

Figure 4 - ACTU Wage Claims – Percentages Sought

Year	Flat \$ Claim	%
1999	\$26.60 / \$373.40	7.12%
2000	\$24.00 / 385.40	6.23%
2001	\$28.00 / \$400.40	6.99%
2002	\$25.00 / \$413.40	6.05%

[1.15] Since 1997, ACTU claims have remained substantially constant through changes in the Australian economy and labour market, including adverse developments, forecasts and climates.

[1.16] The ACTU applications (including the 2002⁶ claim) should be properly treated as triggers to access the minimum wage fixing jurisdiction of AIRC, and to have the Commission periodically review and update award minimum wages. Minor changes in the level of the standard ACTU claim from year to year do not assist the Commission in its deliberations nor make another ambit claim of over \$20 per week any more relevant to the determination of an appropriate increase on this occasion.

[1.17] One element of the changing structure of ACTU claims is however relevant to this matter, and does represent an important consideration in determining any increase to be awarded. The Commission does not have before it any claim for increases in a form that provides higher increases to those on higher rates of pay (in either dollar or percentage terms), as was arguably the case in previous years. This provides a qualitatively different foundation for the Commission's decision on this occasion.

⁵ Under the 2001 claim, and C1(b) employee would have received an increase of \$53.87, in contrast to an employee on the federal minimum wage who would have received a \$28 per week increase. This is a 92.4% higher increase to the more highly paid employee.

⁶ The claim lodged in 2001 that has given rise to the 2002 proceedings and expected decision.