



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP

Minister for Health

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister
for the Public Service and Cabinet

The Hon. Karen Andrews MP

Minister for Industry, Science and Technology

MEDIA RELEASE

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Boosting Australia's medicinal cannabis industry

The Morrison Government will boost the nation's medicinal cannabis industry by prioritising projects that have been granted Major Project Status (MPS) and ultimately driving economic growth.

MPS, managed through the Department of Industry is awarded to projects which will make a significant contribution in the areas of exports, jobs and industry development, particularly in rural and regional areas.

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt said this arrangement will give applicants with MPS, priority to medicinal cannabis licences through the Office of Drug Control in the Department of Health.

“We welcome this collaborative arrangement between the Department of Health and Department of Industry. It showcases the Morrison Government's commitment to boosting local industry and helping those living with chronic or terminal illnesses.

This new prioritisation will commence on the 1 September 2019.

The Office of Drug Control has so far issued 69 licences to cultivate, produce or manufacture medicinal cannabis.

This includes:

- 24 licences for cultivation of cannabis for medicinal use,
- 16 for cultivation for research, and
- 23 for manufacture of medicinal cannabis products.

Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, Karen Andrews said the arrangement was about eliminating red tape which can hold back major projects.

“The Morrison Government is committed to making it as streamlined as possible for companies to invest and do business in Australia, so we can grow the economy and create new jobs,” Minister Andrews said.

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.

“The projects will still have to meet all of the approvals required, but this arrangement will make sure that they are not being held up by unnecessary delays.”

In addition, the recently completed review of the *Narcotic Drugs Act 1967* recommends major congestion busting initiatives for medicinal cannabis cultivation, production and manufacturing that will apply to the whole sector.

Two proposed changes will simplify the administration of the medicinal cannabis scheme and remove impediments to developing the Australian medicinal cannabis industry.

Changes to the *Narcotic Drugs Regulation 2016* will reduce the regulatory burden on licence applicants, and reduce the time it takes to apply and what level of detail is required.

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt said the Government has agreed in principle to adopt all 26 recommendations of the independent review conducted by Professor John McMillian.

“Cutting red tape and streamlining processes will strengthen this important and evolving industry, and ensure medicinal cannabis is available to Australian patients under proper medical supervision,” Minister Hunt said.

“As part of these changes the Government will also work towards a single licence model so there will now be one application for a medicinal cannabis licence covering cultivation, production, manufacture and research activities.”

The Morrison Government continues to make it easier for doctors to access medicinal cannabis products more rapidly, while maintaining strict safeguards for individual and community safety.

Doctors can apply under the Therapeutic Goods Administration’s Special Access Scheme Category or via an Authorised Prescriber to legally prescribe medicinal cannabis products.

As of 30 June 2019, over 10,000 prescriptions have now been written in Australia for medicinal cannabis products. Approximately 7196 patients have been authorised to access a medicinal cannabis product through the Special Access and Authorised Prescriber Schemes.

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