

1 Submissions from members of the ACTU

Author	Submission
Altus, Whitney	<p>I have worked in retail for almost 4 years now, starting when I was 15 at (withheld) my wage started off at \$9.33.</p> <p>I was employed before Christmas and worked up to 25 hours in the weeks leading up, worked until 9pm on Christmas Eve and then was back at work at 8am on Boxing day and was there until 4pm, had it not been for the penalty rates for the Boxing day work (double and a half time) there would have been no way that I would have worked. I worked most Sundays and every public holiday for the 2 years thee and once again would not have worked if I was not going to get a penalty rate.</p> <p>As for only working 1 hour my parents would have to drive me in 25 kms as we lived out of town and they would also pick me up, \$9.33 would not have even covered the cost for fuel. It is ridiculous to expect a person to go to work for 1 hour or work early/late hours or on weekends without a penalty; what you will find is that the only people who will do that is the people that need the money the most, generally people working in full time and part time, as for casual after school workers like I was when I worked at (withheld) had that been the case I would not have bothered working at all.</p> <p>Also I am unsure how a casual that works a maximum of 10 hours a week is going to qualify for any 'incentive' pay?</p> <p>This is truly a complete abuse of power, workers' rights should be moving forward – not backwards, which is exactly what this is doing. If the companies that are losing profit to online sales stopped marking up their products by 400-500% and made them more competitive their sales would come back to them, punishing workers for the companies faults is not going to fix this I'm sure they could mark down their products by hey, why not try to rip off the middle guy instead? And all this government is doing is encouraging this; I thought that the government is for the people, not the corporations.</p>
Berry, Tracy	<p>If Joe Hockey and the National Retailer's Association want to cut wages by 10% I say let's cut their wages by 10% first.</p> <p>My name is Tracy Berry and I have worked in the retail industry for a total of 14 years. I enjoy what I do and as a casual shop assistant (level 3) earning the basic wage \$17.71/hour + 25% and I work 25 to 35 hours a week sometimes more. I also travel 40 minutes to work and 40 minutes back home (as do a lot of people in regional areas) reducing the length of employment to one hour would mean I would have to knock back work as it wouldn't be worth my while to drive in and then I would lose my job. How would this impact on the system?</p> <p>I don't rely on the penalty rates as my employer is in "transition" from the last work choices period. So I don't receive the total penalties anyway.</p> <p>But removing penalty rates will make it harder for employers to find staff let alone experienced staff to work late and weekends. This may even force them to reduce their hours of trade.</p> <p>Creating an "incentive pay" scheme I believe is not an option as it creates friction among employees and an individual work ethic and in retail you need TEAM WORK.</p> <p>With the current award that has been introduced and its scope of hours of employment, at present there is little opportunity of gaining paid overtime. Wages, penalties and overtime are not to blame for the decline in retail.</p>

	<p>Businesses need to have a look at themselves, the lack of consistency, very little incentives, overpricing and trained and experienced staff are not valued.</p> <p>The Liberal Party was voted out last election mainly due to Work Choices. Are they really going to try that again.</p>
Bhogal, Gian	<p>My wife and I work as Nurses. It is critical that we have regular predictable shifts so that we can balance the needs of our children with the demands of our workplaces.</p> <p>Short shifts and 'flexible' work arrangements where we are asked to change our starting times at short notice put tremendous pressure on our family. Penalty rates and other allowances allow us to pay for unexpected bills and to save for a house (that we are hoping to buy before we retire).</p> <p>The hardest thing about our working lives is that we have to work every day of the week sometimes for weeks at a time. The other thing that I particularly dislike is that our workplaces can be violent and that either my wife or myself can easily be injured at work. We also do a significant amount of unpaid overtime to ensure that our workplaces run smoothly. Increasing our workloads and reducing our pay will not increase productivity because we are already working many more hours than we are being paid for.</p> <p>The Productivity Commission should carefully consider the issue of unpaid overtime because if employers take away our entitlements and reduce our pay I expect that many of the people that I work with will start taking regular meal breaks and stop working for free.</p>
Broome, Richard	<p>I would like to add my concern at the proposal to cut retail worker's wages, penalty rates and job security.</p> <p>The minimum wage is a very low wage. It makes it impossible for someone on that wage to ever consider purchasing a small apartment as they can only borrow \$150,000 on that salary and can never close the gap or hope to pay a mortgage. Even rental is daunting on such a wage. Such a low wage does little to stimulate the housing sector.</p> <p>Penalty rates recognise and compensate the demands on workers' leisure time and family life and as such should be maintained for basic equity.</p> <p>The retail sector [and the Productivity Commission] must find other solutions for their current difficulty than reducing the wages and conditions of our most vulnerable workers.</p>
