

9. OTHER MATTERS

9. OTHER MATTERS.....	1
9.1 Irrelevant Historicism and Focus on Reform.....	1
9.2 Executive Salaries	7
9.3 Supported Wage Minimum Payment.....	9
9.4 DEAC / NCID	12
9.5 Community Participation in Proceedings.....	17
9.6 Long Term Tripartite Study	18

9.1 IRRELEVANT HISTORICISM AND FOCUS ON REFORM

[9.1] The ACTU's first written submission commences with various introductory statements, observations and assertions (Section 1¹). Properly analysed, much of this introductory material is essentially irrelevant to the consideration at hand.

Historical Material

[9.2] The ACTU cites historical material, and in particular various decisions and comments from Justice Higgins throughout the introduction to its submission.

[9.3] Relevance of Historical Material: Historical narrative and the development of legislation and precedent may be academically interesting. However, this matter will be determined solely on the interpretation of the contemporary *Workplace Relations Act 1996* and on precedent legally applicable to the current Act. It will not be determined under any earlier framework which may have given rise to (increasingly romanticised) historical decisions and approaches.

[9.4] In uncritically reciting selective passages of some seminal judgements, the ACTU is effectively ignoring:

- a. Changes to the prevailing industrial statute² throughout the 20th century. The Act had already changed considerably from the Higgins era many decades prior to this case. The perspectives advanced were little more than curios in the 1970s and 1990s; today they are not even that.
- b. The evolution of the arbitration of minimum wages, even under the architecture of the former (and now twice revised) *Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904*. The Commission, for example, abandoned Higgins era wage approaches decades before the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*, (including by moving to the total wage plus margins).
- c. In particular, the passage of the *Workplace Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Act 1996* and the *Industrial Relations Reform Act 1993*. Parliament now tells us that awards perform a qualitatively different role (that of a safety net) than they did in the Higgins era. This renders the passages recited by the ACTU in the introduction of its submission little more than historical footnotes.

[9.5] This is not “a (sic) historic opportunity for the Commission to continue the Harvester legacy and to create a lasting difference to the lives of low paid workers”³.

- a. This is a case in which the Commission must discharge its statutory functions under the current *Workplace Relations Act 1996* - no more, no less.
- b. Wilfully seeking to subvert the will of Parliament and to misguidedly “future-proof” award wages is of course in no way a valid role of the Commission, nor one we can ever see it accepting. In this case, the Commission is being asked to determine an award

¹ ACTU 1st Written Submission, 2005 Safety Net Review Case, 18 February 2005, pp.1 to 4

² *Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904*, *Industrial Relations Act 1988*, and the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*.

³ ACTU 1st Written Submission, 2005 Safety Net Review Case, 18 February 2005, [1.3], p.1

wage increase to apply for a period of not less than 12 months on the evidence before it - the same as any other year.

- c. Despite apparent statements to the contrary, the ACTU effectively agrees with ACCI on this, indicating that: *“What ever (sic) system we may be faced with in the future, we continue to operate within the existing system, a system that has, as one of its duties, a consideration of the low paid ”*⁴. Despite taking the opportunity to make extraneous commentary on possible legislative change, the ACTU effectively recognises the reality of this case.

[9.6] We bargain now – like it or not: The ACTU commences its submission with the following:

Unless great multitudes of people are to be irretrievably injured in themselves or in their families, unless society is to be perpetually in industrial unrest, it is necessary to keep this living wage as a thing sacrosanct, beyond the reach of bargaining. (Justice Higgins).

[9.7] We have already moved to a bargaining system, including on wages. Australia has already made the change Justice Higgins was so concerned about all those decades ago.

[9.8] However:

- a. Strikes are at historically low levels.
- b. Employment participation is high and growing. Unemployment is low by the standards of recent decades (although scarcely low enough and there remain risks to the employment outlook).
- c. Real wage increases through productivity bargaining have been delivered without rampant inflation and with a constant increase in living standards.

[9.9] To put it bluntly, from the perspective of 2005, Justice Higgins prognostication was wrong. He, like all of us, was a creature of his times, and not all his predictions and perspectives are inherently

⁴ ACTU 1st Written Submission, 2005 Safety Net Review Case, 18 February 2005, [1.4], p.2

relevant or correct. To raise such comments now is akin to looking to the writings of James Watt to review the new BA Ford Falcon – it does no service to Higgins and it adds nothing to this matter.

[9.10] The Federation era figures in this country were also mortally scared of things we now thoroughly accept in contemporary Australia. The hot issues of the Federation era included the mortal threat posed by free trade between the States and non-white migration. Similarly dire outcomes were predicted as Higgins predicted if we ever dared to bargain. Of course, the sky didn't fall in, hysteria passed, and society changed.

[9.11] “The Harvester Legacy”⁵: The ACTU repeatedly cites what it terms ‘the Harvester legacy’ throughout the introduction to its submissions. Whilst this is patently irrelevant and simplistic, when the perspectives of Justice Higgins are properly considered they don't actually support the ACTU's approach to this matter.

[9.12] Justice Higgins spoke of frugal comfort, and of meeting some of the core or fundamental needs of working families. We disagree with the ACTU that there is a direct line between what the Edwardian era paternalistic interventionists believed they were attempting, and its spin on “needs” in contemporary Australia.

- a. Higgins was talking about fundamental or core human needs – not about income redistribution, nor redressing disparities between labour market cohorts.
- b. It is difficult to believe that Higgins would believe that frugal or reasonable comfort would extend to capacities for interstate holidays, clothes at the height of fashion, or regularly buying luxury foods. As stated earlier, Justice Higgins, like all of us, lived within his particular zeitgeist.

⁵ ACTU 1st Written Submission, 2005 Safety Net Review Case, 18 February 2005, [1.13], p.4

- c. It is difficult to believe that Higgins would have seen executive and judicial salaries as at all relevant to the protection he was seeking to extend to the genuinely lowest paid. We understand his primary concerns to have been delivering industrial harmony and genuine minimum wage protection.
- d. Properly assessed, any ‘Higgins legacy’ would in fact stand for:
- i) Genuinely minimum level award wages, set only at a level of core or fundamental needs.
 - ii) Only regulating single (or a small range of) minimum wages for those at the lowest level of skill and earning capacity.
 - iii) Capping minimum wage increases at a level that focussed them on those most in need (a proposition ACCI has consistently and unsuccessfully advanced during the period since 1997).
 - iv) Genuine needs being paramount in the setting of minimum wages, rather than the capacity limits of the economy/employers. Higgins did not ask himself how high he could possibly set wages before harming the Federation era economy/costing jobs (i.e. how far he could stretch wages before something broke). He looked at what people actually needed, and then determined his capacity to award it without damage or detriment. He reasoned from needs to the economy, not from the economy backwards.

[9.13] The ACTU cannot show precisely how the Harvester perspectives assist its case on this occasion – because they don’t. Comments on the Harvester Legacy⁶ and the development of wage fixation in this country effectively add nothing to this case.

⁶ e.g. ACTU 1st Written Submission, 2005 Safety Net Review Case, 18 February 2005, [1.13], p.4

Discussion on reform:

[9.14] The ACTU also seeks to frame this case in context of current discussions on further reform to the workplace relations system, indicating for example that:

The 2005 Safety Net Review case (occurs)... during a period of much debate concerning the future role of the Commission as an independent arbitrator of award minimum wages. Some parties are now openly questioning the need for a safety net or at the very least, one established through a process of arbitration.⁷

[9.15] All that needs to be said about that is this. It is an unambiguously accepted precept of the work of this Commission that its powers and functions are exercised under the Act as it is, not as it might be in the future.

[9.16] This Commission does not attempt to second guess Parliament, and has properly sought over a century to do no more or less than discharge its functions under prevailing legislation Parliament sets for it.

[9.17] The Commission's decision in *Re Arbitration Inspectors Association*⁸ stands as a direct authority in this regard. In this case, the Commission (Moore VP) specifically applied the law as it stood, despite it being apparent⁹ that a change in the law¹⁰ was pending which would have delivered a differing outcome. Moore VP found that the policy implication of his administering the law as it is (as opposed to how was anticipated to be) was a matter for Parliament, not for the Commission.¹¹

⁷ ACTU 1st Written Submission, 2005 Safety Net Review Case, 18 February 2005, [1.1], p.1. This is repeated at [1.2], [1.4], [1.5], [1.6], [1.14] etc

⁸ *Re Arbitration Inspector's Association* [1993] 50 IR 65

⁹ BY way of a condemnatory ILO report, and statements by the then Minister for Industrial Relations that legislative change was pending.

