

SHARP Dummies Pty Ltd

Submission on the Position Paper

We respond to an invitation to comment on the Position Paper "Review of TCF Assistance" by the Productivity Commission (April 2003).
Our comments are:

Taking into account the labour cost in Australia, the value added through new knowledge generated from scientific studies can make our TCF sector competitive easier than other approaches. Pre-production activities should be kept in Australia especially where innovation, flexibility and responsiveness are involved. Thus, unlike in the past, some TCF support should be channelled to the entities that may be devoted only to research and research results diffusion activities rather than direct production of apparel for the market. Research results that produce incremental improvements in productivity may not be seen as attractive R&D investments by single companies, yet, at a national scale they may produce significant benefits for the entire industry.

Sizing of apparel (clothing, footwear etc) is one of good examples here. Current standards are outdated and inapplicable to Australian population resulting in confusion on the market and inefficiencies in trade. Their improvement through local anthropometric research producing valid and practically applicable standards would improve productivity and consumer satisfaction. Results of relevant research cannot be imported as it concerns local Australian population and this knowledge can only be generated in Australia.

Our preliminary activities (written interviews of 5000 people and anthropometric survey of 1400 individuals in 2002 in 6 capital cities) indicate both enormous public dissatisfaction with current sizing practices and interest of many firms in acquiring better standards.

Results of the preliminary anthropometric survey indicate that existing standards (AS 1344) are nowhere near the actual body measurements of Australian women.

Yours sincerely

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