Bunnings Group Kirrawee Workers	<p>We think it's wrong to suggest that Retail Workers should bear the brunt of internet sales affecting companies.</p> <p>Simple solution could be adding GST to internet transactions making that they of retail not so attractive.</p> <p>The internet does not give personable service and as you are already aware the retail wages are one of the lowest paid in the Country anyway!</p> <p>PLEASE explain how this will help retail profits anyway.</p>
Burchell, Robynne	<p>My son currently works in retail on a casual basis. His work situation is possibly better than most in that he usually gets a Sunday shift which makes it almost possible to survive, pay the mortgage and eat. Without the penalty rate that he receives he would be up that creek in the canoe that is very uncomfortable.</p> <p>For the life of me I do not understand why returning to serf choices is seen as the cure for all ills.</p>

	<p>My lad is new to retail, is is a trade qualified chef who is unable to find work in both his home area or in the so-called “boom states”. He has worked in the mines in WA but is unable to obtain employment there, hence he is now fortunate to have obtained this job.</p> <p>I find it objectionable in the extreme that workers should be expected to turn up at the whim of employers at any given hour in a 24 hour period to work for a base rate, and to expect anyone to work public holidays (PUBLIC) for the usual rate is just not on.</p> <p>Probably out of topic, but I would suggest that the ongoing rant about skill shortages is one that suits the employers who would rather have 457’s than locals as they pay them much less.</p> <p>Anyway, just thought that I would add my two bobs worth, no doubt after the next election we will once again be fighting to retain any vestige of fairness when the one trick phoney Abbot is PM</p>
Campbell, Claire	<p>I definitely don’t agree with the Retail Industry’s proposed reforms of retail workers payments.</p> <p>I am indirectly affected by this action. I have a sister who works in retail. I think that slashing the rates of pay and scrapping penalty rates is very unfair.</p> <p>I am a low paid community sector worker. I work hard to assist the under-privileged and disadvantaged and do not think that remuneration is appropriate. I do not like what the Retail Industry proposed to do and I definitely do not want this happening to the community sector as well.</p>
Collard, Deb	<p>I believe it is an abuse of workers’ rights to have all the listed conditions taken away. People worked hard to have basic conditions put in place so that everyone would benefit. To go into work for 1 hour in particular is totally inappropriate and an abuse of power. For the people we work with including young people and those parents that already have it tough to not have basic rights is wrong, as they are already disadvantaged.</p>
Constantinou, Lorraine	<p>I would like to be added to the submission as I strongly disagree with wage cuts and particularly with penalty rates being removed. I worked shift work half my life and my ex-partner still does. It is extremely hard to live a normal life when the vast majority work Mon-Fri 91m-5pm so there should be no question that anyone who works after hours and/or on weekends be compensated for doing so. They are working these hours so that the rest of us can enjoy our leisure time at clubs, cinemas, shopping, etc. The retail industry is in a slump so cut prices – DON’T take it out on the staff!</p>
Cross, Janine	<p>I’m appalled with the suggestions that retail workers conditions could be reduced as part of a strategy to improve profits of retailers who have had their profits reduced by online shopping.</p> <p>These people are the ones that can least afford a pay cut and the reduction to their conditions including penalty rates and reduction is the minimum shift is completely unreasonable.</p> <p>Many of these retail workers are casuals or part-time who work only a few hours a week at best. If they are lucky enough to get a shift that provides penalty rates, this is the only way they have to supplement their paltry income. To reduce the minimum shift to one hour could possibly mean that it cost a worker more than their recompense to work for that hour.</p> <p>When my son was working in retail, it would cost more than \$10 in petrol to get to</p>

	<p>work as we live some 45 minutes from our closest town. If he was required to work for one hour as an 18 year old he would receive \$12.15.</p> <p>In rural areas often working in the retails is the one of the few avenues of work open to school leavers.</p> <p>People need these jobs but they need protection of their rights at work.</p> <p>Although I can sympathise with small business, I ask that you use your power to ensure that workers are not disadvantaged by the greedy large retailers whose rich owners and/or shareholders who want these unreasonable work conditions introduced.</p>
Crute, Daniel	<p>I used to work in retail from 1999-2004. Employers' attempts to reduce conditions are a disgusting attempt to attack some of the most vulnerable workers in Australia.</p> <p>As it is, retail employees are entitled to few penalties. Casual retail workers don't get any penalties for working on Saturday, unlike almost every other award reliant worker in Australia. But for employers this is not enough! Since employers cannot use AWAs to undermine conditions any more (like mine did) they now want another way to attach retail workers.</p>
