



Rudd responds to COTA's call for a Xmas Bonus

14th October 2008

Pensioners Bonus well timed.

Today's "down payment on pension reform" is a well-timed response, recognising the importance of older people's difficulty to manage on the present pension level.

This initiative makes good sense in the present economic climate as older people need this money to buy their basics, this is money that will be spent and create movement into the economy. Pensioners need the money to spend now. It is not money that will be saved. It also acknowledges the important part older people play in the Australian economy.

Council on the Ageing has been calling on the government to respond to an interim call for an immediate bonus, to enable older people to meet the increasing costs of living.

"Pensioners welcome the \$4.8 billion pension down payment and the reform commitment. The down payment will have a great and immediate impact on older people and the economy", Sue Hendy, Executive Director, COTA said.

The government has also acknowledged the pension review is essential to ensure a long term solution for improving the financial base of older people's income and responds to the need for older people to be able to support themselves. "This will enable older people to buy food, to maintain their involvement in the community and maintain an appropriate standard of living and health, which is good for them, good for their families and the community." says Sue Hendy.

The \$1,400 increase for single pensioners and \$2,100 for couples lump sums will help pensioners to have a reasonable Christmas after all.

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