¹⁰ Which did come to pass in subsequent legislative amendments. Former s.193 of the former *Industrial Relations Act 1988* was repealed by the *Industrial Relations Reform Act 1993* (No. 98, 1993)

¹¹ *Re Arbitration Inspector's Association* [1993] 50 IR 65, 70

[9.18] We are confident the Commission can take no other approach on this occasion. The Commission has union applications for wage increases before it, along with alternatives from respondent parties and interveners. It will determine these applications based on the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* as amended up to the time of its decision in this matter – no more, and no less.

How to treat this material:

[9.19] The material in Section 1 of the ACTU submission on historical wages developments, Justice Higgins and possible legislative change should be treated as nothing more than introductory material/the ACTU's attempt at scene setting.

[9.20] Nothing substantive or germane may be gleaned from it to assist the Commission's arbitral determination in this matter under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*.

9.2 EXECUTIVE SALARIES

[9.21] The ACTU again seeks to make reference to various movements in managerial and executive salaries¹².

[9.22] ACCI has previously exhaustively analysed such material and highlighted its fundamental irrelevance to these proceedings.

[9.23] The Commission found as follows in May 2004:

[131] Furthermore, while all of the measures relied on by the ACTU are of some relevance, the broader measures are more helpful than those measuring changes in particular segments of the labour market, such as management and executive salaries...

[9.24] Therefore, this Commission has proceeded on the basis that, at best, this material may be of 'some relevance', and that other considerations are far more helpful in the determinative task at hand in this matter.

¹² 2005 Safety Net review – 1st ACTU Written Submission, paragraphs [4.39] to [4.47], and [5.15].

[9.25] On this basis it is not necessary to engage the ACTU in detail on the material it (once again) seeks to inject into this matter on executive and judicial salaries.

Why this is irrelevant

[9.26] The Commission's May 2004 conclusion that this material is essentially of highly marginal relevance was a welcome one. However, ACCI maintains that this material should in fact be concluded to be completely irrelevant.

[9.27] In 2003, ACCI undertook an exhaustive 80-page analysis of the irrelevance of executive and judicial salaries to this matter. This has been re-appended to this submission, and ACCI reiterates the points raised in this analysis (Attachment 9.1).

[9.28] In summary:

- a. It is not Australia's top executives/CEOs, nor Australia's top companies that will be required to pass on any wage increase arising from these proceedings.
- b. It is disproportionately Australia's smaller to medium sized enterprises that must increase wages in the wake of decisions to increase the award safety net.
- c. How could a highly specialised human resource/remuneration (executive salaries) setting in a very narrow band of elite companies, be relevant to the small retailers, hoteliers, manufactures etc who are primarily required to pass on award wage increases in these matters?
- d. Australia's major companies are also likely to be party to agreements paying well in excess of award rates - they are not required to pay award wage increases.
- e. There is no basis under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* for the rank comparativism brought forward by the ACTU to be anything other than non-germane background material. It cannot be linked

to any part of the Act relevant to the determination in this matter.

- f. Executive salaries reflect a unique range of market and human resource considerations.
- g. The ACTU figures are selective, and are not representative of CEO/executive salaries in Australia.
- h. This is not a zero sum game: Executive gain cannot be simplistically equated to any loss to employees as the ACTU assumes.

9.3 SUPPORTED WAGE MINIMUM PAYMENT

[9.29] Another issue for consideration in these proceedings is the interaction between variations arising from these proceedings and increases to the Supported Wage Minimum Payment. In particular, there are the following considerations:

- a. Ensuring the supported wage minimum payment amount is consistent across the award system (to the extent possible).
- b. Ensuring the supported wage minimum payment amount across the award system reflects the current level set by the Commission in annual test case proceedings.

Background

[9.30] Supported wage provisions in awards provide for proportionate payment of otherwise applicable award rates based on assessed employee capacities. As specific percentages in awards, there is no need to specifically vary these payments for safety net increases.

