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

# Submission No 34

**Name** Withheld

**Submission made by**

[x]  Older Australian in work

[x]  Older Australian looking for work

# Submission regarding Older Australians

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

*Discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than another person in a similar situation because of a characteristic they have, such as their age, or disability.*

*It is also discrimination when there is a rule or policy that is the same for everyone but has an unfair effect on people who are older or people with a particular disability.*

[x]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

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

[x]  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.**

I **[have written]** to the **[redacted–state ministers]**. There is no point protesting the job outcome to the organisations HR unit as all you will get is denials.

**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?)**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

**Please tell us more**

I have been a temporary employee for 4 years now and I never get to win a permanent position. In the past I was an Executive for both Qantas and Dept of Defence. I moved to **[state redacted]** when I was 47 knowing that over 50’s don’t get jobs, and now I’m 50 and still only a temp. I have applied for scores of middle mgmt. permanent roles in the **[state redacted]** Govt in the past 4 years but never get one. I have to take on temporary roles through employment agencies.

### **Barriers**

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

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

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

Age discrimination is very hard to prove, but it is apparent.

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

[x] 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?**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**Please tell us more**

In the **[state redacted]** Govt, a temporary employee cannot receive ‘Transition into retirement benefits’ – it is legislated against. This is discriminatory as older Australians only seem to get temporary jobs to fill someone’s long leave vacancies, not permanent roles.

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

**Incentives:** Continue a better quality of life. Our knowledge and experience helps organisations.

**Disincentives:**

Bias and inexperienced managers make bad decisions which affect mature aged staff.

### **Good practice**

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

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[x] 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.**

Don’t know. Websites with information is nice, but vacant positions need to be targeted to the matured aged as they do for other discrimination categories.

### **Solutions**

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

* Employment application statistics should be taken for mature aged people as they do for ATSIC, women, disabilities etc. and analysed to see how bad the data is. This relates to the [state government] job application website.
* Certain jobs should be specifically targeted to the mature aged as other discriminated categorys have had in the past – again this would be easy to incorporate,
* Interview panels should be ‘fully independent’ - made up of staff from the same ‘stream’ of employment but with experienced staff from another Department - to remove ‘mate-based’ appointments, or at least have a mature aged member involved in the panel,
* Temporary roles should have the ‘transitioning into retirement’ benefits legislatively included for mature aged employees, as temporary jobs are all they seem to get.
* Jobs interview criteria should have a weighting applied for matured aged applicants – eg an extra 10 or so points on the score sheet for ‘intangible experience’ – Similar to governmental procurement evaluations for SME’s.

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

See above.

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

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