

## Media Coverage

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### New name, old body

LAST week this column was bemused to note that the federal government was going to be only lightly represented at the AusBiotech conference in Melbourne starting next Tuesday. Victorian Premier John Brumby's cutting the ribbon but the heaviest federal presence will be Anthony Byrne, parliamentary secretary for trade and parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister. Is there some awkwardness between the industry and Canberra?

Yesterday's announcement of Commercialisation Australia by Innovation Minister Kim Carr might have a bit to do with it. Biotech sources say that although it's described as a "a radical new program", it's just a new name for the previously proposed Commonwealth Commercialisation Institute.

David Langsam, editor of online blatt Biotech Daily, said: "Applicants will have access to case managers, advice and support, and up to \$250,000 for proof of concept studies and repayable funding of up to \$2 million for early stage commercialisation." Which sounds good so far.

"But there is no mention of continuing royalty streams to allow the organisation to grow and become self-sufficient nor any mention of a Intellectual Property Clearing House returning revenue, as proposed by the Biotechnology and Related Industries Leadership Group. It appears that it will be a unit within the federal Department of Innovation Industry Science and Research." Which suggests that Carr would get a bit of heckling if he turned up, at least from the people who weren't getting grants.