



Modern Slavery

Background

The Commission welcomes and commends the Australian Government on the introduction of the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (Cth) (**Act**). This law establishes a reporting requirement for commercial and not for profit entities with an annual consolidated revenue of at least AU\$100 million, and the Commonwealth Government. These entities must report annually on the steps they have taken to identify and address the risks of modern slavery in their global operations and supply chains. The Commission also welcomes the Government's other efforts on modern slavery such as support for the Bali Process.

Key Issue – Strengthening the Modern Slavery Act

The Commission has recommended a range of ways the effectiveness of Australia's modern slavery regime

could be increased, in particular to address the Act's lack of oversight mechanisms and the lack of penalties for businesses and other entities that fail to report under the Act.

The Act could be strengthened by:

- establishing an independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, whose functions include awareness raising, monitoring and oversight of the Act.
- introducing financial penalties for entities that do not comply with the Act;
- providing adequate funding for review of modern slavery statements and
- establishing a national compensation scheme for victims of slavery and human trafficking.

Key Issue – National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery

The Commission commends the Australian Government for its commitment to developing and implementing a [National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-2024](#) (**2020-2024 Plan**).

The Commission welcomes the Government's 12 proposed goals for the 2020-2024 Plan.



Recommendation

They include priorities such as: training frontline officials to support effective investigations of modern slavery; securing convictions against offenders; providing appropriate support, protections and remedies to victims and promoting regional and international cooperation on combating modern slavery.

The Commission also welcomes the Government's intention to underpin the 2020-2024 Plan with a robust monitoring and evaluation process.

In the Commission's view the 2020-2024 Plan could be strengthened by facilitating provision of support and pathways to remedy for survivors which are not contingent on the survivor participating in criminal prosecutions.

Government establish an Anti-Slavery Commissioner with oversight of modern slavery statements; introduce financial penalties for non-compliance with reporting requirements; and develop and implement a National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-2024

