45 years and over, and grants to help employers provide training for workers aged 55 years and over. More information about *Experience+* is available by calling 13 17 64 (8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday), or by visiting <[www.deewr.gov.au/experienceplus](http://www.deewr.gov.au/experienceplus)>.

The Government has also established a Consultative Forum on Mature Age Participation to recommend further measures to remove the barriers to employment for mature age people. The Forum includes representatives of employers/industry groups, unions and other key stakeholders and will provide advice on addressing negative employer and community attitudes toward mature age people. The Forum met for the first time on 18 February 2010 and is expected to meet again in November this year. For more information about the work of the Forum, click on 'Overview' and 'Consultative Forum' at <[www.deewr.gov.au/experienceplus](http://www.deewr.gov.au/experienceplus)>.

On 1 October 2010, the Australian Human Rights Commission released its *Age discrimination – exposing the hidden barrier for mature age workers* paper, which seeks to expose and raise awareness about this issue. The paper can be found on the Commission's website at <<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/age/hiddenbarrier/>>.

I trust this information will be of assistance. Thank you for bringing the views of the Association to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely



Robert McClelland