Davis, Laura SDA delegate	<p>My name is Laura Davis and I currently work at (withheld).</p> <p>I have worked at (withheld) since it opened around May and I have been given 3 contracts during the time we have opened to now. I have only been given a 12 hour contract over this period, and I am available to work a total of 5 days a week, as I currently a student at SCU. I usually get around 18 hours a week as I am called in a lot, due to other workers calling in sick and also from them not even showing up to any of their shifts. Yet they are still employed at (withheld). I have recently asked for more hours on my contract so I know I have the security of those hours, but I have been rejected by the store manager and the manager of the checkouts. I have only asked for 6 more hours on top of my contract and yet I still can't be given any more. I don't understand why I am the one not being looked after in this situation.</p> <p>To add to that I have been cut off from Centrelink and I cannot get any help from the government and also work.</p> <p>There is no way I can live out of home on \$170 a week, and be able to pay rent (\$113.33) and also be able to afford to eat for the week, let alone pay for the fuel to drive to work. My phone bill is \$15 a week and my electricity and water is way beyond what I earn. Is there anything that can be done about this situation, I am only asking for 6 more hours which I am rightly deserving of. Is there any workers right in this situation? I would not even be writing this letter if I wasn't this desperate. Isn't work meant to help you out, there seems as if there is no ethics of care in the system.</p>
Dawson, Tim	<p>I am very concerned with the new proposal regarding retail workers' rights and penalty rates. As a university student I rely on a minimum number of working hours (I can work a maximum of 15-20 hours per week) to meet my weekly demands. The hours I can work are restricted due to a full time study load entailing up to 40 hours per week. In short I have to work another job on top of my full time job of studying. The proposed deregulation would drastically impact not only upon my rights and entitlements as an employee within the retail sector, but also on my study, ability to meet my weekly budget and quality of life in general.</p> <p>I urge the Productivity Commission and Members of Parliament to take into consideration the rights of workers and the dramatic impact this proposed deregulation would have.</p>
Duffy, Edward	<p>It seems every year now the cost of living rises as do executive salaries, but the wages and working conditions of everyday Australians must now be cut? This is a</p>

	<p>slap in the face to Aussie workers and Aussie families. It is unfair and unjust, Australians deserve better.</p> <p>What is it going to do for Australia's economy when there are vast parts of the population in full or part time work that are still too poor to afford the goods or services that the economy provides? Please do not do this.</p>
Eads, Steve	<p>Having migrated to Australia from the USA more than 35 years ago, I am well aware of the life change I have enjoyed through that decision.</p> <p>America has all of those workplace regulation objectives espoused by some Australian business leaders and leaders of the Liberal party. And I know that they many Americans are forced to undertake 3 separate jobs just to make an almost living wage.</p> <p>How about we work smarter and with more compassion than impoverishing workers?</p>
Fitzgerald, Melinda	<p>I am appalled to hear of the proposed changes to the wages and conditions of the retail workers award, I work within Pharmacy that already has employees paid very low wages usually less than most other retail sectors. Workers do not receive overtime penalties with the way the shifts are structured. The level of personal pressure to safely medicate the community is a huge responsibility and deserves recognition.</p> <p>We are expected to attend 12 in service trainings annually and are required to attend monthly staff meetings outside of work hours in the evenings. There is an expectation that we will happily and readily to stock take in our own time, as well as various special even preparations for the store again in our own time.</p> <p>All the while these requirements and expectations are unpaid work with the employees meeting the cost of own transport as well.</p> <p>Whatever happened to the concept of teamwork and give and take, I feel I am constantly asked to give my time my experience and expertise with no thanks and no pay.</p> <p>I am of the generation who believe in honest hard work, being prompt, polite, conscientious, and professional, but I also believe I am entitled to the same respect from my employer.</p> <p>Workers' rights and reasonable standard of living being eroded in this way is not right or fair no matter how you want to justify it.</p> <p>How did we as a society forget so quickly the long hard road of fair work reform that our parents and grandparents campaigned for, to sustain us into the future. A good balance of everything in moderation has long been known to keep us happy active and healthy, as a society. Altering that balance leads to stress, burden and cost to society.</p> <p>We need precious time spent with family on weekends it is our children's play time after a week of schooling. We and they deserve that time together, to continue to grow a productive healthy community.</p>
