

# Ai GROUP SUBMISSION

Fair Work Commission

**Annual Wage Review 2022 – 2023  
Submission – Draft Timetable**

28 October 2022

The logo for Ai GROUP, featuring the letters 'Ai' in a stylized, bold font above the word 'GROUP' in a smaller, all-caps font, all in white on a dark purple background.

**Ai**  
GROUP

# 1. Introduction

On 14 October 2022, the Fair Work Commission (**Commission**) issued a statement<sup>1</sup> regarding the Annual Wage Review 2022 – 2023 (**AWR**). Accompanying the statement is a draft timetable for the conduct of the AWR. Interested parties have been given an opportunity to comment on the draft timetable by 4pm on 28 October 2022. The Australian Industry Group (**Ai Group**) files this submission in response to the statement and proposed timetable.

## 2. The Draft Timetable

The statement deals specifically with the question of whether the timetable should contemplate the filing of submissions in relation to the March quarter National Accounts, as follows:

[3] In the previous 3 Reviews, each held during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Expert Panel has allowed for submissions on the March quarter National Accounts. This has delayed the announcement of Review decisions until mid-June of each year, whereas decisions were previously announced in late May or early June. The delayed announcement has reduced the amount of time for the Commission to publish award determinations and allow time for comment and for businesses to adequately prepare budgets and payroll. I am seeking the views of interested parties on whether submissions should again be allowed for the March quarter National Accounts in the 2022–23 Review. The draft timetable attached includes an indicative date for filing of those submissions.<sup>2</sup>

On balance, Ai Group considers that the announcement of the outcome of the AWR should not be delayed in order to accommodate an opportunity to make submissions about the March quarter National Accounts.

Whilst the Australian economy is continuing to face major short and long term economic challenges, Ai Group considers that the uncertainty and volatility that was facing the economy during the last three years has, to some extent, receded. The opportunity to comment on the March quarter National Accounts during the last three reviews was important; however, accommodating this in the context of the upcoming AWR must be weighed against the disadvantages of the Commission's decision in the AWR being delayed. Relevantly, employers would be afforded less time to make appropriate payroll adjustments and interested parties would have a limited opportunity to review and comment on the Commission's draft determinations giving effect to the outcome of the AWR.

Accordingly, we submit that the timetable should not expressly provide for an opportunity to make submissions about the March quarter National Accounts. If, however, due to unforeseen circumstances, our economic conditions change markedly, parties should be granted liberty to seek an appropriate amendment to the timetable.

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<sup>1</sup> *Annual Wage Review 2022 – 23* [2022] FWC 2756.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Wage Review 2022 – 23* [2022] FWC 2756 at [3].



## ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP

The Australian Industry Group (Ai Group®) is a peak employer organisation representing traditional, innovative and emerging industry sectors. We are a truly national organisation which has been supporting businesses across Australia for nearly 150 years.

Ai Group is genuinely representative of Australian industry. Together with partner organisations we represent the interests of more than 60,000 businesses employing more than 1 million staff. Our members are small and large businesses in sectors including manufacturing, construction, engineering, transport & logistics, labour hire, mining services, the defence industry, civil airlines and ICT.

Our vision is for thriving industries and a prosperous community. We offer our membership strong advocacy and an effective voice at all levels of government underpinned by our respected position of policy leadership and political non-partisanship.

With more than 250 staff and networks of relationships that extend beyond borders (domestic and international) we have the resources and the expertise to meet the changing needs of our membership. We provide the practical information, advice and assistance businesses need. Our deep experience of industrial relations and workplace law positions Ai Group as Australia's leading industrial advocate.

We listen and we support our members in facing their challenges by remaining at the cutting edge of policy debate and legislative change. We provide solution-driven advice to address business opportunities and risks.

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