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

# Submission No 79

**Name** Mark Whiting

**Submission made by**

Australian with disability looking for work

Australian with disability who would like to work

# FORM 1: 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 I did, back in 2004.**

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.**

**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**

### **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?**

My sight and hearing disability.

**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**

For instance there have been cases where bosses and other managers have used the O,H & S, Occupational Health and Safety Act to deny us a job, or they’ve also use the acronym, the old You would be a liability in the workplace, or they’ve used Oh you need a driver’s licence, especially in warehousing, whereas I can’t get a driver’s licence because of my eyesight disability, furthermore their attitude to me it seems that we are made to feel like criminals just for being born with a disability, as well we seem to be a case of curiosity by potential bosses like they ask silly questions like, How are you able to do that job with your disability? i.e. sight disability.

Furthermore a lot of employers or bosses seem to use THIRD PARTY companies to go through the job applications, i.e. job recruitment agencies and that’s where a lot of the problems lie, the other problem is with Third Parties are as follows, they advertise for positions but they don’t tell you where or the name of the companies that you are applying for, for instance I no longer trust **[redacted]** online job hunting website because they are notorious for doing just that, as well their website is not user friendly towards people with a disability, that’s why I try and go directly to the companies themselves therefore I won’t use **[redacted–job search website]** in the future or ever again, because to me if they are hiding behind so called job recruitment agencies, they have something to hide.

As for my situation I have also tried the E-Mailing directly to the actual companies, I have done this several times and I’ve not heard back from any of them, it seems they just don’t want to know about a person with a disability, it would be nice if they’d acknowledged me, they’ve could have at least replied to my E-Mails by saying Thank you for taking an interest in working for us, they could have also said for instance, Right now we currently don’t have any positions vacant at this present time however we may have something in the not too distant future, Now how hard was that to do?

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

**Incentives:**

There are grants out there and modifications that can be done for people with a disabilities in the workplace that are no cost to the company, like portable magnifiers, I have one and I use if from time to time when I need it for small printed items.

**Disincentives:**

Not knowing that these things are available, lack of education and understanding as well as ignorance.

### **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.**

### **Solutions**

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

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

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