Fosters, Rose	<p>I have been working in retail for 4 years now, I used to work fulltime 40+ a week, I now have stepped down due to stress levels and lack of time for personal duties.</p> <p>I now work night's doing general filling duties.</p> <p>My earning's before I stepped down were approximately \$35,000 and let me tell you it was hard diving off that when our rent ranged between \$360 to \$500.</p> <p>While I was fulltime I had to work many public holidays, weekends and late nights,</p>

	<p>including overnight's for stock take purposes, and I'm telling you it's hard enough to work these kind of hours now, how do you think people are going to feel when you start cutting wages, penalties, Sunday and late night working rates?</p> <p>I feel that we are not compensated enough as it is for the workloads we deal with on day to day basis.</p> <p>In retail we have a constant customer service which MUST be upheld, most of us go to extensive duties to help our customer's, how much extensive work do you think workers are going to want to do if you go cutting wages more?</p> <p>How happy do you think our customers are going to be when our retail workers don't want to be in retail anymore because the money is not worth the trouble, as it is, it is hard enough to get people interested in retail with such a high customer to worker demand.</p> <p>As for incentive pay I have found that when incentives are involved, all the wrong people whom DON'T deserve it, get it, and all the hard working people whom deserve it don't receive it, this is a very unfair system I think it's well – crap.</p> <p>An example for use on late night penalties working for retail, when stock take comes around the penalty rates are the only thing that helps us get the workers that we need to get the duties completed. Without the penalties no one will want to do it, same for night fill who's going to want to work night fill if there is no compensation for working late at night.</p> <p>Seriously consider what you are going to deprive retail workers from if you go messing with our rates AGAIN.</p> <p>Look around you the cost of living is increasing all the time, how do you expect singles, couples and families to survive on what little money most of them receive now.</p> <p>I don't think a lot of people realise just how hard it can be to work in retail, there is so much more to retail then just being there to help customers, that is not even a quarter of the responsibilities that I used to take on in any one day.</p> <p>Retail is exhausting, draining and very very stressful when dealing with it day in day out.</p>
Greaves, Michael	<p>Please add my name to the Productivity Commission inquiry and voice my disapproval of reducing retail wages I can't believe we are having this discussion, reducing the wages of a group of people who are already under paid and work unusual hours is a low act and retailers should be ashamed, they should be looking at why people aren't spending in their shops and not looking for a quick money grab from people who can ill afford it.</p>
Hanlon, Deborah	<p>I have immediate family who work for large retail organisations and my experience is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They work hard</li> <li>2. Are not very well paid</li> <li>3. Get called into work at a moment's notice</li> <li>4. Take on responsibilities well above what their remuneration should require (dealing with police, dismissal, counselling etc.)</li> <li>5. That family life is severely impacted by the irregular, and long, hours of work</li> <li>6. They are often the only "large" employer in many country towns – a captive</li> </ol>



	<p>workforce means conditions can be more rigid for workers in regional areas</p> <p>7. Hours of work provided for casual staff and opportunities for advancement are tinged with favouritism / bias.</p> <p>With the large retailers especially (particularly in food and grocery lines) already making significant profits and with a lack of competition it would appear that the review of working conditions and the proposal from employers will only add to massive profits and disadvantage workers.</p>
Higgins, Jim	<p>I am disgusted by the suggestion made by groups like the National Retailers Association to cut entry level wages by 10%, scrap all penalty rates on Saturdays and at nights, and reduce the Sunday penalty rate for retail workers.</p> <p>Despite the fact that these workers are amongst the lowest paid in Australia, they are being asked to make further cuts in their income and family life to solve wider problems faced in their industry.</p> <p>Despite some challenges in the retail sector, it remains a profitable sector of the Australian economy where shareholders and company (withheld) still manage to eke out a reasonable dividend.</p> <p>I believe that our Australian culture and fabric of our society is built upon principles of egalitarianism and giving workers “a fair go”.</p> <p>The Government and the Productivity Commission need to look at the dysfunctional aspects of any action to make this group of workers suffer. The far-reaching effects of this decision can only have negative effects in our society.</p>
