



The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP  
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

In reply please quote: 548413/1

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Mr Neil Laurie  
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Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to Petition No. 1981-12 presented by Ms Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Member for Inala, on behalf of the principal petitioner, Mr Jason Young, and received by the Legislative Assembly on 30 October 2012.

The petitioners call on Parliament to keep the Labour Day public holiday in May.

The appointment of public holidays is regulated by the *Holidays Act 1983* (the Act). The former Queensland Government made a number of amendments to the Act in November 2011. One of those amendments moved a public holiday to the second half of the year by prescribing that the Birthday of the Sovereign (Queen's Birthday) public holiday would be observed on the first Monday in October.

The movement of public holidays is an important issue for individuals as well as business, sporting and community interest groups. In weighing up changes to the Act, the Government considered a range of views including consistency with the public holiday arrangements in other States and Territories, disruption of production under the current arrangements and the spread of public holidays throughout the year. With those matters in mind, the Government decided that the movement of the Labour Day public holiday to the first Monday in October and the return of the Queen's Birthday public holiday to the second Monday in June were the best arrangements for Queensland as a whole.

Those arrangements will achieve:

- increased uniformity with the majority of other States and Territories. In all other States and Territories, except Western Australia, the Queen's Birthday public holiday is observed on the second Monday in June. The Labour Day public holiday is observed across different months but New South Wales, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory observe the Labour Day public holiday on the first Monday in October;

(2)

- diminished disruptions to production and services for business and industry that result from the concentration of public holidays falling in quick succession in the April-May period (Anzac Day, three Easter public holidays and Labour Day). Moving the Labour Day public holiday from the first Monday in May will break up that concentration of public holidays;
- respite and rest to workers as a result of a more even spread of public holidays across the year; and
- assistance to the Queensland tourism industry in general by returning the Queen's Birthday public holiday long weekend in June because this is a traditionally quieter time of the year.

To implement the legislative amendments to allow for those changes in public holiday arrangements, the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 (the Bill) was introduced into the Parliament on 21 August 2012. On Tuesday, 30 October 2012, the necessary amendments contained in the Bill were passed by the Parliament prescribing that from 2013, the Queen's Birthday public holiday is to be returned to its original date of the second Monday in June each year and moving the date of the Labour Day public holiday to the first Monday in October.

The Queensland Government is aware that individuals, businesses, community and sporting groups and other organisations may be planning events for the former Labour Day long weekend in early May 2013. However, it is considered on balance that the advantages to the community and business as a whole from the movement of the Labour Day public holiday outweigh any disadvantage.

Yours sincerely



**JARRÓD BLEIJIE MP**  
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice