



**THE HON KEVIN ANDREWS MP**

**MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS  
MINISTER ASSISTING THE PRIME MINISTER FOR THE PUBLIC  
SERVICE**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**\$10.4 m Alternative Dispute Resolution Assistance Scheme launched**

The Australian Government today launched a scheme to help fund alternative dispute resolution at the workplace.

Under the Alternative Dispute Resolution Assistance Scheme (ADRAS), parties to eligible disputes are able to receive up to \$1,500 (GST inclusive) of Government assistance towards the cost of private Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services.

ADR providers are those that, for example, offer conferencing, mediation, assisted negotiation, neutral evaluation, case appraisal, conciliation, or arbitration services.

The Australian Government is committed to encouraging employees and employers to resolve disputes at the workplace in a way which is acceptable to all parties involved.

Under the Government's WorkChoices legislation, employees and employers now have a choice between referring certain disputes to a private alternative dispute resolution (ADR) practitioner or the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) for assistance.

Employers and employees will be able to choose whether or not to go to the AIRC or a private ADR provider for disputes:

- about the application of awards, agreements, the Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard, workplace determinations and legislated minimum entitlements to parental leave, meal breaks and public holidays;
- arising during negotiations for a collective agreement; and
- arising where a bargaining period has been terminated in the public interest or suspended to provide a 'cooling off' period.

To ensure access to the Scheme for parties located in regional or remote areas, an additional \$500 (inclusive of GST) will be available to meet reasonable travel expenses for ADR providers travelling to regional and remote areas to provide ADR services.

“This Scheme reinforces the Government’s commitment to providing a workplace relations system that is flexible and non-adversarial in its approach,” Mr Andrews said.

ADRAS provides \$10.4 million over four years for eligible employers and employees wishing to use private ADR services.

The Scheme will be administered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Further information about ADRAS and how to apply for assistance is available from the WorkChoices website [www.workchoices.gov.au](http://www.workchoices.gov.au) or by calling 1300 363 264.

For media enquiries please call Brad Burke 0417 749 711