Jessica	<p>I’ve worked in the retail industry for 15 years. The wage that I currently receive is barely enough to live on once bills and rent are paid.</p> <p>If you cut our penalty rates how do you expect us to live let alone be able to afford to buy the things these retailers produce.</p> <p>If you want to cut wages, cut the rich for once, the greedy CEOs get far too much.</p>
Jones, Lynn	<p>As a retail worker with 12 years’ experience, both with a franchise outlet and now with a major retailer I feel that I should make my voice heard.</p> <p>For too long retail workers have been treated as lower class citizens, with our rights being taken from us. We are in fact a highly trained necessary part of the work force and deserve to be treated as such. We have had to fight for decent wages and to now be told that our minimum wage could be reduced is very disappointing. A lot of retail workers are Mums who need the money to help with family finances.</p> <p>Also the idea of scrapping penalty rates is something that should be vehemently opposed. Retail workers do not get paid overtime for having to stay at work after stores officially close, which is a fact that many customers do not seem to appreciate, but to take away penalty rates for working late nights and Su days is just adding insult to injury. Most retail works are part time or casual workers. Four hour shifts are normal for most retail workers and at around \$18 an hour it is not easy to survive, especially if you are a single Mum paying rent or a mortgage. A twenty hour working week is fairly standard for retail workers. Therefore, we rely on penalty rates at weekends and bank holidays in order to survive.</p> <p>The one complaint most customers have in larger stores is a lack of staff. It seems to me that retail senior management is more interested in making money for shareholders than in improving the work place for both workers and customers. Can they not see that better customer relations will lead to higher profits and a happy</p>

	<p>work force. We do not want to end up with a similar system to that of the USA where you can be fired without explanation and your wages are made up of commission.</p> <p>Shops are now open seven days a week, but we do need to have a break sometimes and Public Holidays such as Easter and Christmas should be a time for us all to be with our families.</p> <p>Retailing hours are getting longer, in some cases 24 hour trading, and yet we are supposed to accept lower wages, a cessation of penalty rates and the lack of protection against unfair dismissal, plus all stores trading over public holidays. As workers we are very tolerant but we cannot afford to stay silent while our rights are being eroded.</p>
King, Gillian	<p>My daughter works for low wages in the retail industry. She also works long hours, including Sundays and pays a fortune for transport to and from the city. She understands that working Sundays is part of the culture of her job description, BUT if penalty rates are abolished it will change the nature of the incentive.</p> <p>At the moment she misses many social and family gatherings because of this responsibility, plus she can't stay out late on Saturday evenings with her friends which for a 21 year old is sometimes difficult. She puts up with this because she receives a small benefit by working that day. If the government takes this benefit away, the whole award will need to be rewritten as she signed her retail contract on the basis of her current salary and conditions.</p> <p>My son also works shift work – are they asking that he work all night and sleep during the day for NO extra money? How can they even consider this to be fair? It's a ridiculous concept and reeks of money grubbing.</p> <p>Employers have asked the Productivity Commission to reduce important workers' rights. The employer demands include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To reduce minimum wages; It is impossible to believe that employers can ask this. I would like to see them work 40 to 50 hours a week for a 21 year olds' wage and still pay rent, transport costs and afford bills and food.</li> <li>2. To get rid of unfair dismissal protections; there are unscrupulous bosses out there who would sack a young person for having a sick day, or being ten minutes late. We need to protect workers.</li> <li>3. To remove penalty rates for workers who work late at night or on the weekends; Employers are asking for a sweatshop mentality. Family gatherings are often missed, socialisation with peers, time with children (if any). They need to be compensated. We are not a third-world country.</li> <li>4. To cut back the minimum shift length, so that a worker could be called to work for a little as 1 hour; when my daughter initially started in retail she was working casually and on-call. She would travel 1 ½ hours one-way, on two buses and a train to get to Homebush from our house for a four hour shift. She would then get back on 2 buses and a train to get home. If they were permitted to call her n for an hour, she would've spent more time travelling, than working, and more money on transport than she earned.</li> <li>5. To get rid of the rule that ensures workers have to be "better off overall"; and I cannot even consider this concept. Employers who do not look after their employees are not thinking of them as human beings, but just a means to an end.</li> <li>6. To reduce pay to retail workers, 'replacing' it with incentive or performance-based pay. Many retail workers already work on incentives. It is a hard slog to try and make 'budget' every week. If they don't get the dollars they get</li> </ol>



	sacked. Don't make it any harder on them.
