March 2018

Queensland Government submission to the fair work commission

Annual Wage Review 2017-18

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# Introduction

The following is a submission by the Queensland Government to the Annual Wage Review (AWR) conducted by the Expert Panel (the Panel) for the Fair Work Commission (FWC). The Queensland Government notes that, in the conduct of the AWR, the FWC must ensure that all persons and bodies have a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions for consideration in the review[[1]](#footnote-1) and have a reasonable opportunity to comment on published submissions.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Queensland is a ‘referring State’ under Division 2B, Part 1-3 of Chapter 1 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (FW Act). From 1 January 2010, Queensland’s private sector has been regulated by the national Fair Work system. The Queensland Government is committed to an industrial relations system that is fair and provides for productive and harmonious workplace relations.

This submission to the FWC AWR 2017-18 by the Queensland Government advocates for an increase, as set out below, that rewards productivity gains and improves the value of real wages as well as the living standards for workers on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and award wage reliant workers, that protects the low paid, and that is economically responsible.

In determining the level of increase, a broad range of indicators should be considered. These include inflation, employment, wage growth, business profits and conditions and productivity growth, relative living standards and the needs of the low paid.

The Queensland Government notes that there is a continued disparity in the wage outcomes of minimum wage and award reliant workers and those able to benefit from bargaining. Therefore, it is incumbent on the Panel to set minimum wage increases that are fair in the context of living standards generally. Further, raising the minimum and award wages will promote gender pay equity due to the greater reliance of women workers on minimum and award wage rates.

Taking into account all these factors, the Queensland Government submits that an increase that rewards productivity gains and improves living standards and the value of the NMW and award wages in real terms is economically sustainable and consistent with the objects of the FW Act. Consistent with the principles and considerations outlined in this submission, and based on data available at the time of this submission, the Queensland Government supports a $27.10 week increase to the NMW, lifting it to $722 per week or $19.00 per hour. Further, the Queensland Government supports a fair and reasonable increase to all other award rates of pay.

The submission that follows provides the Queensland perspective on the current economic and social factors relevant to the FWC’s review of minimum wages.

# Legislative parameters

The Queensland Government submits that the objects of the FW Act[[3]](#footnote-3) and the objectives of modern awards[[4]](#footnote-4) and minimum wages[[5]](#footnote-5) require the FWC to balance economic and social issues, as well as to take into account the needs of the low paid, amongst other factors, in making determinations on minimum wages. The Queensland Government submits that this requirement signifies a focus on social factors being equally as important as economic factors in the creation of a fair safety net.

The abovementioned objectives, taken together, imply that when determining minimum wages, the Panel is bound to ensure a wage outcome consistent with strong economic performance, while at the same time providing a minimum wage safety net that ensures those with limited access to wage bargaining are not left behind.

In this context, the Queensland Government notes that the minimum wages objective requires the FWC to take into account relative living standards and the needs of the low paid, the principle of equal remuneration for equal work, and providing a comprehensive range of fair minimum wages for certain junior employees and those with a disability, as well as the performance and competitiveness of the national economy and promoting social inclusion through increased workforce participation.[[6]](#footnote-6)

### Number of Queensland employees subject to the NMW and award rates

The most recent figures of award dependency are from May 2016**[[7]](#footnote-7)**. At that time, of the 9,290,900 non-managerial employees in Australia, 2,276,100 or 24.5% were award reliant. Queensland had an above-average proportion of award-reliant employees – of an estimated 1,872,400 non-managerial employees, 479,700 or 25.6% were award reliant.

Queensland’s award-reliant non-managerial employees also received below average pay at $744.00 per week compared to the national average at $802.80.

Given Queensland has an above-average proportion of award-reliant employees and that Queensland’s award-reliant employees also have the lowest rate of pay in both absolute and relative terms of any state, the relationship between award reliance and low pay is particularly significant to Queensland employees with regard to the setting of fair minimum rates of pay.

### Characteristics of Queensland employees subject to the NMW and award rates

Of Queensland’s award-reliant employees, 139,700 were full-time (non-managerial) employees. This represents 14.1% of all full-time (non-managerial) employees in Queensland[[8]](#footnote-8). The Queensland Government accepts the Panel’s position “that adult award-reliant employees who receive a rate of pay that (as a full-time equivalent) is below two-thirds of median (adult) ordinary time earnings prove a suitable and operational benchmark for identifying who is low paid.”[[9]](#footnote-9) The Queensland Government also accepts the Panel’s view that “the information as a whole suggests that a sizeable proportion—probably a majority—of employees who are award reliant are also low paid by reference to the two-thirds of median weekly earnings benchmark”.[[10]](#footnote-10) Therefore, the minimum wage and modern award objectives pertaining to relative living standards and the needs of the low paid are particularly relevant to this group. It is important that such a significant group of full time employees are provided with a living wage.

