



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR KIM CARR

Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research

Friday, 3 June 2011

GETTING TOUGH ON IMITATORS

After years of effort, hard work and perseverance, imagine creating a new innovation. Then imagine how you'd feel if your innovation was copied by a dishonest company that didn't recognise your effort.

To help stop this from happening the Labor Government is making changes to empower innovators and improve their ability to enforce their intellectual property (IP) rights.

Innovation Minister Senator Kim Carr said the changes will make it easier for owners of IP, specifically patents and plant breeder's rights, to deal with infringers.

"IP is a cornerstone of a prosperous economy – it encourages innovation, which opens up new industries, creates jobs and drives long-term economic growth. A successful and sustainable economy like Australia's needs a strong IP system to protect its great ideas," Senator Carr said.

"These changes support our innovators with a range of effective measures designed to improve their ability to enforce their rights and resolve disputes at an early stage."

Two reviews by the Government's Advisory Council on Intellectual Property found owners of patents and plant breeder's rights encountered barriers when enforcing their rights. The cost and time needed to resolve a dispute may be a deterrent for small and medium-sized enterprises. And this can result in an infringer getting away with unauthorised use of an innovation and the actual innovator losing out.

"Plant breeders will save time and money because they will now be able to progress matters through the Federal Magistrates Court, which was established to deal with simpler matters in a quicker, easier and cheaper way." Senator Carr said.

IP Australia, the Government agency responsible for patents, trade marks, designs and plant breeder's rights, will set up an online resource to help IP owners find cheaper and faster alternative ways of resolving disputes through mediation and arbitration.

The government responses to the reports by the Advisory Council on Intellectual Property are available at www.acip.gov.au

For information about intellectual property, visit www.ipaustralia.gov.au or call 1300 651 010 between 9am and 7pm (AEST) Monday to Friday.

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