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## Media release

26 October 2012

# Date announced for national Go Home On Time Day!

Put it in your diary – **Wednesday November 21 is this year's national Go Home On Time Day** – the day Australians are encouraged to say 'no' to last-minute meetings, avoid out-of-hours emails and calls, and claim back some work/life balance.

Now in its fourth year, Go Home On Time Day is an initiative of The Australia Institute, a public policy think tank based in Canberra. The day was conceived as a light-hearted way to start a serious conversation about the impact of poor work/life balance on our health, relationships and workplaces.

The Go Home On Time Day website can be found at [www.gohomeontimeday.org.au](http://www.gohomeontimeday.org.au)

The Australia Institute's Executive Director Dr Richard Denniss said for many Australians leaving work on time is actually harder than it seems.

"Whether it's not knowing what time you're supposed to finish work, or feeling guilty if you're the first to leave the office, getting out the door can be a daily battle for many Australians. National Go Home On Time Day provides at least one day of the year on which people can achieve a better work and life balance," said Dr Denniss.

The Australia Institute is delighted to be working with *beyondblue: the national depression and anxiety initiative* this year to highlight the social and economic costs of job-related stress, which can lead to depression and anxiety. *beyondblue* is developing a range of new workplace resources to help managers discuss these issues with employees.

CEO of *beyondblue* Ms Kate Carnell AO said she was delighted the initiative was participating in Go Home On Time Day and highlighting what business could do to improve employees' well-being. She said overwhelming evidence showed a direct link between mental health and working conditions.

"Ensuring employees are not overloaded and have a good work life balance is one thing that business can do to improve mental health," Ms Carnell said.

"It's important employees see that good mental health is as important as physical safety in the workplace and that good mental health in the workplace relies on good leadership, communication, support and balance.

"Employees should leave work on time on Go Home On Time Day to highlight the link between overwork and stress with depression and anxiety in the workplace. Employees and employers alike benefit from a happy and healthy workplace," said Ms Carnell.

**For media enquiries please contact: Serena Rogers 0421 759 262**

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Did you know\*:

- Each year, Australians work more than two billion hours of unpaid overtime
- That's the equivalent of a \$72 billion 'gift' to employers
- One in two Australians reports spending less time with family than they would like to because of work, as well as doing less physical activity
- Work prevents one in three of us from eating healthy meals
- Australians work three times more hours of unpaid overtime than they volunteer to community organisations
- Only one in five Australian workers are working the hours they want to work, with one in two preferring to work fewer hours even if that means a pay cut.

The GHOTD website gives people the chance to download a 'leave pass' for November 21 or a workplace poster to encourage colleagues, find out interesting facts and figures about 'polluted time' and 'time poverty' and connect to the event via social media.

Join the conversation via Facebook [www.facebook.com/gohomeontimeday](http://www.facebook.com/gohomeontimeday) and Twitter @GoHomeOnTimeDay.

For information on *beyondblue's* resources and training for mentally healthy workplaces, go to [www.beyondblue.org.au/workplace](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/workplace)

#### **Notes for editors**

- \*The Australia Institute has published a research paper each year to coincide with national Go Home On Time Day which are available at [www.tai.org.au](http://www.tai.org.au):
  - 2011 – *Polluted time: Blurring the boundaries between work and life*
  - 2010 – *Long time, no see: The impact of time poverty on Australian workers*
  - 2009 – *Something for nothing: Unpaid overtime in Australia*

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