

CITATION: *Queensland Council of Unions AND Local Government Association of Queensland Ltd and Others (B/2010/20) and The Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland AND Local Government Association of Queensland Ltd and Others (B/2010/21) - Decision*
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QUEENSLAND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

Industrial Relations Act 1999 - s. 287 - application for declaration of a general ruling
s. 288 - application for statement of policy

Queensland Council of Unions AND Local Government Association of Queensland Ltd and Others (B/2010/20)

**The Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland
AND Local Government Association of Queensland Ltd and Others (B/2010/21)**

DEPUTY PRESIDENT SWAN
DEPUTY PRESIDENT BLOOMFIELD
COMMISSIONER FISHER

10 August 2010

STATE WAGE CASE 2010

DECISION

THE CLAIMS

- [1] On 23 June 2010 the Queensland Council of Unions (QCU) filed an application (B/2010/20) seeking a general ruling pursuant to s. 287 of the *Industrial Relations Act 1999* (the Act) and a statement of policy pursuant to s. 288 of the Act in regard to the principles of wage fixation. In doing so, QCU sought the following decision:
- a \$26 per week increase in Award wage rates;
 - an increase in existing Award allowances which relate to work or conditions which have not changed and service increments by the equivalent percentage increase to that which the \$26 wage adjustment bears to the C10 wage rate as it appears in the *Engineering Award - State 2002* (i.e. 3.93%);
 - an increase of \$26 per week in the level of the Queensland Minimum Wage (QMW) as it applies to all employees;
 - an operative date for the respective increases from 1 September 2010; and
 - a statement of policy in regard to a statement of principles that may be generated as a result of the aforementioned general rulings.
- [2] On 25 June 2010 the Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland (AWU) filed a similar application (B/2010/21). By consent of all of the parties the two applications were joined in preliminary proceedings conducted on 5 July 2010.

SUBMISSIONS BY QCU IN SUPPORT OF ITS APPLICATION

General

- [3] At the outset, QCU indicated it continued to seek a flat-dollar increase to Award rates of pay and the QMW which had previously been recognised by the Commission as having "... *the benefit of targeting lower paid workers with proportionately higher increases.*"¹.
- [4] QCU asserted that there is capacity for the Queensland economy to sustain the level of increase sought. The present proceedings were taking place at a time when Australia was at the forefront of economic recovery, with conditions in the global economy having improved, global GDP growing at above trend pace and business confidence booming.
- [5] Awarding the level of increases claimed would:
- help to maintain minimum wages relative to community standards, to ensure fair living standards for Queensland's low paid Award-reliant workers;
 - redress, to a certain extent, the wage differential for employees who do not benefit from bargaining; and
 - help to address large gender-pay inequities within Queensland.

¹ *State Wage Case* (2006) 182 QGIG 565 at [282].

Legislative Context

[6] QCU submitted that, in hearing this application, the Commission is required to have regard to s. 126 - Contents of Awards, which provide a framework for economic prosperity and social justice by ensuring that Awards:

- provide for secure, relevant and consistent wages and employment conditions;
- provide fair standards for employees in the context of living standards prevailing in the community; and
- take account of the efficiency and effectiveness of the economy, including productivity, inflation and the desirability of achieving a high level of employment.

[7] The need for deliberations to consider both economic and social factors was outlined in the 2007 State Wage Case Decision when the Commission stated:

*"... there is a need to ensure that people are covered by fair and reasonable wages that allow them to participate in society and that those who do not benefit from bargaining are not left behind. These economic and social objectives are encapsulated in the Principal Object of the Act which is to provide a framework for industrial relations that supports economic prosperity and social justice."*².

[8] Further, the same Full Bench noted that the intent of the Act was for Awards to no longer be a mere safety net of wages and conditions, as follows:

*"... decisions which the Commission is now called upon to make are not in the context of setting rates which provide a safety net of wages and conditions but, rather, wages which represent fair standards for employees in the context of living standards generally prevailing in the community."*³.

Size of the State jurisdiction

[9] The size of the Queensland State jurisdiction changed dramatically following the enactment of the *Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Act 2005* (Cth) (WorkChoices) and the subsequent referral of Queensland's private sector industrial relations powers to the Commonwealth from 1 January 2010 following the enactment of the *Fair Work (Commonwealth Powers) and Other Provisions Act 2009* (the Fair Work referral Act).

[10] Following the enactment of WorkChoices, operative from 27 March 2006, and the referral of private sector industrial relations matters to the federal arena, operative from 1 January 2010, the State jurisdiction now consists of (approximately):

- 250,000 State Government employees (approximately 1,000 of whom are directly affected by this State Wage Case Decision);
- 37,000 Local Government employees (of whom less than 2,000 are Award-reliant);
- an unknown number of employees engaged by statutory authorities; and
- 3,000 to 4,000 employees of Parents and Citizens' Associations.⁴

Economic Conditions - Australia

[11] The QCU referred to a range of economic and other statistical data which it suggested demonstrated the strong performance of the national and Queensland economies over the past year. The data referred to by QCU included the following:

- gross domestic product increased by 0.6% in the March quarter 2010 in trend terms and by 2.7% over the year (0.5% and 2.7% in seasonally adjusted terms);
- domestic final demand grew 1.2% in the March quarter 2010 in trend terms and by 4.3% over the year (0.6% and 4.4% in seasonally adjusted terms);
- household final consumption expenditure increased by 0.6% in the March quarter 2010 in trend terms and by 2.8% over the year (0.6% and 3.1% in seasonally adjusted terms);
- total private fixed capital formation expenditure grew by 0.3% during the March quarter 2010 in trend terms and by 0.3% over the year (negative 2.4% and negative 0.4% in seasonally adjusted terms);
- total public fixed capital formation expenditure increased by 2.3% during the March quarter 2010 in trend terms and by 6.6% over the year (0.5% and 6.7% in seasonally adjusted terms);
- Australia's terms of trade increased by 4.2% in the March quarter 2010 and by 0.3% over the year in seasonally adjusted terms (no trend terms provided);

² *State Wage Case* (2007) 185 QGIG 422 at 21.

³ *State Wage Case* (2007) 185 QGIG 422 at 22.

⁴ QCU Submissions, paragraph 3.10.

