

## ACDC's New Industrial Relations Mediation Service for NSW

The NSW Minister for Industrial Relations and Employment, Mrs Kerry Chikarovski, has announced a \$50,000 grant to the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre (ACDC) to establish a new mediation service in Sydney to help resolve industrial disputes and grievances.

The Government's intention is to improve the efficiency of industrial relations by enabling industrial disputes to be resolved by mediation instead of the, often lengthy and expensive, industrial litigation process.

ACDC's new service will make private mediators available to resolve workplace grievances before they become fully-blown disputes requiring resolution before the NSW Industrial Relations Commission.

The private mediation service, developed after consultation with employers, employee organisations and other mediation services, should provide a quick and inexpensive alternative to assist parties resolve workplace grievances and differences, particularly those which may arise when enterprise agreements are negotiated.

The \$50,000 grant will be used to train mediators with expertise in industrial relations, as well as to help produce a booklet on industrial relations mediation, a training manual and other relevant material.

The mediators will be available, on a fee-for-service basis, to employers and employees seeking help to resolve disputes.

The new service will not replace any of the existing channels for solving industrial disputes in NSW, but industrial disputants will now have a choice to go through the formal industrial relations system or to seek private mediation from the ACDC.