

Newsletter - Employers Newsletter March 2024

Government commits to Holidays Act and Health & Safety amendments

Workplace Relations and Safety Minister, Brooke van Velden has outlined the Government's intentions to reform two crucial pieces of legislation: the Holidays Act and the Health and Safety at Work Act. Speaking at the Auckland Business Chamber, Van Velden emphasized her commitment to improving the Holidays Act, stating that her primary objective is to ensure any proposed changes are both feasible and substantially enhance the current framework.

Van Velden highlighted the challenges encountered by the previous Government in implementing reforms to the Holidays Act, citing the complexity of proposed changes as a significant hindrance. She stressed the importance of crafting policies that are easily implementable for businesses, acknowledging the widespread non-compliance issues faced by employers due to the Act's intricate processes and calculations. Moreover, Van Velden recognized the difficulties employees face in tracking their statutory entitlements, resulting in years of underpayment.

In addressing the shortcomings of the Health and Safety at Work Act, Van Velden announced plans for a public consultation to evaluate the effectiveness of the decade-old legislation. She underscored the need for clarity and comprehensibility in health and safety regulations, acknowledging the challenges faced by businesses and workers alike in adhering to existing laws.

Van Velden emphasized the Government's commitment to gathering feedback from stakeholders before proposing any reforms to the health and safety framework. She expressed a desire for a streamlined system that focuses on mitigating workplace hazards effectively, rather than burdening businesses with unnecessary compliance measures. Overall, the Government aims to instill confidence in businesses regarding their efforts to ensure a safe and healthy work environment.