- exports increased by 0.2% in the March quarter 2010 in trend terms and by 2.1% over the year (no seasonally adjusted figures quoted);
- imports of goods and services increased by 4% in the March quarter 2010 in trend terms and by 14.4% over the year (1.8% and 15.7% in seasonally adjusted terms); and
- industry gross value added increased by 0.6% in the March quarter 2010 and by 2.7% over the year (0.5% and 2.7% in seasonally adjusted terms).

[12] Other data, which recorded economic performance and business and consumer attitudes, showed the following:

- total inventories held by enterprises and governments rose by \$1,203 million during the March quarter 2010 in seasonally adjusted terms, compared with an increase of \$644 million in the previous quarter. The change in inventory levels, which generally reflects anticipated increases in demand, contributed 0.2 percentage points to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth during the quarter;
- for the year ending 31 March 2010 the wages share of total factor income decreased from 54.6% to 53.4%. This indicates that the proportion of money paid as wages has decreased, relative to employers' business incomes;
- non-farm real unit labour costs decreased by 4% in seasonally adjusted terms in the March quarter 2010 and by 2.4% over the year (trend terms data not supplied). This indicates that the costs incurred by employers in employing labour have decreased;
- in current price trend terms, Australian retail trade turnover increased by 0.2% in May 2010 following increases of 0.1% in April 2010 and 0.2% in March 2010;
- the Australian Government's *Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (2010)*, recorded that consumer confidence is roughly 50% higher than it was in October 2008 and that households appeared to have quite optimistic views about the state of the economy and its future; and
- the Government's *Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (2010)* also recorded that:
 - business confidence is well above long-run average levels, after increasing significantly in the latter part of 2009;
 - business credit stabilised in the March 2010 quarter and the availability of credit has improved; and
 - on the whole, the business sector is in a generally sound financial position.

[13] In terms of interest rate, price and other pressures facing workers, QCU pointed to the following data:

- the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 0.9% over the March quarter 2010 and by 2.9% over the year. Underlying inflation was around 0.8% during the March quarter 2010, which was higher than expected, as well as being above the underlying inflation rate for the December quarter 2009;
- interest rates have increased by 1.5% (or by 50%) since mid-2009, as demonstrated in the following table:

Table 1: *Interest Rate Movements*

Effective Date	Change in Case Rate (Percentage Points)	New Case Rate Target (%)
5 May 2010	+0.25	4.50
7 Apr 2010	+0.25	4.25
3 Mar 2010	+0.25	4.00
2 Dec 2010	+0.25	3.75
4 Nov 2009	+0.25	3.50
7 Oct 2009	+0.25	3.25
8 Apr 2009	-0.25	3.00

- this increase in interest rates has had a large negative impact on household disposable incomes. The ratio of interest payments to household income has increased by approximately 2.5 percentage points since mid-2009; and
- housing prices have increased significantly over the past year to be 15% higher than they were in late 2008.

[14] QCU generally submitted that Queensland's lowest paid Award-reliant employees required the claimed \$26 per week increase to maintain the real value of their wages as a result of increasing price pressures, increasing housing prices and higher interest rates.

Economic Conditions - Queensland

[15] QCU reproduced Table 4 - State and National Economic Outcomes and Forecasts, from the *State Budget 2010 - 2011: Budget Strategy and Outlook - Budget Paper No. 2 (2010)* which recorded Queensland and national

outcomes in a number of areas for 2008-2009, estimates for 2009-2010 and forecasts for the subsequent two financial years.

[16] In referring to the data contained in this table, QCU highlighted the following:

- growth in Queensland's gross State product slowed to 1.4% in 2008-09, which was at its lowest rate since 1990-91. This reflected the impact of the global financial crisis on business and consumer confidence, household wealth and demand for exports. However, growth is estimated to increase significantly by the end of 2009-10, to 3%. In each instance, actual and estimated gross State product are higher than the national figures;
- the global financial crisis had a large impact on asset prices and consumer confidence. As a consequence, household consumption grew by only 2.7% in 2008-09 with growth likely to remain low, at 2% for 2009-10. QCU submitted that this was reflective of a weakening of disposable income for households. Higher household debt levels, combined with rising interest rates, had also affected discretionary spending;
- Queensland's export growth decreased by 1.6% in 2008-09 but is forecast to increase by 6.75% in 2009-10;
- Queensland's level of imports of goods and services decreased by 1.5% in 2008-09 and is expected to decrease by a further 0.75% in 2009-10;
- public final demand increased by 5.6% in 2008-09 and is expected to grow by a further 6.25% in 2009-10;
- business investment tripled in the eight years leading up to 2008-09 but is forecast to fall by 16.5% in 2009-10. However, it is forecast to increase (again) by 9.5% in 2010-11;
- dwelling investment declined by 7.6% in 2008-09 but was forecast to increase marginally, by 0.25%, in 2009-10. It was forecast to grow by 6.5% in 2010-11;
- inflation declined from 3.7% over the year and was expected to fall to 2.75% by the end of 2009-10; and
- retail trade remained stagnant between August 2009 and February 2010. However, slight increases of 0.1% were experienced in each of April and May 2010. In trend terms, retail trade growth reached 0.9%. In seasonally adjusted terms retail trade increased by 1.2% in April 2010, which was the highest increase in over a year.

The Economic Outlook

[17] Drawing on the Australian Government's *Statement No. 2: Economic Outlook (2010)* QCU submitted that "*(t)he global economy is showing strong signs of recovery and global growth is improving more rapidly than expected. This has eased concerns about global financial stability and has increased business confidence.*"⁵.

[18] Quoting *World Economic Outlook: April 2010*, published by the International Monetary Fund, QCU observed that the global economy is predicted to grow by 4.25% in both 2010 and 2011, following a 0.5% contraction in 2009.

[19] The same publication also indicated:

*"(t)he recovery has been stronger than expected thus far, as confidence has picked up among consumers and business as well as in financial markets ... extraordinary policy intervention since the crisis has all but eliminated the risk of a second Great Depression, laying the foundation for recovery."*⁶.

[20] In referring to the Australia situation QCU quoted from the Reserve Bank of Australia's *Statement on Monetary Policy - May (2010)* as follows:

*"(t)he Australian economy continues to recover from what turned out to be a relatively mild downturn. Over the past 18 months or so, activity has been supported by stimulatory settings of fiscal and monetary policy, high population growth, strong trade links with Asia and a sound financial system. Compared with the experience elsewhere in the developed world, business investment is at high levels and exports held up well through the financial crisis."*⁷.

