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

# Submission No 239

**Name** Graeme David Moorhouse

**Submission made by**

Older Australian in work

Older Australian looking for work

Older Australian who would like to work

Australian with disability in work

Australian with disability looking for work

Australian with disability who would like to work

# Submission regarding Older Australians / Australians with Disability / Both

### **Your experience**

**Have you (or the person you are submitting on behalf of) experienced employment discrimination?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Did you take any action in relation to the employment discrimination you experienced?**

Yes

No

**Please tell us more, for example, what action you took and how effective you felt it was; or why you chose not to take any action.**

Perhaps I took slight action only to challenge and question why I was not suitable and after receiving the typical bland "you are not what our client is looking for" or "you are too qualified", I eventually gave up asking. Most of the time these responses come in the form of an email usually which do not get monitored and you are told not to reply.

**Did your experience of employment discrimination impact on your participation in the workforce? (For example, did you have to stop work, change jobs or take sick leave?)**

Yes

No

**Please tell us more**

I am still self-employed working a small number of hours earning minimal pay which means I am not considered un-employed. I was to work with other people and work for an organisation where age is considered a benefit, but if I am to believe the comments from recruiters or HR Departments, there are no organisations like that in Australia, with the possible exception of Bunnings.

### **Barriers**

**Do you think older Australians/Australians with disability face barriers when they look for work or are in a job?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**If yes, or not sure, what do you think these barriers might be?**

Recruiters are in their twenties or thirties and do not see any value in anyone older than themselves.

**Does employment discrimination have an impact on gaining and keeping employment for older Australians/Australians with disability?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Are there any practices, attitudes or laws which discourage or prevent equal participation in employment of older Australians/Australians with disability?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Please tell us more**

Recruiters are in their twenties or thirties and do not see any value in anyone older than themselves. I also wear hearing aids so I am considered to be unsuitable for any position requiring me to use a telephone. I do not see the Federal Government leading the way to show that they benefit contribution from older Australians by actively employing them, whereas they see to make all the right noises when it comes to disability. There is also one very big barrier if like me you wish to move from being self-employed to employed when you are older.

**What are the incentives and disincentives for older Australians/Australians with disability to work?**

**Incentives:**

There are none

**Disincentives:**

Employers do not necessarily want to spend additional money in employing older Australians or Australians with disability and they see this as a real cost, such as purchasing a telephone handset for hearing impaired.

### **Good practice**

**Are there examples of good practice and workplace policies in employing and retaining older Australians/ Australians with disability?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Please tell us of examples of good practice in employing and retaining older Australians/ Australians with disability in work that you are aware of.**

Certainly KFC in Queensland often employ Australians with disabilities and Bunnings hire older Australians. Other than that many make the right noises but do not put anything into practice. They advertise saying they are an equal opportunity employer but they do not practice this. I believe that almost every advertisement I responded to stated that they were an equal opportunity employer. The actions of them and their agents showed this to be far from the truth in practice.

### **Solutions**

**What action should be taken to address employment discrimination against older Australians/Australians with disability?**

I believe that employers should be held accountable to show how they are recruiting older Australians or Australians with disabilities in much the same way that they are made to be accountable with the Training Guarantee Act.

**What should be done to enhance workforce participation of older Australians/Australians with disability?**

As above

**What outcomes or recommendations would you like to see from this National Inquiry?**

There must be a legislated solution that supports the Federal Government's desire to have people remain working and not retire until 70 or 75. I believe that the Federal Government are just as guilty of making the right noises as are recruiters and companies. If companies and organisations cannot take it upon themselves to be actually non-discriminatory then legislation must be enacted to enforce the law. There can no longer be room for them to use excuses such as "you do not meet our criteria" when clearly people do meet the criteria.