

As indicated in a news release in February this year, employers with monthly wage bills of between \$5,000 and \$12,500 are levied payroll tax on a graded scale rising to 5%. After 1 July, the tapered exemptions will apply to wage bills ranging from \$5,500 a month to \$13,750. Whilst very similar to the wording of the original act, the purpose of this amendment is to create a new section within the legislation. This new section contains references which clarify the method of calculation of the tax payable by group employers and closely follows the New South Wales legislation. The new section streamlines the original act by providing the necessary linking provisions with the legislation so that the amount of the deduction which can be claimed by employers is clearly specified.

Amendment agreed to.

New clause 6 inserted.

Clauses 7 to 10 agreed to.

Progress reported.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr ROBERTSON (Manager of Government Business) (By leave): I move that so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the passage through all stages at this sittings of the Workmen's Compensation Bill Serial 302.

Motion agreed to.

TERRITORY INSURANCE OFFICE BILL (Serial 262)

COMPENSATION (FATAL INJURIES) BILL (Serial 270)

MOTOR ACCIDENTS (COMPENSATION) BILL (Serial 272)

MOTOR VEHICLES BILL (Serial 275)

Continued from 8 March 1979.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, the opposition is very eager to see the establishment of a Territory Insurance Office. It would be impolite, if not perhaps unparliamentary, for us to say that the government has gone off half-cocked about the government insurance office. However, I do recall the Treasurer making a similar comment when I had the temerity to mention such a matter in August last year. Indeed, in August and November last year and again in January this year, the ALP suggested in very strong terms that the Northern Territory government establish a government insurance office. We saw it as the only vehicle open to us to check the spiralling costs of compulsory third-party payments and to provide some real competition in the insurance industry. To say the least, the opposition is delighted that the government should have taken up our suggestion even though it may not have been so fulsome in its praise to us for suggesting it. I believe that the government insurance office will attract support from the community and will attract the sort of business that it will require to ensure that it operates as a very successful business undertaking for the overall interests of the people of the Northern Territory and for the general developmental interests of the Northern Territory.