

We included the following points in our submission to FWC regarding the minimum/piecework wage.

1/Everyone is aware of “dodgy” contractors who pay less than acceptable wages to their staff. There are already ample laws protecting workers rights in Australia so our recommendation was to use existing laws to remove this problem. . This latest ruling will make **no difference** to an unscrupulous employer.

Fair work has non-functioning reporting system that is very hard to access online where unscrupulous contractors/ bosses can be reported, this could have been used to stop employers doing the wrong thing. Fair work could have implemented extra checks and balances under existing law if the purpose of this Ruling is to stamp out under payment.

2/ The new ruling **takes away incentive** for working hard. Now the slower picker is rewarded the same as the faster picker.

The fairest system of remuneration is the piece work system using the “average competent picker’ to set the rate of pay for the patch.

Workers will slow down to the “hourly rate” speed so the production of the group will be down. We can’t afford this situation at a time where labour is in short supply. We can’t just find more staff to increase output. The Piecework system encourages people to work that bit harder, so our output is maintained.

3/ The new ruling **discriminates** against semi disabled and older workers and it could affect Mental health. In the case of citrus, we regularly see these two groups of people participating in the harvest, especially in the cooler months for some extra income. They may spend several hours to pick one bin and that’s their choice. If they must be paid an hourly top up, they will all become unemployed. From an industry point of view, we will lose a group of people who contributed to the total harvest labour pool and there will now be a further shortfall in workers.

4/It's not only the cost of labour, but the accounting of hours worked, breaks taken plus other requirements that adds further complication and cost to growers.

5/ Will the markets we send to be happy to accommodate a price rise to cover this utopic situation or will the grower be expected to cover the loss?

6/The “Average Competent Picker”, a Fair work initiative has been totally ignored and no provision has been made for a first timer to be able to work themselves up to an average competent picker.

6/ Are there plans for an employer to have an exemption from the ruling for trainees to learn how to get up to speed to go onto an “Average Competent picker” Piecework rate?

7/ Will provision be made for pickers to waive their rights under the new ruling and pick at their pace to keep their job?

In Summary.

The new ruling will not address the unscrupulous employer

The new ruling rewards slower people and removes incentive to work hard.

The new ruling Discriminates against people who are happy just having a go.



Mark Doecke Chair [REDACTED]

Any clarification required? Happy to talk about it.