



THE HON. CHRISTIAN PORTER MP
Attorney-General
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Leader of the House

Media Release

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Leading economist to help regrow jobs lost to COVID-19

The Morrison Government has appointed former West Australian Under Treasurer, Tim Marney, to help lead its efforts to regrow jobs lost during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr Marney, now a principal at Nous Group, will serve as deputy chair of the five industrial relations working groups that were announced by the Prime Minister last month. The working groups will aim to tackle known problems within the IR system which inhibit job growth and creation.

Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations, Christian Porter, who will chair the working groups, announced Mr Marney's appointment today following an IR roundtable meeting in Sydney to map out the consultative process over the coming months.

"Mr Marney is a highly respected economist and problem solver who worked successfully under both Labor and Liberal governments during almost three decades of public service," the Attorney-General said.

"Having worked closely with Tim during my time as WA Treasurer, his skillset and ability to bridge the political divide makes him the ideal choice to facilitate negotiations between employers and unions to get Australian working again.

"Like me, Tim also understands the urgency of this task and the need for all sides to put old animosities aside and work together like never before to deliver fair and workable solutions to the problems that threaten to hold back our economic recovery.

"Today's roundtable agreed that jobs needed to be everyone's central focus as we move into the COVID-19 recovery phase, whilst remaining conscious of the continuing health challenges posed by the virus.

"I was very heartened by the co-operative approach of all participants at today's meeting and the commitment all participants made to working consultatively on the five working group topics, which are:

- Casuals and fixed term employees
- Award simplification (covering Awards in industry sectors heavily impacted by COVID)
- Enterprise agreement making

- Compliance and enforcement
- Greenfields agreements for new enterprises

“Whilst the fact that these groups have come together has generated some commentary suggesting this approach is unique or unusual, the meeting noted that it is in fact the case that employee and employer representatives work together almost every day on a wide variety of issues and it’s certainly the case that government also engages with key stakeholders.

“The significance of this particular process is that all participants have agreed that Australia, like almost every country in the world, is facing a challenge that nobody could have foreseen just a few short months ago and that it essential that we all work intensively together to ensure Australia comes out of the COVID-19 crisis as strongly as possible with as many people as possible in work.”

The Attorney-General said following today’s discussions, membership of each working group would be finalised over coming days with working groups likely to commence meetings in coming weeks. Further details will be announced once finalised.

“The Prime Minister has asked for outcomes from the working groups in September to ensure that any reforms can be implemented as soon as is practicable and all participants at today’s meeting in Sydney and those joining via video conference from Melbourne, Canberra and Perth, agreed to work hard to that time demand” the Attorney-General said.

Further background on Mr Tim Marney:

Mr Marney held the position of WA Under Treasurer from 2004 until 2014.

He then became WA’s Mental Health Commissioner (2014-2019)

He served on the board of Beyond Blue for 11 years and is currently chair of the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre.