

SUBMISSION TO THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION'S PUBLIC INQUIRY EXAMINING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE WORKPLACE RELATIONS FRAMEWORK

I would like the Productivity Commission to produce a REALLY FAIR evaluation. This is likely to be difficult given that the Terms of Reference have been written heavily skewed towards evaluating EMPLOYERS' interests with relatively little emphasis on evaluation of the Act's operation in enabling employees a 'fair-go' in the Australian workplace.

Despite the initial 2 Terms of Reference:

- unemployment, underemployment and job creation
- fair and equitable pay and conditions for employees, including the maintenance of a relevant safety net

being reasonably balanced regarding employers and employees, all the remaining Terms are heavily predisposed towards evaluation of 'the business interest' with complete disregard for employees and workers.

- small **businesses**
- **productivity, competitiveness and business investment**
- the ability of **business** and the labour market to respond appropriately to changing economic conditions patterns of engagement in the labour market
- the ability for **employers** to flexibly manage and engage with their employees
- barriers to bargaining
- red tape and the compliance **burden for employers**
- industrial conflict and days lost due to industrial action
- appropriate scope for independent contracting.

This bias is not surprising since they have been written by a Coalition right-wing Treasurer and employment Minister but it is SERIOUSLY WORRYING and inappropriate since it means the outcomes will almost inevitably be about simply enabling business to be more profitable at the expense of those who labour to produce those profits for businesses both large and small.

While things being better for business is usually regarded as benefiting employees this commonly not the case. It is my view that the Productivity Commission's findings will be adversely distorted by the mandate they have been given at the outset and that those findings will then be used to dilute the protections for employees. The electorate of Australia expressed their wrath over the Howard government's 'Work Choices'. If this inquiry provides any grounds for the ever-diminishing protections that working Australian's have vis a vis business (large or small), then this is an unwanted and negative outcome.

(Terms of reference sourced from: <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/workplace-relations>)