



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Nick Minchin
Minister for Industry, Science
and Resources

The Hon Daryl Williams AM QC
Attorney-General

Senator Richard Alston
Minister for Communications,
Information Technology
and the Arts

28 August 2001

AUSTRALIA'S INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SYSTEM TO IMPROVE

The intellectual property system in Australia will be improved to make it more responsive to the needs of rightsholders and users in the private and public sector and provide a better balance with competition policy.

The proposed changes arise from the Government responses to two recent reviews of the intellectual property system, the Intellectual Property and Competition Review (IPCR) Report and the Advisory Council on Industrial Property (ACIP) review of patent enforcement. The changes concern diverse aspects of the intellectual property framework, so the benefits will flow directly to the interests of business, education, creators and licensees of intellectual property material.

Releasing the Government responses today, the Minister for Industry, Science and Resources Senator Nick Minchin, the Attorney-General Daryl Williams and the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Senator Richard Alston said the Government welcomed the changes which reflected the increasing importance to the economy of intellectual property protection and management.

The IPCR report brings a useful economic perspective to analysis of intellectual property policy, promoting a clear understanding of the costs and benefits associated with changes to the system. Government's adoption of recommendations in the report achieves a balance between the interests of owners, investors and users. Mechanisms to ensure efficiency and transparency in copyright management and greater public scrutiny of collecting societies are among initiatives adopted by Government in considering its response to the report. The Government is responding through legislative, regulatory and best practice management approaches as recommended by the IPCR Committee.

Changes to the patent system will increase the certainty and strength of granted patents. The Government will amend the *Patents Act 1990* and *Patents Regulations 1991* to create a 12 month grace period to protect a patent application against invalidation by prior public disclosure, and to lift the threshold tests to obtain a patent to international standards.

Details of the proposed changes are provided in an information pack, which is available in electronic form on the following websites:

IP Australia
www.ipaustralia.gov.au

Attorney-General's Department
www.ag.gov.au

Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
www.dcita.gov.au

Contacts: Patents and Trade Marks

Jennifer Eddy, Senator Minchin's Office, 02 6277 7580
Rick Gould, IP Australia, 02 6283 2008 or 0415 627 801

Copyright

Catherine Fitzpatrick, Attorney General's Media Adviser, 02 6277 7300
Sasha Grebe, Senator Alston's Office, 02 6277 7480

CMR449-01