MacDonald, Duncan	<p>I have attempted to use the cover sheet in order to make a direct submission to the Productivity Commission but am finding that impossible so will pass on my thoughts to you and perhaps they could be of some assistance.</p> <p>I am a retired Senior Lecturer in Economics. I was a member of staff in the Faculty of Economics and Commerce (as it was then titled) at the University of Newcastle for 25 years. I hold a PhD specialising in Industrial Relations from the University of NSW and have relevant publications etc.</p> <p>Not only am I personally appalled at this attempt to downgrade the wages and conditions of already disadvantaged workers but it makes no sense from an Economics or HRM perspective.</p> <p>Several weeks ago when retailers were lamenting the decline in their sales, letters to the editor indicated some level, at least, of dissatisfaction with the quality of service in the outlets of some of the major retailers. This quality of service is hardly going to improve if there is an attack on the wages and conditions of shop assistants. Perhaps some of these organisations need to reflect on the example set by Henry Ford when he introduced the "five dollar day" for his workforce. This was well above the going rate at the time but his rationale was firstly to secure the best possible employees and be assured of their commitment and loyalty. I do admit some of the other aspects of his "HR" practices were not so admirable.</p> <p>The second part of his rationale was to ensure that his employees could, if they were a little frugal, afford to purchase the vehicles he was producing. This is highly relevant to today's situation especially given the significant section of the workforce that is comprised of shop assistants. Reducing their wages may reduce costs but it will also have a negative effect on sales.</p>
Manning, Brian T	<p>The lowest paid and most exploited workers in Australia would have to be in the Retail Industry.</p> <p>An industry that is not subject to price controls expects to improve their profit bottom line by reducing wages and penalty rates.</p> <p>Family life does exist beyond the needs of the retail industry which has already over time expanded retail working hours beyond the half day Saturday to include Sundays.</p> <p>A major expenditure in the retail trade is the rental costs of premises and it is a matter for retailers to tackle such cost increases by efforts to reign in charges instead of constant pressure on wage costs.</p> <p>Retail trading is experiencing operational changes as a result of on-line services which must certainly impact on staff productivity but the answer is not to cut wages and conditions, but to modify sales procedures.</p> <p>Employers need to take more time when recruiting staff so as to ensure an employee is suitable for the position and where necessary provide training. Conditions of employment should include a probationary period before engaging staff on a permanent basis after which time severance pay must apply. Unfair dismissals should not then occur unless for breaches of employment conditions.</p>
McGeachy, George	<p>My wife works in retail so I know how bad the pay is, and they want you to bend over backwards to get the pittance they call a wage, leave them alone.</p> <p>I have a better idea let's chop the pay of all the big wigs who claw in millions every year, lets also chop the bonuses all the managers get, then we will see how productive they are.</p>

McKinlay, Donna	I am concerned that many students work in retail. They are already on a terribly low wage. How can anyone support cutting their hourly rate even further? As a mother of two teenage high school students, I have been shocked at the pay rates for juniors in the retail and fast food industries. These kids are being exploited. I am also concerned about minimum shift hours.
