

The Textile Institute  
Southern Australian Section Inc

# Submission

## to the

# Productivity Commission Inquiry

## into the textiles clothing and footwear industry

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June 2003

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The Textile Institute, Southern Australian Section is the local representative body of The Textile Institute which was established in 1910 and is the **only** chartered professional Institute in textiles, clothing and footwear (TCF). The Institute embraces all professional disciplines of the TCF industry. Members represent all segments of the TCF Industry, ranging from raw materials to advanced industrial products and high fashion products.

The Textile Institute Southern Australian Section's purpose is to be recognised as the primary body contributing to the continuing development of professional and technical expertise across all segments of the TCF industry in Australia

### **Background**

The Australian TCF industry has changed significantly in its structure and profile since the last Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Industry in 1997.

Several previously significant manufacturers have exited the local industry due to rationalisation driven by technology advances in processes and products, increased imports and changes in route to market and consumer demand.

### **The Future**

It is expected that this rapid rate of change within the TCF Industry will accelerate based on the influences of World Trade Organisation requirements, regional and bilateral trade agreements and manufacturer rationalisation.

In such an environment, manufacturers will require more specialisation in areas of unique product offering led by innovation, improved processes, adoption of new technologies,

continuing Research and Development, and improving business practices including route to market.

All of these elements must be complemented with meaningful and ongoing investment in targeted training and development of workers within the industry segments.

The Textile Institute Southern Australian Section fully supports the Victorian Government's belief that a viable long term TCF Industry for Australia will require a comprehensive industry assistance package focussed on:

- supporting labour market adjustment
- maintaining a critical mass of the manufacturing base
- improving export market access
- providing incentives for increased innovation and Research and Development
- developing a highly skilled and collaborative workforce, and
- encouraging inter company collaboration

### **Recommendation**

The Textile Institute Southern Australian Section strongly believes that the TCF Industry in Australia can develop a strong and sustainable future if the outcome from this Productivity Commission Inquiry results in a comprehensive and focussed assistance package from the Commonwealth Government for post 2005. We further believe that such an outcome should not be diminished by any future actions to unilaterally reduce tariffs into Australia for the TCF Industry.

**Noel L Emselle (C Text FTI) – President**

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