



Wednesday, 25 March 2009

2009 Minimum Wage Review submissions available online

The Australian Fair Pay Commission today announced **67** written submissions were received from interested groups and individuals to its 2009 Minimum Wage Review.

Australian Fair Pay Commission Chair, Professor Ian Harper, said the submissions came from a wide range of stakeholders including individuals; employee, employer, community, education and professional organisations; and governments.

“The Commission received **36** submissions from employer, employee, community and professional stakeholder organisations, **8** from governments and government agencies, and **23** from individuals.

“The Commissioners would like to thank all those groups and individuals who made submissions to the 2009 Minimum Wage Review.”

“The Commission will consider all input received through submissions, consultations and commissioned research in the 2009 Minimum Wage Review.”

Professor Harper said: “The legislation requires the Commission to take into account a range of often competing priorities in setting minimum wages.

“In our previous three decisions in 2006, 2007 and 2008, the Commission acknowledged that increasing minimum wages too high can have a negative impact on employment. On the other hand, the legislation directs the Commission to balance this effect with the need to provide a safety net for low-paid workers.

“This decision will be the Commission’s most difficult of all. It is a balancing act that is particularly challenging in these uncertain economic times.

“The Commission will provide its views on matters raised in submissions and consultations when it announces its 2009 Wage-Setting Decision in July. The decision document will outline the Commission’s reasons behind its decision,” he said.

In addition to receiving submissions, the Commission conducts extensive national consultations for its Minimum Wage Reviews. The consultation program has included visits to all states and territories and involved meetings with over 50 organisations, including councils of social services and youth affairs, governments and employer and employee organisations. The Commission will meet with national stakeholder organisations in the coming weeks.

Professor Harper said: “The people we meet tell us the consultations are a valuable opportunity to talk about local issues and to provide their own perspectives on minimum wage issues.”

Other elements of the Commission's consultation program include:

- site visits to places of employment;
- meetings of the Commission's Disability Roundtable, Business Consultative Group and Research Advisory Committee;
- focus groups involving low-paid and unemployed people, juniors and employers in capital cities and regional areas;
- in-depth interviews with employers; and
- interactive online discussion forums.

To view the non-confidential submissions, details of the Commission's consultation program, or for more information on the 2009 Minimum Wage Review, visit www.fairpay.gov.au.

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