[21] In terms of estimates and predictions for Australia, QCU stated:

- the Australian economy is predicted to grow by 3.25% in 2010-11 and by 4% in 2011-12, significantly better than initially anticipated;

⁵ QCU Submissions, paragraph 5.4.

⁶ QCU Submissions, paragraph 5.7.

⁷ QCU Submissions, paragraph 5.15.

- domestic final demand is forecast to increase by 3.75% by the end of 2010-11 and by a further 4.5% in 2011-12;
- household consumption is expected to grow by 3.5% in 2010-11 and by 4% in 2011-12;
- new business investment is expected to increase by 7% in 2010-11 and by a further 12.5% in 2011-12;
- dwelling investment is forecast to grow by 7.5% in 2010-11 and by a further 4% in 2011-12;
- export volumes are predicted to increase by 5% in 2010-11 and by a further 6% in 2011-12;
- consistent with strengthening domestic activity, import volumes are expected to increase by 9% in 2010-11 and by 8.5% in 2011-12;
- underlying inflation is predicted to reach 2.75% by the end of 2010, and it is forecast to trend higher, to around 3%, in 2012; and
- interest rates are forecast to increase to 5.25% by the end of 2010 and to 6% by late 2011 (source: National Australia Bank, *The Bigger Picture - A Global and Australian Economic Perspective*).

[22] QCU also indicated that the position in Queensland was likely to mirror, or better, the national position as stated above. In terms of projections, QCU stated:

- Queensland's overall economic growth is expected to improve to 3.25% in 2010-11 and to accelerate to 4.5% in 2011-12;
- export growth is expected to continue to be particularly strong in 2010-11, largely because of further growth in coal exports but also because of further economic recovery of traditional major buyers in the Asia-Pacific region;
- private investment is forecast to increase by 7% in 2010-11 and by a further 15.5% in 2011-12;
- business investment is predicted to rise by 9.5% in 2011 as a result of further strong global demand for resources. A further increase of 17.75% is projected in 2011-12; and
- household consumption is expected to grow rapidly to 3.5% in 2010-11 and by 4% in 2011-12. However, household consumption will generally remain at below average levels during this period partially as a result of increasing interest rates which have a negative impact on household disposable income and consumer confidence.

The Labour Market

[23] QCU provided a wealth of data which it said demonstrated that labour market conditions have improved since the middle of 2009 and which also showed that the Australian and Queensland labour markets did not decline to the same levels as experienced in the 1980's and 1990's recessions, as predicted by some stakeholders at the time of the last State Wage Case.

[24] Referring to this data, QCU indicated:

- the national unemployment rate has stabilized below the predicted 6.5%, having peaked at 5.8% and subsequently decreased to 5.2% in May 2010 in both trend and seasonally adjusted terms;
- the unemployment rate is forecast to continue to decline in the mid-term, reaching 5% by the end of 2010-11 and 4.75% by the end of 2011-12;
- the participation rate, in trend and seasonally adjusted terms, was 65.1% in May 2010 which was only marginally below its peak of 65.6% in April 2008. QCU said the relatively stable participation rate indicates that there has not been a surge in the labour force;
- in the mid-term, the participation rate is predicted to reach 65.5% in the June quarter 2011;
- the underemployment rate, in trend terms, decreased from 7.8% in the August and November quarters of 2009 to 7.6% in the February quarter 2010, reducing further to 7.2% as at May 2010; and
- full-time aggregate monthly hours worked increased by 2.4% in May 2010 to be at their highest level since the previous peak of July 2008.

[25] In terms of the situation in Queensland, QCU provided the following data:

- unemployment, in trend terms, reached a peak of 6% in October 2009 but that figure has subsequently declined rapidly, to 5.5% in May 2010;
- the rate of employment growth in Queensland has increased for six consecutive months and is now at the highest level it has been since late 2006;
- the participation rate in Queensland is higher than the national figure, being 67.3% in February 2010 and 67.6% in May 2010; and
- consistent with recent declines in the level of unemployment, the unemployment rate is forecast to continue to decline in 2011-12, to a level of 5.25%

Movements in Wage Measures

- [26] While there are four commonly used measures of wage growth, namely: average weekly earnings (AWE), average weekly ordinary time earnings (AWOTE), average earnings on a national accounts (AENA) basis, and the wage price index (WPI), the latter index had previously been accepted by the Commission (*State Wage Case (2006)*)⁸ as the most useful indicator of wage trends on the basis it was less subject to compositional changes in the workforce and therefore less volatile in comparison to other measures of wage movements, particularly AWOTE and average annualised wage increases (AAWI). Further, the WPI is the Reserve Bank of Australia's preferred measure of wages growth.
- [27] QCU said that the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics⁹ (ABS) data showed the following quarterly and yearly movements in WPI to the February quarter 2010.

Table 2: *Quarterly and yearly change in WPI to February quarter 2010 (total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses)*

	Private sector	Public sector	All sectors
Quarterly increase to Feb-10	0.6%	1.1%	0.7%
Yearly increase to Feb-10	2.5%	4.2%	2.9%

- [28] Referring to another ABS publication¹⁰ (below) QCU submitted the gap between AWOTE for men and women increased by \$28.60 per week, to \$236.20 per week, between February 2009 and February 2010. Expressed as a percentage, the gap increased from 16.6% to 17.7%, as shown in the following table:

Table 3: *AWOTE for full time adults by gender*

	AWOTE full-time male	AWOTE full-time females	Gender-pay gap (\$)	Gender-pay gap (%)
Nov 2008	\$1,232.50	\$1,031.60	200.90	16.3
Feb 2009	\$1,251.30	\$1,043.70	207.60	16.6
May 2009	\$1,269.20	\$1,054.70	214.50	16.9
Aug 2009	\$1,288.10	\$1,066.60	221.50	17.2
Nov 2009	\$1,307.60	\$1,078.80	228.80	17.5
Feb 2010	\$1,331.40	\$1,095.20	236.20	17.7

- [29] At a national level, Queensland has the second highest gender-pay gap based on adult hourly ordinary time earnings, as demonstrated in the following table¹¹:

Table 4: *Gender-pay inequity by State*

State/Territory	Adult hourly ordinary time earnings (\$)		Gender-pay gap (%)
	Male	Female	
NSW	31.10	27.80	10.6
VIC	29.50	26.30	10.8
QLD	29.30	25.40	13.3
SA	28.30	25.10	11.3
WA	33.10	26.30	20.5
TAS	26.10	24.80	5.0
NT	29.60	26.30	11.1
ACT	35.60	31.50	11.5
Australia	30.30	26.70	11.9

Social Factors

- [30] Highlighting that the Commission had previously indicated that an application of this type must be considered in both an economic and a social context, QCU referred to extracts of the Commission's 2007, 2008 and 2009 State Wage Case Decisions, respectively. In the latter Decision, the Full Bench stated:

⁸ State Wage Case (2006) 182 QGIG 565 at [269].

