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11 November 2021

The Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
Minister for Mental Health; Aboriginal Affairs; Industrial Relations

Dear Minister,

The Hearing Business Alliance is a business body, whereby the hearing business is the member. HBA represents approximately 105 businesses nationally, within the hearing health sector. HBA advocates for small business providers in the hearing health sector and recognises that the impacts business issues have on Providers will ultimately impact consumers. HBA strives for equal opportunity and a level playing field for Providers operating within the sector more broadly, thus improving access and services for consumers.

HBA is supportive of the proposed changes in the draft Workers Compensation & Injury Management Bill 2021. Please accept our apologies for the late inclusion of our comments, as we discovered this consultation was occurring only after the conclusion of the consultation deadline. HBA wishes to be included in future industry stakeholder consultation regarding implementation of this Bill through new Regulations, and thanks you in advance for considering our brief comments.

Hearing plays a vital role towards effective communication. Hearing has far-reaching impacts on an individual's ability to remain socially engaged, which can reduce social isolation and loneliness. Hearing can impact an individual's mental health. Untreated hearing loss has been shown to increase anxiety and depression and to contribute to an [earlier onset of dementia](#).

HBA wishes to urge that WA Workers Compensation & Injury Management Bill 2021 will align with similar legislation in NSW, VIC and SA, whereby at least a portion of payment to injured workers is actually applied to rehabilitation and appropriate hearing devices, rather than being allocated in a lump sum. This is particularly pertinent to the wellbeing of workers in WA, where a significant proportion of the WA workforce is potentially subjected to excessive noise.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jane MacDonald".

Jane MacDonald
Chief Executive Officer