Some 340,000 part-time employees in Queensland were also award-reliant8. Given current high levels of underemployment, the Queensland Government submits that the needs of the low paid is also an important consideration for this group.

**Table 1: Employees by Industry (Australia)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Industry** | **Number of Employeesa (000s)** | **Proportion of female Employeesa (%)** | **Proportion of Award reliant Employeesb**  **(%)** |
| Mining | 231.6 | 15.07 | 0.00 |
| Manufacturing | 957.0 | 27.50 | 17.66 |
| Electricity, Gas and Water Services | 137.8 | 22.79 | 6.48 |
| Construction | 1059.6 | 12.40 | 19.71 |
| Wholesale Trade | 356.5 | 33.55 | 16.82 |
| Retail Trade | 1254.7 | 54.79 | 34.49 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 850.3 | 54.20 | 42.66 |
| Transport, Postal and Warehousing | 620.6 | 22.53 | 13.42 |
| Information, Media and Telecommunications | 212.1 | 36.96 | 5.51 |
| Financial and Insurance Services | 416.5 | 50.06 | 0.00 |
| Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services | 212.8 | 53.52 | 27.18 |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 996.6 | 40.47 | 9.33 |
| Administrative and Support Services | 435.1 | 50.95 | 42.05 |
| Public Administration and Safety | 763.6 | 48.38 | 18.11 |
| Education and Training | 993.1 | 71.49 | 25.97 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 1540.9 | 78.34 | 28.79 |
| Arts and Recreation Services | 208.0 | 50.63 | 26.23 |
| Other Services | 461.0 | 45.47 | 34.34 |
| **Total** | 12003.7 | 46.54 | 24.50 |

Source: a. ABS, Cat.No. 6291 Labour Force, Detailed, Nov 2017

b. ABS, Cat.No. 6306 Employee Earnings and Hours, May 2016

Table 1 above shows employment by industry and the proportion of employees who are female in each industry (as at November 2017) along with the proportion of award reliant employees by industry (as at May 2016). The largest proportions of award dependent (non-managerial) workers are found in the Accommodation and food services (42.7%, 362,700 workers), Administrative and support services (42.1%, 183,000 workers) and Retail trade (34.5%, 432,700 workers) industries8. These industries are characterised by high levels of female participation: 54.2%, 51% and 54.8% respectively[[11]](#footnote-11).

These industries account for some 21% of total employment. Given that these industries are disproportionately award reliant, and therefore lower paid and highly feminised, an increase in minimum wages will promote gender pay equity.

# Economic factors**[[12]](#footnote-12)**

Australian Gross Domestic Product rose 2.0% in 2016-17, moderating from 2.8% growth in the previous year. The Australian economy is expected to expand at a solid pace over the next few years, with the drag on growth resulting from the end of the investment phase of the mining boom nearing completion. Real GDP is forecast to grow by 2½ per cent in 2017-18 and 3 per cent in 2018-19, supported by non-mining business investment, household consumption, public final demand and exports.

Global growth has strengthened significantly over the last year and is forecast to be 3½ per cent in 2017 and in 2018 and 3¾ per cent in 2019. The drivers of global growth have become increasingly broad based. Growth has strengthened in most advanced and emerging economies over the year, producing a more synchronised global expansion. Nevertheless, the global economic recovery is still heavily dependent on monetary stimulus provided by major central banks. With global monetary policy settings remaining very accommodative, the outlook is positive in the short to medium term. However, the current economic recovery is clouded by (1) the difficulty of implementing the Brexit process in Europe; (2) the uncertainty of economic policies in the US; and (3) rising military tensions on the Korean Peninsula. On balance, the current consensus is that global growth will moderate towards 3% by 2020.

Australia’s real GDP is forecast to grow by 2½% in 2017-18, and then strengthen to 3% in 2018-19, as the detraction from mining investment eases. Exports are forecast to grow by 3% in 2017-18 and 4% in 2018-19 supported by non-rural commodity exports — liquefied natural gas (LNG) and iron ore in particular — and services exports. Services export volumes, including tourism and education services, continue to be supported by a lower exchange rate and rising demand from Asia.