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 6345.0 - *Labour Price Index, Australia, March (2010)*.

¹⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 6302.0 - *Average Weekly Earnings, February (2010)*.

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 6306.0 - *Employee Earnings and Hours (2008)*.

"(i)n determining the applications, this Commission has a range of criteria which must be addressed. This includes the statutory obligation to provide secure, relevant and consistent wages for employees together with a requirement to ensure that fair standards 'in the context of living standards generally prevailing in the community' apply (s. 126(f) of the Act). There is also a statutory requirement to consider relevant economic data, together with a requirement to ensure equal remuneration for men and women performing work of equal value."¹².

[31] In the same Decision the Full Bench stated:

"(i)t is imperative that the gulf between award-reliant employees and the vast majority of employees who gain outcomes through collective bargaining is not widened to the point where a sub-group of disadvantaged employees emerge. The statutory requirements to provide relevant and consistent wages which provide for fair standards for employees in the context of living standards and outcomes which ensure 'social justice' demand a measured response from the Commission, after taking into consideration current and projected economic conditions."¹³.

[32] In this regard, QCU submitted that data prepared by the ABS¹⁴ showed there was no incentive for workers to remain on minimum rates. Employees whose wages were set by Awards received considerably lower hourly and weekly wages, on average, than employees whose earnings are set by other methods, as revealed in the following table:

Table 5: Average hourly cash earnings by method of setting pay (non managerial employees)

	Males	Females	Persons
Award only	\$18.20	\$19.40	\$18.80
All methods of setting pay	\$30.10	\$26.20	\$28.30

Summary

[33] In summarising its submissions, QCU submitted that there were nine general themes which justified the claimed increase of \$26 per week, as follows:

1. *The decision will have a limited impact on Queensland's employers, as a result of the limited size of the State jurisdiction and the low degree of award dependency within the jurisdiction.*
2. *Both the Australian and Queensland economies performed far better than forecasts expected over 2008-09 and the 2009-10 year to date.*
3. *The short to mid-term economic outlooks for Australia and Queensland are particularly strong.*
4. *Both the Australian and Queensland labour markets did not decline to the extent predicted at the time of the last State Wage Case decision and significant improvements have been realised both in markets of 2008-09 and the 2009-10 year to date.*
5. *All general measures of wages for the Australian and Queensland labour markets for 2008-09 and the 2009-10 year to date are indicative of particularly strong labour market conditions.*
6. *General measures of wages for the Australian and Queensland labour markets are forecast to strengthen further over the mid-term.*
7. *The decision will help to maintain minimum wages relative to community standards, to ensure fair living standards for Queensland's low paid, award-reliant workers.*
8. *The decision will redress, to a certain extent, the wage differential for employees who do not benefit from bargaining.*
9. *The decision will help to address large gender-pay inequities within in Queensland."*

¹² State Wage Case (2009) 192 QGIG 18 at [118].

¹³ State Wage Case (2009) 192 QGIG 18 at [121].

¹⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 6306.0 - Employee Earnings and Hours (2008).

[34] The AWU adopted and supported the submissions of QCU.

SUBMISSIONS OF THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT

[35] In response to the applications by QCU and AWU the Queensland Government proposed:

- a general ruling to provide an increase that maintains real wages for all Award-reliant workers in the State industrial relations system;
- an increase to existing Award allowances which relate to work or conditions which have not changed and to service increments; and
- an operative date of 1 September 2010.

[36] The Queensland Government also stated:

- the Government supports the maintenance of real wages for all Award-reliant workers in the State industrial relations system;
- Award wage increases serve an important social function by directly targeting and benefiting those employees who are not able negotiate wage increases with their employer through enterprise bargaining. This helps to ensure that those workers with little or no bargaining power, who rely on Awards for their rate of pay, are not unduly disadvantaged;
- the Commission is required to ensure that Awards provide fair standards for employees in the context of living standards generally prevailing in the community. As such, the Commission should award an increase that at least maintains the real value of the Queensland minimum wage so that the living standards of the lowest paid are not reduced;
- Award-reliant employees in the State system are engaged in both State and Local Government. Those employees most likely to be affected are concentrated in organisations such as remote and Indigenous Councils and Parents and Citizens' Associations.

[37] The Queensland Government submission agreed with QCU's estimate (see paragraph [10] above) as to the number of employees remaining in the State jurisdiction as a consequence of the enactment of WorkChoices and the Fair Work referral Act. Using a "worst-case assumption", to the effect that all 37,000 employees in the Local Government sector, all employees of Parents and Citizens' Associations and its own Award-reliant employees received a 3% increase, the Queensland Government estimated that the total increase in average weekly earnings across the State would be approximately 0.035% and affect 1.74% of the total Queensland workforce. This cost was considered to be a reasonable and affordable addition to wages growth.

[38] The Queensland Government submission also indicated that since the Act commenced operation on 1 July 1999, the Commission has determined eleven annual adjustments to Award rates of pay through State Wage Cases. The following table (Table 6) demonstrates that State Wage Case increases have provided the lowest paid workers in Queensland, who have not received increases through collective or individual bargaining, small real wage increases, with the C14 or QMW increasing by 7.07% in real terms since September 1998. Award-reliant employees at the C9 level and above, however, have had their wages reduced in real terms over the period. By comparison, AWOTE has increased by 19.95% in real terms. This indicates that while the lowest paid workers have kept up with price inflation they have not necessarily kept up with community standards.