Moller, Michael	This is just outrageous. Cutting retail workers pay makes no sense. Retail workers make up something like 12% of the workforce, so what do the very profitable retail companies think will happen to their sales when these workers cut back on spending as a result of a 10% pay cut? If you add on the flow on effects (i.e. a reduction in all goods and services purchased by retail workers), such a massive pay cut will be a catastrophe for the retail and domestic tourism sectors, in fact the whole domestic economy, really, Economic effects aside, how can we have a just and fair society if retail workers are treated this way (i.e. 24 hour shift times, no penalty rates etc.). Also, if the retailers win this one, who is next? Resource industry workers?
Noone, Jacinta	<p>Please enter a submission on my behalf objecting to proposed changes to Retail wages and penalty rates.</p> <p>As a supermarket employee (and SDA member) I object to the proposition that my labour, or that of my fellow retail workers, should be rewarded less, whilst benefiting my employer and aiding a growth in their profits at the expense of workers' conditions.</p>
Norris, Recka	<p>Ok so I have read the union email that I was sent, and I have read the newspaper article, and I am disgusted by the Liberal party and their notion to try and reduce the minimum wage and cancel out penalty rates for weekends and night shift, as well as unfair dismissal. I have been a victim of unfair dismissal in the past with my husband being fired for asking for a pay rise. We found out later that the only reason he was hired was to improve the place and once he had done that, they fired him at the first chance they got.</p> <p>I myself have worked in the retail sector for (withheld) for nearly 4 years. I started working here after my son was born in June 2007. I work full time at (withheld) and I am a full time mum. If these penalties were cancelled it would cost my family over a hundred dollars a week. I do not rely on the government for any family payments or to help me pay for the cost of raising my child I raise my child by my husband and I alternating the care of our child; my husband starts work early in the morning, and I work nights, so our son doesn't have to go to childcare. As you would be aware the cost of living in Canberra the nation's capital is extremely high, it is not feasible for one of us to be a stay at home parent.</p> <p>I have worked in retail for the last 4 years, have entailed the worst of customers, thinking that they are better than me because they have government jobs, but little do they know or care that I actually have a bachelor in early education, but I have chosen my child over my career, if you take away the penalty rates it would more than likely send me back into a profession that would make me unhappy and I would claim every benefit we could just so we could get by.</p> <p>By decreasing the minimum wage you would be decreasing the economy and it would put more people under the poverty line.</p> <p>I find it very distressing to think that the Honourable Joe Hockey believes that as a retail worker I don't work extremely hard already, and do not deserve to be paid for what I do. My husband is on a disability pension, and as such cannot work, and as I work 32 hours a week his pension is cut by 65%. We find it very difficult to make ends meet now so I cannot imagine what it would be like to lose wages and penalty rates. A reduction of 10% off my \$568 gross means that I will lose \$56.80 per week</p>

	<p>and if I work in a higher capacity that means I will lose a further \$20 which may not seem much to Mr Hockey but means a great deal to my family.</p> <p>Mr Hockey may find it easy on his \$100k +, but I work my fingers to the bone for a measly \$30k of which the tax man gets his percentage. I hope that the Productivity Commission takes these sorts of things into consideration when contemplating how people will survive in today's economic environment.</p>
O'Shea, Sandra	<p>I work at (withheld) and have worked there for 30+ years. I'm also a union delegate for the SDA. I understand how things work, and having been a department manager I can see things from both sides. I know that for a company to grow, it needs to change.</p> <p>But every time there is a major change, workers lose. We lost with extended trading hours, we lost with 7 day a week trading, and now we stand to lose again with cuts to our wages and penalty rates.</p> <p>Retail is already one of the lowest paid sectors with a basic wage of just \$17 an hour. I'll never be able to buy a house, or a new car. Overseas holidays are just a dream, but I and many of my workmates work where we do because we love the job, we love the people, and heck, we even love the company we work for.</p> <p>We get great satisfaction from doing our job well, helping our customers, and working to make our community better. There are many long term retail workers who are extremely loyal to the companies they work for, large and small, but we've had our hours cut back, we've been forced to work nights and weekends taking us away from our families. We're doing the job of 2 or 3 people, and now you want to cut our wages and penalty rates as well?</p> <p>Retail employs more people than almost any other sector. Surely those people deserve to have their rights protected. OUR rights protected. If you cut the wages of that huge group of people, surely that will mean retail suffers even more, since we'll have less to spend.