Business investment fell by 4% in 2016-17 as resource investment continued to decline. The outlook, however is more positive for business investment, with growth of 2% forecast for 2017-18 followed by 3% growth in 2018-19. There has been a significant strengthening in business conditions and non-mining capital expenditure intentions over the past year.

Dwelling investment is expected to decline moderately, falling by 1½ per cent in both 2017-18 and 2018-19. Dwelling investment has now declined for the past three quarters. In addition, house price growth has slowed and auction clearance rates have fallen since the beginning of 2017. However, the pipeline of construction work remains elevated and is expected to support activity for some time.

Household consumption is forecast to grow by 2¼ per cent in 2017-18 and 2¾ per cent in 2018-19, remaining below the historical average in both years. Growth in household consumption has been relatively modest in recent years compared with long-run historical growth rates, reflecting subdued growth in household incomes. Consumption growth is expected to continue to outpace growth in disposable incomes and the household saving rate is expected to fall further.

Employment growth has been strong nationally, with trend employment growth having risen 395,000 persons over the year to January 2018. Strengthening employment has coincided with rising participation and a falling unemployment rate. However, labour underutilisation remains elevated, despite declining in recent quarters. Employment growth is expected to be supported by continued economic growth and subdued wage growth. Employment is forecast to grow by 1¾ per cent through the year to the June quarter 2018 and 1½ per cent through the year to the June quarter 2019. The unemployment rate is forecast to be 5½ per cent in the June quarter 2018 and 5¼ per cent in the June quarter 2019. The participation rate is forecast to be 65 per cent in the June quarter 2018 and 64¾ per cent in the June quarter 2019.

Headline inflation remains subdued, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increasing by 1.9 per cent through the year to the December quarter 2017. A combination of factors including heightened competition in the retail sector and subdued rental price growth are expected to contain inflation in the short term. Consumer prices are forecast to increase by 2 per cent through the year to the June quarter 2018, before accelerating to 2¼ per cent through the year to the June quarter 2019.

Wage growth remains near record lows by historical standards in both the public and private sectors. Wages, as measured by the Wage Price Index, are forecast to grow by 2¼ per cent through the year to the June quarter 2018 and 2¾ per cent through the year to the June quarter 2019. Wage growth is forecast to lift as the economy strengthens, inflation picks up and excess capacity in the labour market is reduced.

### The Queensland economy[[13]](#footnote-13)

Economic growth in Queensland is expected to be 2¾% in 2017-18 reflecting the further ramp-up in LNG exports and an earlier than expected turn around in business investment, before accelerating to 3% in 2018-19. This follows more modest growth of 1.8% in 2016-17, due largely to subdued growth in household consumption, a further decline in business investment and a strong increase in overseas imports, the latter partly offsetting growth in overseas exports.

A recovery in global trade has driven widespread improvements in the outlook for global industrial production, including in China, the United States and the Eurozone. This has led to rising commodity prices, which are expected to boost Queensland’s export earnings. The higher terms of trade will support growth in household income which in turn is forecast to drive slightly stronger growth in household consumption in 2017-18, despite remaining below the historical average. Subdued wage growth remains an impediment to a more sustained pick‑up in household consumption activity.

After three years of strong growth, dwelling investment rose by a further 2.4% in 2016-17. However, dwelling approvals are now well below their peak in late-2015 / early-2016, driven by significant falls in approvals for medium-to-high density dwellings. With the value of work in the pipeline now easing, it is expected that dwelling investment will fall in 2017-18 and 2018‑19. However, a sustained pick-up in house approvals, combined with strengthening population growth, suggests the decline in dwelling investment will likely be modest compared to previous dwelling cycles.

Business investment began to recover in 2016-17, with this trend expected to continue in 2017-18 and 2018-19. With the wind-down in LNG construction leading to two years of substantial falls, business investment declined by a more modest 2.2% in 2016-17, as growth in machinery and equipment largely offset a further fall in non-dwelling construction. However, it is noted that the improved outlook for machinery and equipment is likely to see an increase in overseas imports to Queensland, which will lessen the contribution of net exports to overall economic growth

Below average summer rainfall in 2016-17 is expected to lower Queensland crop production in 2017-18, while sugar cane production is also expected to fall, partly due to issues associated with Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie. However, beef production and exports are expected to grow modestly in 2017-18, with herd rebuilding having started to wind down.