Table 6: *Real and nominal increases for award rates and AWOTE 1998-2008*

	1 Sep 1998	1 Sep 2009	\$ Increase	Nominal % Increase	Real % Increase
AWOTE*	\$698.60	\$1,185.30	490.00	70.47	19.95
C14	\$373.40	\$568.20	194.80	52.17	7.07
C13	\$390.10	\$584.90	194.80	49.94	5.50
C12	\$412.60	\$607.40	194.80	47.21	3.58
C11	\$433.50	\$628.30	194.80	44.94	1.98
C10	\$465.20	\$662.00	196.80	42.30	0.13
C9	\$486.10	\$682.90	196.80	40.49	-1.15
C8	\$506.90	\$703.70	196.80	38.82	-2.32
C7	\$527.80	\$722.60	196.80	37.43	-3.30
C6	\$567.50	\$764.30	196.80	34.68	-5.24
C5	\$587.80	\$784.60	196.80	33.48	-6.08

*AWOTE QLD based on Aug 1998 qtr and Aug 2008 qtr Trend data

Source: AWOTE: ABS *Average Weekly Earnings* Cat. No. 6302; Award rates: Engineering Award - State 2002

- [39] In terms of economic activity, at both a national and State level, the Queensland Government's submission indicated:
- the Australian economy has performed better than expected in the face of profound global financial instability and macroeconomic weakness;
 - the Australian Treasury estimates GDP growth of 2.25% in 2009-10, strengthening to 3% in 2010-11 and 3.75% in 2011-12. Future economic growth is forecast to be driven by stronger private final demand which will more than offset the phasing-out of fiscal stimulus;
 - Queensland gross State product slowed to 1.4% in 2008-09, its lowest rate since 1990-91. Growth is estimated to strengthen to 3% in 2009-10 due to resilient demand for coal from Asia and the public sector stimulus;
 - household consumption growth on a national level has remained resilient in recent months and is expected to grow by 3% in 2010-11 and 3.75% in 2011-12;
 - in Queensland, the impact of the global financial crisis caused household consumption growth to slow to 2.7% in 2008-09, with growth estimated to remain subdued in 2009-10 at 2%. Household consumption growth is forecast to strengthen to 3.5% in 2010-11 and by 4% in 2011-12, which is below average; and
 - new business investment on a national basis is forecast to grow by 7.5% in 2010-11 and by 12.5% in 2011-12. This would see total business investment approach its recent highs as a proportion of GDP.
- [40] In other areas, the economic data provided by the Queensland Government mirrored the information contained within QCU's submission (above). In those circumstances, it is not necessary to refer to it again.
- [41] While generally indicating that the current economic outlook at a global and national level had improved over the last 12 months, the Queensland Government submitted that there were still a number of uncertainties and important emerging risks, most notably the sustainability of sovereign risk and fiscal consolidation in the context of reversing the extraordinary stimulus measures undertaken by world governments in recent years. In particular, concerns over sovereign debt in Europe were said to have "*highlighted the fragility of sentiment and heightened financial market volatility.*"¹⁵.
- [42] Notwithstanding that the Queensland economy was in the early stages of recovery, albeit that some risks remained, the Queensland Government submitted that "*at this stage in the business cycle the maintenance of real wages is appropriate.*"¹⁶.
- [43] The Queensland Government submission also said that an increase which enabled Award-reliant employees to "*maintain their real wage position*" should be supported "*as it provides a good balance between the two major legislative requirements of the Act - that is, to support employment and keep the wages of the low-paid in touch with the community standard.*"¹⁷.
- [44] Finally, the Queensland Government supported a continuation of the current statement of principles through a statement of policy, with the necessary amendments to reflect changes to operative dates, the quantum of wage and allowance adjustments determined by the Full Bench, and other consequential amendments.

SUBMISSIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND LTD (LGAQ)

- [45] LGAQ opposed the \$26 per week increase claimed by QCU and AWU, respectively, and proposed that the Commission award the following:
- a \$17.05 per week wage adjustment for Award employees;
 - a 2.6% allowance adjustment for Award employees; and
 - a \$17.05 per week adjustment to the QMW as it applies to employees.
- [46] LGAQ submitted that the increase of \$17.05 per week it proposed would represent an increase to the current minimum wage of 3% and would be in accordance with the consensus projections for underlying aggregate inflation for 2010-11. An increase of \$17.05 per week would also reflect an increase in the minimum wage slightly above the percentage increase in aggregate wages reflected by the Labour Price Index for the 12 months to March 2010.
- [47] LGAQ submitted that:
- "... in relation to the areas of the Local Government sector (which) are the most affected by this application, a disproportionately large increase of \$26 as sought by the QCU and AWU will clearly have an impact on not*

¹⁵ Queensland Government Submission, paragraph 69.

¹⁶ Queensland Government Submission, paragraph 70.

¹⁷ Queensland Government Submission, paragraph 86.

only those Local Governments' financial capacity to deliver vital services within their broader Local Government areas, but will also have a flow on impact to both the incorporated and unincorporated private sector and the broader community given that individual Councils' ability to raise rates or levy additional funding from their communities is intrinsically linked to the economic capacity of those communities to absorb such increases.¹⁸ⁿ.

- [48] LGAQ also indicated that the capacity of Queensland Local Governments to "cross subsidise" increases in rates and charges within their communities had been impacted by decisions of both State and Federal Governments to reel in their budget deficits following significant financial stimulus packages over the past two years. In this respect, LGAQ estimated that Queensland Councils are about \$45 million worse off in 2009-10 as a result of last year's budget decisions.
- [49] It was also estimated that Councils will be worse off by up to a further \$100 million per annum from 2011-12 once the existing water and sewerage subsidy (of 40%) is capped at \$45 million per annum across all of Local Government.
- [50] In addition, Queensland Councils are now also subject to a Commonwealth loan guarantee from Queensland Treasury Corporation for existing and new borrowings as a result of the Queensland Government losing its AAA credit rating. This will result in Councils paying an additional 20 basis points for existing loans maturing after 2010 and 35 basis points for all new loans. These costs will add approximately \$7.5 million per annum to Local Council repayments at a time when Local Government budget deficits are at record highs as a result of on-going amalgamation costs.
- [51] LGAQ disputed the estimated number of Award-reliant employees employed by Queensland Local Government (see paragraph [10] above) and produced a table which recorded estimated numbers of employees falling into the following categories:
- Category 1 - total EBA reliance;
 - Category 2 - partial EBA and partial Award reliance; and
 - Category 3 - complete Award reliance.

