

**PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION – DRAFT REPORT ON
PAIDPARENTAL LEAVE**

**RESPONSE FROM THE VICTORIAN WOMEN'S TRUST
NOVEMBER 2008**

The Victorian Women's Trust welcomes the draft Report from the Productivity Commission and congratulates the Commission for producing a careful, well-conceived and fair model for consideration by the Federal Government.

We still prefer a longer period of leave for both mothers and fathers. However, in striking the leave period for mothers at 18 weeks, the Commission has opted for a reasonable length of time rather than one that is demonstrably too short.

We welcome the attention given by the Commission to those women who are working in casualised parts of the Australian workforce as well as lone parents, adoptive parents and same sex couples. We appreciate the practical need for an employment test and believe the Commission provides a formula that is reasonable.

We also welcome also the emphasis on self-employment and contractors.

We would urge the Commission in its final advice to Government to encourage it in the strongest possible terms to adopt such a national scheme within the first budget opportunity. We have waited too long for such a scheme. The current global financial meltdown should not be used as a reason to defer such a scheme. Ultimately, we are talking here about the health, well-being and productivity of many women and men in the paid workforce. It is not a luxury touch. It goes to the heart of a more effective and modern workforce.