



## Australian Fair Pay Commission calls for submissions to final

The Australian Fair Pay Commission is inviting written submissions from interested groups and individuals in the lead-up to its final minimum wage decision, in July 2009.

Advertisements calling for submissions to the 2009 Minimum Wage Review will appear in the national press this weekend.

The function of setting minimum wages for federal employees will transfer to Fair Work Australia in January 2010.

Commission Chairman, Professor Ian Harper said: "All Australians are welcome to make a submission. The Commission is interested in receiving a wide range of views on relevant issues and we again encourage all Australians to participate.

"The Commission must consider a range of often competing priorities when setting Australia's minimum wages. It is a balancing act that is particularly challenging in these uncertain economic times."

As part of the 2009 Minimum Wage Review, the Commission recently commenced a program of consultations, meeting with federal, state and territory governments and with representatives from key employer, employee and community organisations to discuss issues regarding minimum wages and the impact of the 2008 Minimum Wage Decision.

Professor Harper said: "The Commission has established a new approach to setting minimum wages in Australia – an approach that uses evidence-based decision making, and draws on information gathered through research, consultations and submissions."

Submissions to the 2009 Minimum Wage Review need not be lengthy and can address some or all of the following criteria:

- the capacity for the unemployed and low paid to obtain and remain in employment;
- employment and competitiveness across the economy;
- providing a safety net for the low paid; and
- minimum wages for junior employees, employees to whom training arrangements apply and employees with disabilities that ensure those employees are competitive in the labour market.

The closing date for submissions is Friday, 20 March 2009.

Further details regarding the 2009 Minimum Wage Review and how to make a submission can be found at [www.fairpay.gov.au](http://www.fairpay.gov.au) or by calling 1300 139 699.

# CITY OF ATHENS ANNOUNCES CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME

## We're celebrating on every corner of Athens!

*This year Christmas in Athens will be different – more modern and artistic, with a greater emphasis on culture, and bathed in light and music. The City of Athens is once again staging a comprehensive series of events. This year the celebration is spreading across many locations throughout the city, in City District, on squares and in the neighbourhoods. All citizens – and children, in particular – have the opportunity to feel the festive atmosphere, no matter where they live.*

Christmas decorations are being installed as the city is transformed and awaits its residents and guests to join this unique celebration. Syntagma Square, the National Gardens, Kanari Square in Kypseli and



Sotiris Petroulas Square in Kolonos are some of the locations at which we will have the opportunity to celebrate Christmas and the New Year.

Syntagma Square: The centre of the celebration

National Gardens: The Forest of Fairytales

City of Athens Technopolis: Xmas / New Year's Pulse  
Kanari Square – Kypseli

Sotiris Petroulas Square – Kolonos

"Christmas is everywhere... the city celebrates" - Events in City Districts

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Athina Municipal Radio 9.84 FM, the City of Athens Cultural Organisation and the City of Athens Music Ensembles are the organizers of the municipality's Christmas festivities programme..

## FREE LAP TOPS ON THE WAY

Just days after securing an extra \$180 million from the Commonwealth for computers for schools, the NSW Government has called for tenders to deliver 200,000 lap tops to our senior students.

NSW Premier Nathan Rees said the Government was wasting no time in working to deliver this technology to our students. Mr Rees said Expressions of Interest for the delivery of student lap tops went live on the Department of Commerce website yesterday and ads will appear in the media on Monday.

"We're seeking experts who can custom build and deliver these lap tops to almost 200,000 students and can

wirelessly connect more than 570 of the state's high schools," Mr Rees said.

Mr Rees said IT experts had designed a plan to deliver a lap top to every Year 9-12 student wirelessly connected to the internet, that they could take with them with their leave school.

"This will revolutionise education and equip our young people with the skills they need in our increasingly IT dependent workplaces.

"The plan is designed to deliver robust, teenage-friendly and compact lap tops.

"The lap tops must be safe and secure.

"They will be in a Department of Education encoded network so they are

worthless if stolen and safe from inappropriate or harmful material over the internet. "Mr Rees said they will also be designed for educational purposes – not social networking on MySpace and FaceBook.

The computers will cost around \$500 per unit with running costs bringing the cost per student to \$2245.

This includes installing wireless in school classrooms; all relevant software and additional hardware; provision of IT support; training for class teachers; and, a ten per cent contingency for lost, damaged or stolen machines.

At least 400 extra full-time IT staff will be employed across the state to support

this program. Mr Rees said the plan had been designed in consultation with the Secondary Principals' Council and was supported by the majority of principals.

Mr Jim McAlpine, President of the Secondary Principals' Council, said:

"We have worked closely with the Department on the proposal to have wireless digital next generation laptops with the proper wireless systems in all our high schools.

"That's the proposal we've been supporting all along and it is the most appropriate one for the vast majority of our schools."

Mr Geoff Hastings – Principal of Bathurst High said: "I think it's fantastic, I'm really committed to it – I think it's an opportunity to fundamentally change the way we teach and the way students learn.

"It presents challenges for schools – but the opportunities are so exciting – we can overcome the challenges for the benefit of our students.

"I think it's an opportunity to reduce the divide between county and city students' learning opportunities."

Expressions of Interest close on January 14 and can be found at [www.commerce.nsw.gov.au](http://www.commerce.nsw.gov.au)

## BANKSTOWN RULED OUT AS OPTION FOR SECOND AIRPORT

Federal Member for Blaxland, Jason Clare MP, this week welcomed the Government's commitment that Bankstown Airport would not be the site for Sydney's second airport. The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Anthony Albanese MP, told the National Press Club on Monday that "we support a second Sydney airport outside the basin. We have ruled out, for example, Bankstown Airport as an option". "This is great news for the Bankstown community," Mr Clare said. "Bankstown airport is a good place to create local jobs, but not a good place for large passenger aircraft," Mr Clare said. The Federal Government released its National Aviation Policy Green Paper on Monday.

Office of Jason Clare MP- MEMBER FOR BLAXLAND