Table 7: *Award Reliance in Queensland Local Government Sector*

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
No. of Councils	12	42	18
No. of Employees (where known)*	7,295	22,271	2,000

*Category 1 includes the Brisbane City Council but does not include an estimate of the number of employees of the Council. In proceedings on 17 September 2009 related to certification of the Council's most recent EBA the Commission was informed the Council employed 9,537 employees. If these employees are included, the number of Local Government employees across the State would be in the order of 41,000.

- [52] From this table LGAQ estimated that, to varying degrees, in excess of 24,000 employees across the Queensland Local Government sector will potentially be affected by the Commission's decision in the present proceedings.
- [53] In terms of the obligations of the Commission, pursuant to s. 126 of the Act, LGAQ argued "*the QIRC should consider its broad minimum wage setting parameters with a greater weighting toward those employers and employees most affected by the outcome of such decision, given the significantly reduced jurisdiction of the Act.*"¹⁹.
- [54] In this respect, LGAQ said that much of the positive aggregate economic data provided by QCU in support of a \$26 per week increase to minimum wages did not reflect the true economic circumstances for those employers and employees residing within those regional areas where the QIRC's decision will have its greatest impact.²⁰
- [55] For Councils residing in the Far North and Far North West Queensland, respectively, the situation was quite different to the picture portrayed by QCU. The most recent Regional Unemployment Index (RUIN) for February 2010 indicated that the unemployment rate in Local Government areas encompassing Far North Queensland had increased by 2.8% to 12.4%. In the regional area of Northern-North West Queensland the unemployment rate had increased by just under 1% to 6.8%.
- [56] Further, based on the definition of "recession" adopted on page 56 of the RUIN Report, as of February 2010 the region of Far North Queensland would clearly have been in recession given its rising unemployment levels. Northern-North West Queensland, while not necessarily experiencing negative growth was, nonetheless, experiencing slowing growth with increasing unemployment.

¹⁸ Local Government Association of Queensland Submission, paragraph 9.

¹⁹ Local Government Association of Queensland Submission, paragraph 28.

²⁰ Local Government Association of Queensland Submission, paragraph 29.

[57] Of those Local Governments falling into Category 3 (i.e. complete Award reliance) in Table 7, LGAQ indicated that 67% were located in the survey area of Far North Queensland, while the Local Government areas of Doomadgee, Flinders and Mornington were in the Northern-North West area considered in the RUIN survey. Consequently, of those Local Governments identified in Category 3 (complete Award reliance), 83% were situated in the RUIN survey areas of Far North Queensland and Northern-North West Queensland. Similarly, 60% of Category 2 Councils (i.e. partial Award reliance) resided in the same RUIN survey areas.

[58] After referring to that material LGAQ went on to submit:

"41. While LGAQ accepts that under the Industrial relations Act 1999 the QIRC has a broader set of parameters to consider in setting appropriate minimum wages than that of pure economic capacity or the level of unemployment prevailing in the community, it is clear that the desirability of facilitating high levels of employment and the economic capacity for employers and the community in which they reside to absorb such increases is an important statutory consideration in awarding safety net increases.

42. LGAQ maintains that in the case of where the QIRC's minimum wage setting outcomes will have its largest impact on the Local Government sector, the QIRC should place significant weight on considering the effectiveness of the economy in those regions in light of what appears to be some of the lowest economic growth and highest unemployment levels in Queensland if not nationally.

43. In conclusion, LGAQ maintains that the number of Queensland Local Government employees affected by the QIRC's safety net general ruling is significantly greater than the figure quoted by the QCU as being merely 'award reliant'. Many Local Governments in Queensland continue to remain under considerable financial pressure due to amalgamation costs, higher credit costs and reductions in subsidies and grants due to tighter fiscal settings by the State Government."

[59] Finally, LGAQ said that the capacity of individual Local Governments to improve their revenue situation to allow them to meet the expected cost impositions arising from the present proceedings was limited due to slow economic growth in a number of areas. In particular, the Commission's General Ruling would have its most significant impact in the regions of Far North and North-West Queensland, which were those areas where the RUIN survey revealed increasing unemployment levels and low economic growth.

SUBMISSION BY AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION (ACSEA)

[60] The Australian Community Services Employers Association (ACSEA) opposed the \$26 per week increase to State Awards and the QMW as claimed by QCU and AWU and proposed the following:

- a 2.9% wage adjustment for Award employees; and
- a 2.6% allowance adjustment for Award employees.

[61] ACSEA indicated that an increase of 2.9% would be in accordance with the consensus projections for underlying aggregate inflation for 2010-11 as estimated by the Reserve Bank of Australia in its *Statement on Monetary Policy, May 2010*. Such level of increase was also said to be slightly above the percentage increase in aggregate wages reflected by the Labour Price Index for the 12 months to March 2010.

[62] Largely mirroring the LGAQ submission in content, style, and wording, ACSEA argued that the \$26 per week claim by QCU and AWU, which reflected the Fair Work Australia (FWA) Annual Wage Review Decision of 3 June 2010, was "*fanciful at best*". This was because FWA, in awarding a \$26 increase to federal minimum Award wages, "*implicitly compensated federal Award-reliant employees for what was a 12 month wage freeze by the Fair Pay Commission for the period July 2009 to June 2010, while over the same period Queensland Award and minimum wage reliant employees received an increase of \$16.20 per week.*"²¹.

[63] ACSEA also argued that it would be the Queensland Parents and Citizens' Associations who would be most affected by the present applications. It was argued that the "*disproportionately large increase of \$26 as sought by the QCU and AWU*" would clearly have an impact not only on the 1,290 Parents and Citizens' Associations across Queensland but would also have a flow-on impact in childcare and other community facilities throughout the State.

²¹ Australian Community Services Employers Association Submission, paragraph 5, which mirrored the Local Government Association Queensland Submissions, paragraph 6.

- [64] It was also submitted that many Parents and Citizens' Associations continued to remain under considerable financial pressure due to increasing costs and reductions in the number of grants/subsidies received due to tighter fiscal settings by the State Government.
- [65] In conclusion, ACSEA indicated that it could not confirm QCU's estimate (see paragraph [10]) of the number of employees of Parents and Citizens' Associations in Queensland who might be affected by any QIRC general ruling.