[9.31] There is however a single additional floor rate in the standard supported wage provisions. For some years this has been set by consent consistent with the income-free test for eligibility to receive

the Disability Support Pension (DSP). Since July 2004, this minimum payment amount has been set at \$61 per week.¹³

Commission Assistance in the 2003 and 2004 Decisions

[9.32] In response to representations from ACCI and the ACTU, the 2003 decision assisted in improving both the consistency and currency of the supported wage minimum payment. Paragraph [235] of the 2003 decision sets out the following:

[238] We think it is appropriate that during the hearing of applications for the implementation of the safety net adjustment provided for in this decision, parties give consideration to the inclusion of the model supported wage clause in the award. If the award already includes the model clause the level should be checked and if necessary varied to reflect the existing level of the supported wage - \$56.¹⁴

[9.33] Paragraph [253] additionally sets out:

[253] Consistent with our decision the federal minimum wage will be increased by \$17 to \$448.40 per week. To avoid doubt we emphasise that the level of the supported wage, currently \$56, is a matter for separate Full Bench proceedings.

[9.34] This was repeated in the May 2004 decision, in which the Commission made the following key indication to parties:

[312] We simply reiterate our comments in the May 2003 decision. During the hearing of applications to vary awards to give effect to this decision, parties should give consideration to the inclusion of the model supported wage clause in the award. If the award already includes the model clause the level should be checked and if necessary varied to reflect the existing level of the supported wage - \$60. Any application to increase the supported wage above \$60 should be dealt with in accordance with the Principles.

[9.35] These were very welcome changes, and appear to have assisted in improving the consistency and currency of supported wage minimum payment amounts in awards.

¹³ 22 July 2004, PR949915, Ross VP, Ives DP and Gay C

¹⁴ Safety Net Review Decision – May 2003 [Print PR002003], para [238], p.73 (*emphasis added*).

Proposed Approach For 2005

- [9.36] The Commission is requested to again expressly address the level of the supported wage minimum payment in its 2005 Safety Net decision, and to again seek to better ensure both consistency and currency in the level of this minimum payment.
- [9.37] It is again important that scope for doubt in the application of the supported wage again be avoided through the safety net review decision, as occurred in May 2003 and 2004.
- [9.38] To the extent that DEAC/NCID's analysis of supported wage minimum payment levels¹⁵ is correct it shows that the Commission is on the right track. More awards contain the supported wage option and there is greater consistency in the level of the minimum payment. DEAC/NCID are effectively showing that the concerns averted to by ACCI in previous proceedings were correct and that the solution reached is working.
- [9.39] Specifically, the Commission is requested to again clearly set out in its 2005 decision the current level of the supported wage minimum payment, in the same format as appears at paragraph [312] of the May 2004 decision¹⁶.
- a. (At the time of issuing the Commission's 2005 safety net review decision, this is almost certain to be the level set in the 2004 *Supported Wage Minimum Payment Test Case* decision¹⁷ = \$61 per week).
- [9.40] As set out in ACCI's written submissions in 2003 and 2004:

ACCI continues to strongly support the supported wage system. The clarification proposed appears essential to ACCI to ensure that the effectiveness and ongoing role of the supported wage system are not detracted from.

¹⁵ DEAC/NCID Submission, p.7

¹⁶ Safety Net Review Decision – May 2004 [Print PR002004]

¹⁷ 22 July 2004, PR949915, Ross VP, Ives DP and Gay C

[9.41] Revision of the standard \$61 minimum payment under the SWS provision in awards after the safety net proceedings will again be a matter for separate discussion between ACCI, the ACTU and other parties to the test case proceedings.

9.4 DEAC / NCID

[9.42] The Disability Employment Action Centre (DEAC) and the National Council on Intellectual Disability (NCID) have indicated¹⁸ that they will seek leave to appear in this matter under s.43(1) of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*.

[9.43] ACCI has questioned the basis of DEAC/NCID's intervention in these matters since 2003. On consideration, it is necessary to again question their participation in this matter.

[9.44] *ACCI will oppose the intervention of DEAC/NCID in this matter to the extent it is not directly and expressly relevant to the consideration before the Commission.*

[9.45] This is not an inquiry at large: The intervention of any party in any matter must be restricted to the considerations at hand, and in particular to the decision the Commission must make.

[9.46] This is not a general inquiry before which all persons should be heard on any matter of interest. This is a consideration of whether union applications for a \$26.60 per week / 5.7% wage increase should be given effect to, and more broadly by what level wages payable in open (non-sheltered) employment should increase.

[9.47] Any body seeking intervention in this matter should be made to show:

¹⁸ Correspondence to the President dated 2 December 2004.

- a. An appropriate nexus between its interests and the applications under consideration (and with minimum award rates of pay generally).
- b. The extent to which its intervention is germane to, or will contribute to the consideration the Commission must make on the union applications and on minimum wages more generally – i.e. the extent to which its contribution will be on point in the matter.

