**Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination against Older Australians and Australians with Disability**

# Submission No 287

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# Submission regarding Older Australians / Australians with Disability / Both

My husband (76 years old) and I (81 years old) are still providing career development services to the community under contract to the SA Department of Development. We were both retrenched in our fifties from senior professional roles in tectonic mineral research and as a director of a university-based early intervention program for parents of children with Downs Syndrome respectively.

We analysed the services my husband received from outplacement consultants, looked for the strengths and weaknesses, and decided to investigate the field of career counselling as a possible avenue for future work. Our small business, Vector Consultants has provided individual and group career development services for people who have been retrenched, are out of work, and who are in transition.

In order to learn more about this area of service we embarked on an intensive program of professional development, became sensitive to the challenges of the changing world of work, and engaged in further post graduate study to enhance our contribution to the community we serve.

We joined the Australian Association of Career Counsellors (now the Career Development Association of Australia) in 1993 and I later became the first woman and longest serving President, and later co-founder and inaugural President of the Career Industry Council of Australia. Both my husband and I continue our involvement in providing and participating in professional development services.

I was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia on 2005 for my voluntary contribution in the areas of career development and life-long learning, and other honours have followed. We understand the issues of aging and contribution to the community through paid and unpaid work.

We assist people to understand the new world of work, and the global changes which impact on them. Both of us have engaged in post graduate studies, and I completed my Masters of Career Development in 2013.