QCU SUBMISSIONS IN REPLY

- [66] QCU said adjusting wages to reflect the underlying inflation rate, as proposed by both LGAQ and ACSEA, was not an appropriate mechanism to determine wage outcomes. Rather, if minimum wage rates were to remain relevant, movements in the WPI were a more suitable measure of comparative wage outcomes.
- [67] QCU also supported the approach advocated by LGAQ at [53] above and said the most appropriate WPI measure for the Commission to rely upon was the Queensland Public Sector figure, of 4.5% for the year ended March 2010, as reflected in Table 2 above.
- [68] QCU also indicated that in its 2009 State Wage Case Decision the Commission recognised the growing gap between Award wage increases and general wage movements in the community when it stated:

"(s)ince 2000/2001, the QMW has grown by 7% in real terms, however, the Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE) has grown by 11.2%. This shows that QMW has not kept pace with real wage growth."²²

- [69] Further, awarding the \$17.05 per week increase proposed by LGAQ would only exacerbate the gap between Queensland's lowest paid, Award-dependent, workers as compared to the remainder of the Queensland Public Sector working population, as demonstrated in the following table:

Table 8: *Real wage change - LGAQ proposal*

Classification	Current weekly rate	LGAQ proposal	Adjusted rate weekly rate	Nominal increase	Underlying aggregate inflation	Real wage change
C14	\$568.20	\$17.05	\$585.25	3.00%	3.0%	0.00%
C13	\$584.90	\$17.05	\$601.95	2.92%	3.0%	-0.08%
C12	\$607.40	\$17.05	\$624.45	2.81%	3.0%	-0.19%
C11	\$628.30	\$17.05	\$645.35	2.71%	3.0%	-0.29%
C10	\$662.00	\$17.05	\$679.05	2.58%	3.0%	-0.42%
C9	\$682.90	\$17.05	\$699.95	2.50%	3.0%	-0.50%
C8	\$703.70	\$17.05	\$720.75	2.42%	3.0%	-0.58%
C7	\$722.60	\$17.05	\$739.65	2.36%	3.0%	-0.64%
C6	\$764.30	\$17.05	\$781.35	2.23%	3.0%	-0.77%
C5	\$784.60	\$17.05	\$801.65	2.17%	3.0%	-0.83%
C4	\$806.00	\$17.05	\$823.05	2.12%	3.0%	-0.88%
C3	\$847.70	\$17.05	\$864.75	2.01%	3.0%	-0.99%
C2a	\$868.60	\$17.05	\$885.65	1.96%	3.0%	-1.04%
C2b	\$906.30	\$17.05	\$923.35	1.88%	3.0%	-1.12%

- [70] QCU said that under LGAQ's proposal the C14 classification level (the same as the QMW) was the only classification level for which the real value of wages would be maintained.
- [71] Referring to LGAQ's submission about the number of employees who were totally or partially Award-reliant (see Table 7 above), QCU said its analysis of the data provided by LGAQ showed that only 2280 employees in Category 2 were reliant on movements in the Award for their wage increases. As such, only 4280 (or about 10%) of Queensland Local Government Sector employees would be impacted by the Commission's Decision in the present proceedings.

²² *State Wage Case (2009) 192 QGIG 18 at [120].*

CONCLUSIONS

Legislative Considerations

[72] In deciding the present applications the Commission is required to have regard to the Objects of the Act as well as s. 126 - Contents of Awards. Relevantly, s. 3 - Principal object of this Act, provides as follows:

"The principal object of this Act is to provide a framework for industrial relations that supports economic prosperity and social justice by -

...

(b) providing for an effective and efficient economy, with strong economic growth, high employment, employment security, improved living standards, low inflation and national and international competitiveness; and

...

(d) ensuring equal remuneration for men and women employees for work of equal or comparable value; and

...

(f) promoting the effective and efficient operation of enterprises and industries; and

(g) ensuring wages and employment conditions provide fair standards in relation to living standards prevailing in the community; and ...".

[73] Section 126 - Content of Awards, relevantly provides:

"The commission must ensure an award -

...

(d) provides for secure, relevant and consistent wages and employment conditions; and

(e) provides for equal remuneration for men and women employees for work of equal or comparable value; and

(f) provides fair standards for employees in the context of living standards generally prevailing in the community; and

(g) is suited to the efficient performance of work according to the needs of particular enterprises, industries or workplaces; and

(h) takes account of the efficiency and effectiveness of the economy, including productivity, inflation and the desirability of achieving a high level of employment; and ...".

[74] Reflecting the above provisions, each of the parties to these proceedings acknowledged that the Commission is required to balance economic and social factors in making its Decision in this matter, as recorded in the 2007 State Wage Case Decision:

"In economic terms, there is a need to ensure wage outcomes are consistent with strong economic performance. In social terms, there is a need to ensure that people are covered by fair and reasonable wages that allow them to participate in society and that those who do not benefit from bargaining are not left behind."²³.

Economic Considerations

[75] The economic data and other material provided by QCU and the Queensland Government, respectively, demonstrate that, overall, the economic position within the State has improved over the last 12 months and that the forward outlook is generally positive, albeit that some risks still remain - especially European sovereign debt and the capacity of individual economies to continue their present rate of recovery given the progressive withdrawal of Government stimulus measures.

[76] In Queensland, the level of economic activity remains relatively subdued although trending upwards. After growth of only 1.4% in Gross State Product in 2008-09, growth is estimated to strengthen to 3% in 2009-10, increasing further to 3.25% in 2010-11 and 4.5% in 2011-12. In each case the Queensland economy is expected to outperform the Australian economy.

[77] Weaker than normal jobs growth in 2009-10 is likely to lead to an increase in total jobs of approximately 0.75% leaving the year-average unemployment rate at 5.75%. However, this represents a peak below previous economic downturns which experienced an unemployment rate of around 7%. In line with stronger economic growth, jobs growth is forecast to accelerate to 2.75% in 2010-11 and 3.25% in 2011-12, reducing the year-average unemployment rate to 5.25% by 2011-12.

²³ State Wage Case (2007) 185 QGIG 422 at 444.

[78] LGAQ's submission suggested that the economic effects of any General Ruling which the Commission might make would be felt most severely by Local Governments in the Far North and Far North Western areas of the State where the February 2010 RUI survey (above) recorded rising unemployment levels and slowing economic growth. In a similar vein, ACSEA suggested that Parents and Citizens' Associations would be adversely affected if the "*disproportionately large increase of \$26 as sought by the QCU and AWU*" was granted.

