



Tuesday, 3 August 2004

## Commission to celebrate centenary in 2004-05

The Australian Industrial Relations Commission will celebrate its centenary in 2004-05 with a program of events designed to encourage public understanding of the tribunal's role and work.

Vice President Iain Ross, launched the centenary program today with the release of a commemorative pre-stamped envelope produced by Australia Post.

The envelope features a portrait of the first president of the Commission, Justice Richard O'Connor, a High Court judge appointed in early 1905.

Other events planned for the centenary include:

- a centenary convention to be presented in Melbourne on October 21-23 by the Industrial Relations Society of Australia;
- the release on 21 October of a book on the history of the Commission - edited by Professors Stuart Macintyre and Joe Isaac of Melbourne University;
- a centenary exhibition to tour Australia during the centenary year; and
- a ceremonial sitting of the Commission in November 2005 to mark 100 years since the first hearing.

Vice President Ross said the 100th anniversary of the tribunal provided an opportunity to reflect on the work of Commission members and Australian Industrial Registry staff and look forward to the next century.

"Since its creation as a court in the early years of last century, the tribunal has had a profound impact on the working lives of Australian people," he said.

"In settling disputes, setting minimum wages and conditions and registering employer organisations and unions, the Commission has sought to balance the interests of employees and employers with the economic well-being of the nation."

The Commission was first established as the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration following the passage of the *Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act* in December 1904.

**Further information: Contact AIRC Media Liaison Officer Judy Hughes on phone 03 8661 7862, 0407 920 815; email: [judy.hughes@air.gov.au](mailto:judy.hughes@air.gov.au).**