The sustained lower A$ and expanding middle class in Asia are expected to drive further solid growth in Queensland’s overseas tourism and education services exports over the next few years. The Commonwealth Games, to be held on the Gold Coast in April 2018, is expected to provide a further boost to tourism exports in 2017-18.

Labour market conditions in Queensland have strengthened significantly, with trend employment having risen 110,000 persons over the year to January 2018. Improved conditions have drawn more participants into the labour market (reversing the decline in 2016), while the trend unemployment rate has also declined, to be 6.0% in January 2018. Employment gains have been concentrated in construction, reflecting the elevated residential construction activity in South East Queensland, and accommodation and food services, reflecting stronger tourism activity. Employment is forecast to rise 2¼% (seasonally adjusted) through the year to June quarter 2018, before rising a further 1½% through to year to June quarter 2019. The unemployment rate is forecast to be 6% (seasonally adjusted) in both June quarter 2018 and June quarter 2019.

Despite the strong pick-up in employment and the decline in the trend unemployment rate, labour underutilisation rates remain elevated, both in Queensland and nationally, partly explaining subdued wages growth. Wages growth in Queensland is expected to remain modest, at 2¼% in 2017-18 and 2½% in 2018-19. Inflation is expected to be 1¾% in 2017-18 and 2¼% in 2018-19.

### Risks to the outlook

The housing market remains a risk to both the national and Queensland economies. After five years of strong dwelling price growth (particularly in Sydney and Melbourne), increased supply and declines in foreign and investor demand have seen dwelling prices begin to soften recently in a number of capital cities. Additionally, the Commonwealth Treasury has forecast declines to dwelling investment in both 2017-18 and 2018-19. With household debt to income ratios at elevated levels, continued falls in dwelling prices could impact future consumption activity, with household wealth one of the key drivers of household consumption. However, with employment growth strong nationally and interest rates at historical lows, a soft landing for national dwelling prices appears the more likely scenario.

### Economic implications of low wage growth

Australia has experienced a sustained period of subdued wage growth, both in the public and private sectors. Seasonally adjusted wage growth was just 2.1% over the year to December quarter 2017, a slight rise from the annual rate in the September quarter 2017 (2.0%) and the historically low annual growth rate of 1.9% recorded in previous quarters.

A sustained period of low wage growth can have implications for the broader economy. Subdued wage growth constrains growth in household income, one of the key drivers of household consumption (which accounts for around 60% of total economic activity). Slow wage growth combined with rising housing prices can also put pressure on household budgets through higher debt to household income which may also constrain spending. Declining household consumption in turn impacts upon business profits and employment. Additionally, low wage growth limits growth in Government revenues.

The RBA has suggested that current low wage growth can be mostly explained by spare capacity in the labour market, the low inflationary environment and the decline in business incomes following the decline in the terms of trade. However, the RBA has also acknowledged that structural changes may be occurring in the labour market, such as the increasing use of contracts with fewer wage adjustments, which may have affected the relationship between wage growth and the labour market in recent years. Wages set by individual contract may respond more quickly to economic conditions, which could see new contracts being struck at lower rates to reflect any prevailing uncertainty. The ACTU and others have suggested that this disconnect may be due to impediments in the Fair Work framework that curtails the ability of workers to secure wage rises.

# A benchmark for minimum wages

As mentioned previously as at May 2016, approximately 479,700 (25.6%) of Queensland non-managerial employees relied on the award system to determine their rate of pay.

Minimum and award wage increases serve an important social function by directly targeting and benefiting those employees who are not able to negotiate wage increases with their employer through enterprise bargaining. This helps to ensure that those workers with little or no bargaining power are not left behind.