[9.48] DEAC has no interest in this matter, as this case is about open employment. This case is not about persons in business services / sheltered employment. Under the safety net as it is, the wage outcomes in this case do not flow into the sheltered employment sector. DEAC/NCID acknowledge this by stating that “*wages and conditions (in the disability sector) do not reflect the minimum safety net requirements enjoyed by other workers*”¹⁹.

[9.49] DEAC/NCID in fact acts for one of the subsets of ‘employees’²⁰ for whom the safety net proceeds are not relevant. Under the safety net as it is at present, DEAC/NCID has no proper interest in this matter.

[9.50] DEAC is pursuing alternative relief: The system is already addressing the concerns of DEAC/NCID and in particular, the extent to which “*wages and conditions (in the disability sector) do not reflect the minimum safety net requirements enjoyed by other workers*”²¹. To the extent DEAC/NCID is arguing to change this, this is in no way advanced by participation in the Safety Net Review.

[9.51] Applications have been made for additional award address of employees in sheltered employment and are before the Commission for consideration under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*²².

¹⁹ DEAC/NCID Correspondence to Justice Giudice, 2 December 2004.

²⁰ Without prejudice to any argument on whether or not this is employment or some other model is more applicable.

²¹ DEAC/NCID Correspondence to Justice Giudice, 2 December 2004.

²² C2004/4617, C2004/5981, C2004/6012

- a. We understand DEAC/NCID is seeking intervention in these matters, and to also have applications it has initiated²³ heard and determined.
- b. The proper place for consideration of the matters raised by DEAC is these proceedings, not the Safety Net Review. There is an award covering sheltered employment in Australia – proceedings in relation to that award are the proper place to address the concerns of DEAC/NCID, rather than these proceedings.
- c. (We understand these matters are before Vice President Lawler).

[9.52] Whilst ACCI understands that the Industry Consultative Council (ICC) process is now in abeyance as a function of the shift into arbitration proceedings, this is merely the system addressing the concerns of DEAC/NCID in an alternative way. Again, there is a proper forum for DEAC/NCID to be heard, and this is not it.

[9.53] DEAC/NCID add nothing to these proceedings. DEAC/NCID relies on its intervention in the 2003 and 2004 cases in support of intervention on this occasion. The last decision contained the following:

DEAC AND THE SUPPORTED WAGE

[309] The DEAC submission, while supporting the ACTU's claim to increase minimum rates in all awards, raised a number of other issues. The concerns raised by DEAC are similar to those raised before the Full Bench and discussed by it in the May 2003 decision.

[310] The ACTU, ACCI and the Commonwealth acknowledged, as they did in the 2003 safety net review proceedings, the concerns of DEAC. Each supported the approach taken by the Full Bench in the earlier proceedings and submitted that the concerns, consistent with that approach, were being addressed by an Industry Consultative Council.

[311] We are of the view that the issues and concerns raised by DEAC are more appropriately dealt with in that forum.

[312] We simply reiterate our comments in the May 2003 decision. During the hearing of applications to vary awards to give effect to this decision, parties should give consideration to the inclusion of the model supported wage clause

²³ C2004/6123

in the award. If the award already includes the model clause the level should be checked and if necessary varied to reflect the existing level of the supported wage - \$60. Any application to increase the supported wage above \$60 should be dealt with in accordance with the Principles.

- [9.54] The Commission does not engage the detail of DEAC/NCID's position in these proceedings because (a) DEAC/NCID provide nothing germane or relevant (b) alternative avenues are being provided to DEAC/NCID to redress their concerns.
- [9.55] DEAC/NCID did raise a substantive matter regarding the supported wage in 2003²⁴. This matter (access to the supported wage system and the level of the supported wage minimum payment, of which the ACTU and ACCI were already aware) was appropriately addressed by the ACTU and ACCI, and there has been a real improvement in this area²⁵.
- [9.56] This issue is again requested to be addressed this year (See above). However, DEAC/NCID do not contribute to this process (the approach to which in our view was settled by the Commission's approach in 2003 and 2004).
- [9.57] *Unless DEAC/NCID are addressing an issue similarly germane or linked to award wages, their intervention should not be accepted.*

DEAC/NCID Written Submission

- [9.58] ACCI received a purported written submission from DEAC/NCID on 25 February 2005, a full week later than was required under the directions in this matter. We have corresponded with DEAC/NCID on this and will seek to have the Commission address their failure to properly comply with directions in due course.
- [9.59] Once again however, DEAC/NCID raise only two matters in any way relevant to these proceedings:

²⁴ Safety Net Review Decision – May 2003, PR002003, [238]

²⁵ See Safety Net Review Decision – May 2003, PR002003, [238], and Safety Net Review Decision – May 2004, PR002004, [312].

