

## 15 Conclusion: Options for the Commission

[15.1] The ACTU contends that its case is consistent with principles developed by this Commission for the arbitration of claims for increases in the award safety net.<sup>85</sup>

[15.2] Not only is the ACTU claim not consistent with the principles and approaches of this Commission it is inconsistent with the statutory considerations the Commission must have regard to. The claim is principally inconsistent with the economic and labour market considerations that underpin safety net decisions.

[15.3] The ACTU claim is not moderate. It is merely a redressed continuation of the ambit claim advanced since 1997. Nor is it targeted to the low paid.

[15.4] The Commission has consistently rejected ACTU ambit wage claims of over \$20 during the post Accord era. No basis has been presented to the Commission upon which it should be persuaded to depart from this approach.

[15.5] The Commission should reject the ACTU claim in favour of a moderate and targeted increase in minimum award wages.

[15.6] ACCI supports an appropriate increase in minimum award wages on this occasion, as follows:

- a. A \$10 per week in the federal award minimum wage. This would increase the wage from \$413.40 to \$423.40 per week.
- b. No increase to award wages above this level.

<sup>85</sup> (C2001/5719 and ors) ACTU Written Submission, 8 February 2002, [1.6], p.3

- c. Were the Commission to increase award rates above the federal award minimum wage, any such increase would need to be moderate<sup>86</sup> (that is \$10 per week), and should be properly targeted to the lower paid (not being applied to all award rates of pay).
- d. Support for particular arrangements ameliorating the impact of any increase on industry or sub industry sectors based upon industry circumstances.

[15.7] This would represent the best balance of the Commission's required considerations under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*, and an appropriate reflection of the Commission's duties to contribute appropriate macro-economic and labour market outcomes.

<sup>86</sup> In the context of this 2002 case.