

Date: 23/Jan/2015

Comments to the productivity commission

To whom it may concern,

I very much welcome your commissions examination of the business productivity. This directly impacts employment and the overall community. I make this submission as a concerned person and small business for the longevity of this country.

Some back ground, I am a qualified electronics engineer and running a small consulting engineering business helping people develop their IP, generally just myself a couple of part timers and overseas external suppliers. During the 1990's I ran a business employing more than 60 people, and it was a nightmare dealing with staff issues. I sold this business and focused on what I enjoy, R&D. This followed an unfair dismissal claim against me after a staff member resigned and I accepted his resignation, then he claimed unfair dismissal simply tell me he would win so just pay up, which I had to, commercial decision. Companies should be able to hire and fire staff as they wish this will make employment easier and companies more willing to take a gamble on expansion. Good staff are always retained poor staff should be let go. Current unfair dismissal laws protect poor staff.

Of recent years I have become extremely concerned at the employment situation in Australia. The low skilled and semi-skilled positions that this country was built on are all disappearing, where are these people going to be employed? Our youth have nowhere to go for entry level unskilled employment. The endless regulations on employment are forcing companies to move offshore. Our high labour rates unreasonable workplace conditions and the now the FTA are ensuring that product from overseas is way cheaper. As a small business I manufacture all my product off shore, the Chinese labour rates of \$0.90/hr make it impossible to do this here with the equivalent labor rates of \$40/hr inc super and all the taxes/insurance gov compliance etc. It would be irresponsible for me to try to make product here as this would disadvantage the shareholders in the company, and make me uncompetitive.

While I am not a union basher and firmly believe that during the earlier years the union did untold good for the workplace and the community and our country, they are badly out of touch today and are no longer relevant. While the various union organisations struggle to keep themselves afloat for the sake of their own existence not the people they report to support. They need to join the real modern world. We are directly competing on a global basis they need to make sure they are competitive in their demands or their loyal members will have no job and no money to pay their union fees.

Employment is good for many reasons sense of purpose and self-worth, money to spend and enjoy, tax revenue. Unemployed people become depressed and disaffected with life we are seeing so many young with a feeling of no hope turning to drugs

alcohol or radical groups for almost a vengeance. Clearly we need to find a way to make sure as many people have gainful employment as possible, if this means a few of us have to give up some of our luxurious employment conditions then so be it.

While I do not at this time have anything new and constructive to add in terms of improving the situation, I am pleased to have had my say and thank you for your indulgence.

Regards

Mark Barber