









21. The Knox report says:

*“While the onset of the COVID crisis and its effects have been significant, both here and abroad, Australia’s economy appears to be bouncing back at aggregate level (Borland 2021). Within Australia’s hospitality industry, similar trends are apparent, although slightly more tempered.”*

22. Accordingly, with respect to this application, the Commission should take the view that:

- a. the circumstances facing the sector of the industry covered by the Restaurant Award are different than they were at the time of the Minister’s Letter and at the time the Commission commenced the process to review the Restaurant Award; and
- b. the hospitality industry is not facing as acute an economic crisis as may have appeared to exist at the time of the Minister’s Letter and at the time the Commission commenced the process to review the Restaurant Award; and
- c. while the speed and circumstances of the economic recovery in the hospitality industry is inferior to that of some other industries (and was categorized by Professor Borland as “lagging”), the hospitality industry *is recovering* from the economic effects of the pandemic.

23. In support of the application, RCI filed witness statements made by several employers operating within the scope of the Restaurant Award. A number of these employers assert they are presently finding it difficult to engage staff and that a higher headline rate of pay might assist in attracting and retaining staff – by implication, that income levels are at least one of the factors associated with the problem these businesses are experiencing in filling staff vacancies.

- a. Witnesses who said they were having trouble attracting staff included Zac Mina from the Gambaro Group (at [14]); Lee Green from Canning River Café (at [9] and [10]); Mark Holmes from Gran Pacific Group (at [10]); Sarah Hooper from La Vida Restaurant (at [14], [16], [17]); Jeremy Courmadias from Fink (at [9], [1 (sic)]); Craig Squire from Ochre Restaurant and Catering (at [11]); Andrew Zaniewski of Ramen Danbo Australia (at [9]), Vincenzo Salvatore of Lucas Group (at [11] – [13]); Ben Cummings of Sydney Restaurant Group (at [8], [2 (sic)]); Sunshine Dyer of American Bourbon Bar and Grill (at [8] – [9]); Tim Johnson of Corbett and Claude Pty Ltd (at [10]).
- b. Witnesses who said that a higher headline rate of pay might assist in attracting and retaining staff included Mark Holmes from Gran Pacific Group (at [15]); Sarah Hooper from La Vida Restaurant (at [17], [26]); Jeremy Courmadias from Fink (at [12 (sic)]); Vincenzo Salvatore of Lucas Group (at [21]); Tim Johnson of Corbett and Claude Pty Ltd (at [10]).





