[79] However, as the Queensland Government pointed out in its submission:

"88. ... *the maintenance of real wages and conditions will always have some impact on labour costs. However, the small cost burden which would be associated with the increase suggested should not constitute a reason for denying the maintenance of current standards. The Queensland Government, having calculated the likely effect of this increase, submits that the small cost impact is acceptable given the other imperatives of the Commission in setting award rates of pay.*

89. *The Queensland Government also notes that the Economic Incapacity Principle provides for any party to apply to, temporarily or otherwise, reduce, postpone and/or phase-in the application of any increase in labour costs on the ground of very serious or extreme economic adversity."*

[80] Notwithstanding their submissions (paragraph [78]) about economic impact, LGAQ nonetheless proposed a \$17.05 per week increase in the QMW and Award wages while ACSEA proposed an increase of 2.6%.

Social Considerations

[81] As noted by QCU in its submissions (see paragraph [31]) the Commission has previously observed:

*"(i)t is imperative that the gulf between award-reliant employees and the vast majority of employees who gain outcomes through collective bargaining is not widened to the point where a sub-group of disadvantaged employees emerge. The statutory requirements to provide relevant and consistent wages which provide for fair standards for employees in the context of living standards and outcomes which ensure 'social justice' demand a measured response from the Commission, after taking into consideration current and projected economic conditions."*²⁴.

[82] The Queensland Government and QCU both highlighted that while Queensland's lower paid Award-reliant workers had received small real increases in their wage rates over the last decade, workers on higher Award rates (C9 and above) had experienced declines in the real value of their Award wages. Further, *all* Award-reliant employees had received considerably lower increases than workers receiving average weekly ordinary time earnings (see Table 6). In other words, while Award-reliant workers had generally kept up with price inflation their wage rates had not kept up with community standards.

[83] Similarly, QCU submitted that if LGAQ's proposal for a \$17.05 per week increase in the QMW and Award rates was accepted the real wage levels of Award-reliant workers receiving more than the QMW would decrease (see Table 8).

[84] The changes to the Commission's jurisdiction in recent years, as a result of the enactment of WorkChoices and the Fair Work referral Act, has resulted in the situation where the actual number of workers potentially impacted by any General Ruling Decision the Commission might make is more readily apparent.

[85] From the information provided by the respective parties, it appears that the following persons will be impacted, to varying degrees, by any increase in Award rates as a result of the present proceedings:

- approximately 1,000 State Government employees, who work for small entities such as water boards and who are not covered by the Core Agreement covering the bulk of public sector employees in Queensland;
- approximately 4,000 employees of Local Governments; and
- 3,000 to 4,000 employees of Parents and Citizens' Associations spread throughout the State. Many of these employees, the majority of whom could reasonably be expected to be female, are engaged in the delivery of outside school hours care.

[86] Left to their own devices, these employees will, more likely than not, continue to remain Award-reliant and be unable to achieve collective bargaining outcomes. As such, based upon historical wage outcomes and projected income growth, they will slip further behind workers receiving average weekly ordinary time earnings (see Table 3, Table 5 and Table 6).

²⁴ *State Wage Case* (2009) 192 QGIG 18 at [121].

DECISION

Level of increase

[87] In summary, the respective parties proposed the following increases to the QMW and Award wage rates:

- QCU and AWU - \$26.00 per week.
- LGAQ - \$17.05 per week.
- ACSEA - 2.9%, said to represent "*the consensus projections for underlying aggregate inflation for 2010-11.*"²⁵ and
- Queensland Government - "*(a) moderate increase to maintain the real value of Award wages*", to be ascertained by reference to the projected Brisbane Consumer Price Index²⁶.

[88] After considering all of the submissions of the parties, especially:

- the obligations on the Commission imposed by s. 3 and s. 126, respectively, of the Act;
- the current state of the Queensland and national economies;
- the social considerations; and
- the nature and extent of the increases proposed by the various parties,

we have decided to maintain the Commission's practice of recent years of awarding a flat-dollar increase in the Queensland Minimum Wage and in Award rates of pay in the amount of \$20.00 per week.

[89] Based upon the economic material provided such level of increase represents an appropriate balance between affordability and assisting to keep the wages of lower paid Award-reliant workers in touch with the community standard. Further, the awarding of a flat-dollar increase will, as the Commission has previously recognised, have "*... the benefit of targeting lower paid workers with proportionately higher increases.*"²⁷ It will also go some way to addressing the gender-pay gap (see Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5).

Adjustment to allowances

[90] Existing Award allowances which relate to work or conditions which have not changed and service increments are to be increased by 3.0%, being the percentage which an increase of \$20.00 per week bears to the C10 wage rate as it appears in the *Engineering Award - State 2002*.

Operative date

[91] In keeping with the past practice of the Commission the operative date for wage increases and allowance adjustments granted by this Decision will be 1 September 2010.

Declaration of General Ruling

[92] A formal declaration of General Ruling will be issued at the same time as the release of these reasons for Decision, thereby giving effect to this Decision.

Wage fixation principles

[93] The parties were in agreement that the current statement of principles, through a Statement of Policy, should continue with the necessary amendments to reflect changes to the operative date, the quantum of wage and allowance adjustments awarded in this Decision, and other consequential amendments. A new Statement of Policy with respect to wage fixing principles will issue concurrently with this Decision.

²⁵ Reserve Bank of Australia, *Statement on Monetary Policy - May (2010)*.

²⁶ Queensland Government Submissions, paragraph 96.

²⁷ *State Wage Case (2006) 182 QGIG 565 at [282]*.

[94] The Commission determines and orders accordingly.

D.A. SWAN, Deputy President.

A.L. BLOOMFIELD, Deputy President.

G.K. FISHER, Commissioner.

Hearing Details:

2010 14 July (*QCU Written Submissions*)
21 July (*LGAQ Written Submissions*)
21 July (*ACSEA Written Submissions*)
21 July (*Queensland Government Written Submissions*)
26 July (*QCU Written Submissions in Reply*)

Appearances:

Ms K. Anderson for Queensland Council of Unions.
Mr D. Broanda for The Australian Workers' Union of Employees, Queensland.
Mr S. Blaney for the Local Government Association of Queensland Ltd.
Mr C. Hardy for the Australian Community Services Employers Association.
Ms C. Berry for the Queensland Government.
Ms M. Robertson for the Queensland Services, Industrial Union of Employees.

Released: 10 August 2010