- a. Their support for the ACTU claim (which is entirely nominal, without detail, and adds nothing substantive to this matter)²⁶.
 - b. Their submissions on the supported wage system²⁷.
- [9.60] DEAC/NCID again seek to address matters which are not before the Commission in this case, and cannot be before the Commission in this case:
- a. Minimum wages in sheltered employment (which is subject to separate proceedings, *see above*).
 - b. Issues relating to the Industry Consultative Council.²⁸
 - c. Issues relating to the Business Services Wage Assessment Tool.²⁹
 - d. Bargaining in the sheltered employment sector.

How the Commission should proceed:

- [9.61] Firstly, the Commission should give serious consideration to not accepting the DEAC/NCID submission in this matter as it significantly breached directions.
- [9.62] Secondly, unless DEAC can show how its submissions will assist the Commission's consideration of the level of award wages in open employment (and of the ACTU applications in particular), its intervention should be refused.
- [9.63] Thirdly, if any intervention is to be accepted, it should only be accepted on an appropriately restricted basis. DEAC/NCID should not address the Commission on matters not before the Commission, or those that are subject to other proceedings.

²⁶ DEAC/NCID Submission, p.1

²⁷ DEAC/NCID Submission, p.7

²⁸ DEAC/NCID Submission, pp.9 to11

²⁹ DEAC/NCID Submission, pp.9 to11

- a. DEAC/NCID's submissions should not be received in full. DEAC's submissions in this case should only be accepted to the extent to which they are relevant to minimum award wages in open employment.
- b. DEAC/NCID should be made to re-submit their submission, excising extraneous matters and matters subject to other proceedings.

9.5 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN PROCEEDINGS

[9.64] As the ACTU has indicated³⁰, at PN144 and PN145 of transcript of these proceedings, the President raised the following:

JUSTICE GIUDICE: There is one final matter. It has occurred to us that there may be some benefit in extending the opportunity for other groups in the community to participate in these proceedings particularly in relation to the issue of the connection between minimum wage and unemployment. We would be interested to hear submissions from the parties in due course either as part of written submissions or when an opportunity arises as to how that might be done. One possibility might be to sit in State capitals and advertise hearing times and invite public submissions.

There may be other ways in which that could be achieved. On the other hand the parties and interveners may feel that the current manner of ascertaining the views of people in the community is sufficient. But we raise that for consideration and we would (be) assisted by submissions on it. Whether they relate to these proceedings or possible modification of proceedings in the future....

- [9.65] The ACTU addresses this at [8.53] to [8.57] of its submission.
- [9.66] These matters should be considered in the context of any future proceedings.
- [9.67] Directions in this matter have been set, with hearings scheduled in Melbourne as was the case in recent years. In addition, interested parties have been notified of these proceedings by way of:
- a. The AIRC internet site / dedicated e-court site³¹.

³⁰ ACTU 1st Written Submission, 2005 Safety Net Case, [8.53] – [8.57], pp.143-144

³¹ <http://www.e-airc.gov.au/wage2005/>

- b. Newspaper listings of AIRC matters.
- c. Parties' internet sites.
- d. Media reporting and announcements from parties and interveners.

9.6 LONG TERM TRIPARTITE STUDY

[9.68] In Chapter 6 of its submission, the ACTU states that:

- 6.6 The ACTU believes that it would be appropriate for the key parties who regularly participate in the Safety Net Review Case to meet under the auspices of the Commission to discuss the possibility of undertaking a tripartite study. Whilst agreement on methodology and other arrangements may be difficult, we are of the view that there should be an attempt to overcome these difficulties.
- 6.7 The ACTU believes that any study should be conducted over a considerable period of time and over more than one economic cycle.

[9.69] There is no such study before the Commission at this time. Any future proposal from the ACTU would depend on future wages proceedings, and will be assessed in the context of any future applications to increase award wages.