



GOLD COAST CITY COUNCIL

National Competition Policy Review of the *Disability Discrimination Act* 1992

Submission to Productivity Commission

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Purpose

This submission from the Community Services Directorate of the Gold Coast City Council wishes to endorse the independent submission developed by Ms Rita Struthers, dated 26 May 2003.

Ms Struthers argued in her submission that the *Disability Discrimination Act* (1992) and the development of its Standards would assist an older but healthier population to remain active and included in their communities either through: employment; voluntary work; support to families and others; or participation in recreational and social activities thereby lessening the fiscal burden.

Gold Coast Demographics

From the perspective of the Community Services Directorate this paper would like to highlight the following issues arising from the Council's community profile:

- The Gold Coast has an older age profile than either Queensland or Australia. Young people under the age of 15 years represented 19.7% of the Gold Coast population, compared to 21.6% for Queensland and 20.8% for Australia.¹
- Persons aged 60 years and over represented 18.3% of persons in Gold Coast City, compared to 15.9% for Queensland and 16.8% for Australia.²
- Person aged 75 years and over represented 6.3% of persons in Gold Coast City, compared to 5.3% for Queensland and 5.8% for Australia.³

The community profile made the following observations:

- The city's older population is likely to be a contributing factor to the smaller proportion of Gold Coast residents in the labour force compared to Queensland and Australia.⁴
- Of those in the labour force, a higher proportion are unemployed and employed part-time than in Queensland and Australia, with part-time employment increasing by 7 percentage points between 1991 and 2001.⁵

¹ Gold Coast City Council, *Our Community: A Social Profile of Gold Coast City*, 2nd ed. (Draft as of 29 May 2003) 2003, Chapter "Population, Mobility and Age", p 5

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

⁴ Gold Coast City Council, *Our Community: A Social Profile of Gold Coast City*, 2nd ed. (Draft as of 29 May 2003) 2003, Chapter "A Social Profile – An Overview", p 22

⁵ *ibid*

As noted in Ms Struthers' submission, an ageing population raises concerns such as its impact on taxation levels, national savings, business investment and productivity growth due to the contraction of labour supply.⁶

The demographic profile of Gold Coast City with its older age profile and smaller labour base particularly exacerbates the impact of an ageing population.

Given these demographics, the benefits of the *Disability Discrimination Act* Standards in supporting people with disabilities as well as an ageing population, are particularly relevant for the city.

Assistance to Local Government

The Gold Coast City Council would also like to point out the development of the *Disability Discrimination Act* Standards would be of significant assistance to municipal governments with their specialised role of integrated planning for various local communities, across Australia.

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⁶ V., Sheen, ' *Australia's ageing workforce - The Challenge for Human Resource Management*, Australian Human Resources Institute Conference, 22 May 2001,< <http://www.cota.org.au/ahrispeech.htm>> p 4-5 (17 April 2003)

References

Gold Coast City Council, 2003, *Our Community: A Social Profile of Gold Coast City*, (Draft as of 29 May 2003), 2nd ed., Gold Coast City Council, City of Gold Coast.

Sheen V, ' *Australia's ageing workforce - The Challenge for Human Resource Management*, Australian Human Resources Institute Conference, 22 May 2001, < <http://www.cota.org.au/ahrispeech.htm>.> (17 April 2003).