

EDITORIAL

On 11 January this year the federal government released its exposure draft and discussion paper on the criminalisation of cartel conduct in Australia.

It follows a commitment by the Labor Party during last year's federal election campaign to introduce the amendments to the law within the first 12 months of office.

For Australia it will mean a significant reform of the approach authorities can take in cracking down on cartels that operate within Australia's borders.

While criminalising cartels is complex, it presents an opportunity to greatly enhance the detection, deterrence and eradication of cartels from the Australian economy, potentially saving the community millions of dollars every year.

This issue of *ACCC update* considers some of the hurdles that will need to be overcome to see this goal become reality.

During Easter petrol prices again hit the headlines, demonstrating the strong concern in the community over recent price increases. After many months of hearings around the country, the ACCC has reported to government on the findings of its inquiry into the price of unleaded petrol.

On page 14 we consider some of the findings of that inquiry and the options open to government in dealing with the concerns of motorists.

The price of groceries has also become an issue of national debate, and the ACCC's expertise has again been called on to investigate what drives prices and whether shoppers, farmers and industry are getting a fair deal.

As the national inquiry into grocery prices gets underway, *ACCC update* will keep readers informed on the progress of the inquiry and a summary of the inquiry's findings once they become available.