

PRIME MINISTER

**MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND
DEREGULATION**

**MINISTER ASSISTING THE FINANCE
MINISTER ON DEREGULATION**

\$1 BILLION TO HELP LIFT BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

The Rudd Government will provide more than \$1 billion towards creating a seamless national economy on the back of an historic agreement made by COAG today, helping to lift business confidence.

Under the agreement the states and territories have secured a \$550 million package to implement a range of regulatory and competition reforms in areas including:

- National consumer policy and product safety regulation
- National trade licences
- Financial services regulatory reforms

The Rudd Government is also investing \$475 million on landmark reforms such as the creation of a national system for registering business names and taking over responsibility for the regulation of all consumer credit.

The reforms also make way for a new national electronic conveyancing system, which could save homebuyers hundreds of dollars on every house purchase, and will help support the Government's work on affordable housing.

The new system to create a national register for business names alone has been estimated by Ernst and Young to save Australian businesses \$1 billion over the next 10 years.

Federal and state governments have been working all year towards removing regulation differences across borders in 27 areas.

Never before in Australian history has a government attempted such an ambitious program of reducing unnecessary business regulation.

We are moving Australia from being nine markets to one and putting an end to “rail gauge” economics that have plagued the business community for more than a century.

The Rudd Government is vigorously pursuing the reform of Australia's tangle of business regulation because it will help lift productivity growth off the floor. This is essential to ensure Australia's future prosperity and for job creation.

The cooperation of the states and territories has been instrumental in pursuing these reforms that are so vital to Australia's future.

The Business Council of Australia (BCA) has also shown strong and constructive support for the package.

“Our current fragmented economic regulation creates a whole range of unnecessary burdens and costs for business and the wider economy,” BCA President Greig Gailey said. **(BCA press release “COAG meeting a chance for economic growth” - 28 November).**

“Right now we need businesses to have the confidence to employ and invest. Businesses will have significantly greater confidence when they see governments pushing ahead with reforms that enhance the productive capacity of the economy.

“The economic burdens of ending this inefficiency have been estimated to be as high as \$16 billion annually.”

The Government will continue to press ahead with economic reform while managing the impacts of the global financial crisis.

The result of yesterday's COAG meeting is good for business confidence, good for jobs growth and a plus for national productivity.

**CANBERRA
30 NOVEMBER 2008**

**NARDIA DAZKIW (MINISTER TANNER): 0418 144 690
CHRIS WARD (MINISTER EMERSON): 0418 424 654
PM'S PRESS OFFICE: (02) 6277 7744**