There is a marked disparity between the wage outcomes for those on awards compared to employees covered by collective agreements. In Queensland, in May 2016, average weekly earnings for full-time employees paid at the adult rate covered by industrial awards were $1246.70 per week, compared to $1,624.50 for those covered by collective agreements and $1,553.70 for those covered by individual agreements**[[14]](#footnote-14)**. The ratio of award-reliant wages to the average of all wages was marginally lower (81.0%) in Queensland than the national average of 81.8%*.*

**Table 2: Real and nominal increases for award rates and AWOTE, 2007-2017**

| Wage group | Weekly rate of pay | | $ increase | Nominal % increase | Real % increase |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2007 | 2017 |
| C14 | $522.10 | $694.90 | $172.80 | 33.10% | 5.44% |
| C13 | $538.80 | $714.90 | $176.10 | 32.68% | 5.12% |
| C12 | $561.30 | $742.30 | $181.00 | 32.25% | 4.77% |
| C11 | $582.20 | $767.80 | $185.60 | 31.88% | 4.48% |
| C10 | $616.00 | $809.10 | $193.10 | 31.35% | 4.06% |
| C9 | $636.90 | $834.40 | $197.50 | 31.01% | 3.79% |
| C8 | $657.40 | $859.80 | $202.40 | 30.79% | 3.61% |
| C7 | $676.40 | $882.80 | $206.40 | 30.51% | 3.40% |
| C6 | $713.30 | $927.50 | $214.20 | 30.03% | 3.01% |
| C5 | $728.80 | $946.50 | $217.70 | 29.87% | 2.89% |
| C4 | $749.70 | $971.90 | $222.20 | 29.64% | 2.70% |
| C3 | $791.20 | $1022.80 | $231.60 | 29.27% | 2.41% |
| C2(a) | $812.10 | $1048.30 | $236.20 | 29.09% | 2.27% |
| C2(b) | $849.70 | $1094.10 | $244.40 | 28.76% | 2.01% |
| **AWOTE\*** | **$1,076.00** | **$1,543.80** | $467.80 | 43.48% | 13.67% |
| **WPI\*\*:**  **Australia**  **Queensland** |  |  |  | **34.79%**  **34.55%** | |  | | --- | |  | | **7.00%** |   **6.59%** |

\*AWOTE based on June 2007 and June 2017

\*\* Wage-Price Index refers to Ordinary time hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses; June 2007 and June 2017.

Sources: ABS, *Average Weekly Earnings*, cat. 6302.0; ABS, *Wage Price Index*, cat. 6345.0; Award rates: Metal, Engineering and Associated Industries Award, 1998 (increase operative December 2006) and Manufacturing and Associated Industries and Occupations Award 2010

Moreover, the growth in the minimum wage and award rates of pay has not kept pace with the growth in earnings across the workforce generally. As Table 2 above shows, over the 10 year period June 2007 to June 2017, the Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE) increased by 43.48%, or 13.67% in real terms, compared with an increase of only 31.35%, or 4.06% in real terms, to the benchmark C10 tradesperson rate in the manufacturing award[[15]](#footnote-15). AWOTE may be influenced by compositional changes – the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) wage-price index may provide a better measure of overall wage movements, abstracting from compositional changes. While this comparison is less dramatic, it is still evident that the C10 benchmark real increase of 4.06% over the period is below the real increase in the ordinary-time wage-price index of 7.00%. Maintenance of the real value of wages should be a threshold benchmark. In addition, it is reasonable that that workers share in the benefits of measurable improvements in productivity. Labour productivity, real GDP per hour worked, has increased 13.5% in the 10 years to 2017.

A perennial point of contention is with the impact of minimum wage movements on the employment of low-skilled workers. Arguments around the empirical evidence regarding the impact of wage adjustments on employment have been a constant feature of national and state wage cases. While it has been argued that moderate increases in real wages, in the absence of offsetting productivity improvements, may lead to a small negative impact on employment, this has not been borne out by the evidence. Factors such as employer efforts to increase workers’ productivity to justify the wages paid, incentive effects on employees, and through the broader effects of a fairer system on social and economic cohesion in society as a whole, are effective in mitigating any dis-employment effects.

The impact of safety net adjustments to award wages is less contentious. In previous wage case decisions, the Panel has noted that a general assessment of employment data, including in more heavily award reliant sectors, has not disclosed any basis to suggest that past safety net adjustments have had any significant adverse employment effects. In its 2016 Decision, the Panel reaffirmed its view that “modest and regular increases in minimum wages have a small or even zero impact on employment”.[[16]](#footnote-16) This sentiment was reiterated in the Panel’s 2017 decision along with the statement that “the Panel’s past assessment of what constitutes a ‘modest’ increase may have been overly cautious, in terms of its assessed dis-employment effects.”[[17]](#footnote-17)

The Queensland Government submits that these findings regarding the employment effects of wage increases should be considered in tandem with the social and individual benefits of an increase in the minimum wage.

# Social factors – The importance of fair wages

The Queensland Government submits that, in line with the statutory obligation on the FWC to ensure a fair and relevant minimum safety net, there should be a continuing effort to address the disparity between award rates and wage outcomes achieved through bargaining, as well as general wage movements across the community.

The Queensland Government submits that taking into account the significant difference between wage outcomes of those on minimum wage instruments and those able to bargain, improving the real value of award wages and the living standards of the low paid will not cause bargaining to become less attractive to wage earners. This approach is consistent with the objective of modern awards to encourage enterprise bargaining.

The current gap would provide a significant incentive for employees to seek to bargain for wage increases. The fact that a significant proportion of employees have remained award reliant, despite the fact their rate of pay falls well short of the pay of those on agreements, suggests that it is not a matter of choice that employees remain subject to award only rates. The reality is that, for a variety of reasons, not all employees are able to bargain with their employers for wage increases.

# Equal remuneration

In last year’s FWC AWR decision the Panel noted that, “[W]omen continue to be overrepresented among the award reliant and low paid. It follows, and we accept, that increases in the NMW and modern award wages can provide some assistance in addressing the gender pay gap.”[[18]](#footnote-18) The Queensland Government supports this position.

In accordance with the requirement of the FWC to take into account the principle of equal remuneration in the minimum wages and modern awards objectives, the Queensland Government’s position is that an increase to the NMW and modern award rates will impact positively upon pay equity.

With regard to modern award increases, as mentioned a significant portion of Queensland’s award reliant employees are women. Given the relationship between award reliance and low pay, an increase in minimum wages is likely to positively impact on pay equity. While such an increase may only have a minimal impact on the gender pay gap, the Queensland Government position is that this remains a worthwhile pursuit.

# Conclusion

This submission has examined the background and context for the FWC AWR and the key economic and social factors that are relevant to the determination of the Panel.

The Queensland Government is committed to economically responsible pay increases and the protection of the low paid. The Queensland Government submits that a pay increase that rewards productivity gains and improves the value of real wages as well as the living standards for workers subject to the NMW order and award wage reliant workers would meet these criteria.

**The Queensland Government submits:**

1. On balance, the Australian economy is characterised by a slow improvement in economic activity as the transition from resource investment led growth towards broader-based drivers of economic activity appears to be near complete. Employment growth has strengthened recently as the economy transitions to more labour intensive services sectors. However, the strengthening labour market has not produced an improvement in wage growth;
2. an increase that rewards productivity gains and improves the value of real wages as well as the living standards for workers receiving the NMW or award wage reliant workers is economically responsible and protects the low paid;
3. in determining the level of increase, a broad range of indicators should be considered. These include inflation, employment, wage growth, business profits and conditions, productivity growth, relative living standards and the needs of the low paid;
4. there is little or no evidence to suggest that moderate increases in minimum and award wages have any significant dis-employment effects;
5. there is a continued disparity in the wage outcomes of minimum wage workers and those able to benefit from bargaining.  It is incumbent on the Panel to set minimum wages that are fair in the context of living standards generally;
6. raising the minimum and award wages will promote gender pay equity due to the greater reliance of women workers on minimum and award wage rates; and
7. consistent with the principles and considerations outlined in this submission, and based on data available at the time of this submission, the Queensland Government supports a $27.10 week increase to the NMW, lifting it to $722 per week or $19.00 per hour. Further, the Queensland Government supports a fair and reasonable increase to all other award rates of pay.

1. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) s 289(1). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) s 289(5). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) s 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) s 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) s 284. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) s 284(1). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. ABS, *Employee Earnings and Hours*, cat 6306.0, May, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. FWC Decision **Annual Wage Review 2015–16** (C2016/1) para 449. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. ABS, Cat.No. 6291 Labour Force, Detailed, Nov 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Forecasts are taken from the Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO), Commonwealth of Australia (released December 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Forecasts and data are obtained from the Queensland 2017–18 Mid-Year Fiscal and Economic Review (MYFER). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. ABS, *Employee Earnings and Hours*, cat 6306.0, May, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Manufacturing and Associated Industries and Occupations Award 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. FWC Decision **Annual Wage Review 2015–16** (C2015/1) para 492. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. FWC Statement **Annual Wage Review 2016-17** (C2017/1) para 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. FWC Decision **Annual Wage Review 2015–16** (C2016/1) para 576. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)