</p> <p>I understand online shopping is taking a toll, but surely that's just another challenge for businesses. It's a kind of evolution, if businesses can't adjust to the new way of doing business, then they'll fail, but that isn't the fault of the staff. Punishing workers who are not the cause of these challenges will not solve the problems faced by the sector.</p> <p>If you cut our wages, and take away our penalty rates, then what else is there for us but to leave long term jobs we love, and look for employment in other sectors? One girl from work recently left to be a lolly pop lady at road works and earns \$25 an hour for standing in one place holding a stop sign, and you're saying we are worth less than that?</p> <p>Who would you prefer to speak to when you want advice on a major purchase: a cheap teenager who is just there to get a little pocket money, or a long serving staff member who has the product knowledge and experience to make sure you get exactly what you need?</p>
Powell, Angela	<p>I think it is outrageous that shop assistant rates are being reduced. People deserve a fair days pay for a fair days work.</p> <p>Don't retailers know that you get what you pay for? Maybe they should ask for cheaper rent as a way to cut costs.</p> <p>Now I know what all this publicity about the internet purchasing is all about, a way to cut wages ... soon no-one will have any money to but anything.</p>
Riley, Sue	<p>Reducing wages for anyone in any industry is a step backwards. The cost of living</p>

	<p>has increased for everyone so why/how could it possibly benefit the lowest paid worker to reduce an already low income earner?</p> <p>Incentive based salary does not work. It's a direct link to complaints to the ombudsman or highest equivalent for corrupt behaviour and inappropriate selling technique. The consumer is already sick of this everywhere else they purchase. Good customer service speaks for itself.</p> <p>Rules are necessary to have in place because already employers receive the advantage over the employee. Don't reduce employees conditions in favour of the employer even more. Workers do need a better off overall test. Doesn't that make sense?</p> <p>Individual contracts are the prime reason to eliminate collective arrangements altogether. It takes away bargaining rights because employers don't negotiate with individuals unless they are potentially earning over \$100,000. It's common knowledge individuals don't have choice because most are either forced to sign an individual contract or don't get the job. The individual employee doesn't have any power when negotiating employment wages and conditions.</p> <p>These proposed changes are also designed to make the rich richer and the poor poorer.</p>
Sauer, Kay	<p>I find it disgraceful that employers in the retail sector are suggesting that the solution to the competitive pressures they face from online retailing is to slash the wages and conditions of their workforce. The high value of the Australian dollar combined with a consumer shift towards online shopping has posed challenges for the retail sector. Additionally, the Productivity Commission has also identified factors including: high cost of real estate, transport, and utilities, plus competition within the sector as contributors to problems faced by the retail sector.</p> <p>Retail workers earn a wage of \$17 per hour are already among the lowest paid in the workforce. They are not responsible for the costs of doing business in the retail sector nor rising costs as they too experience rising costs in living. I do not support punishing those who work in the sector by reducing their wages, removing penalty rates for weekend work and reducing the minimum number of hours that can be worked. Allowing employers to require someone to work 1 hour when the costs associated with getting to and from work are more than what could be earned in unreasonable and unethical.</p> <p>Reducing wages will in turn only reduce consumer demand with a flow-on effect to the retailing industry.</p>
Smyth, Jacqueline	<p>To ever consider cutting retail employee's rights, entitlements and penalty rates is downright disgusting!</p> <p>It's not rocket science to acknowledge that retail employees have bills, responsibilities to be kept maintained, etc. And the fact that retail employees too, have lives to lead/live.</p> <p>Nobody wants to really work till 10pm or on weekend nights, let alone without penalty rates. But some people have to. They should have rights however to these rates.</p> <p>I have worked in the retail industry for six years now. I still work part-time, although I'd love to go full time, there is a lack of opportunity due to the level of employee's. I do 24-48 hours a week but would rather do 36. And wouldn't mind a normal Monday to Friday job that is not lucky enough for me however.</p> <p>And even though I do 24 hours, that includes working weekends every week! So it cuts into my time I'd personally love to be spending with my family, but instead find</p>

	<p>the need greater to work whenever, so you just do it.</p> <p>But to cut my penalty rates on top of that, is just disgusting to even think of!!!!!!! The lobbying of these applications deserve to be thrown in the bin before even being locked at. And the greed of these companies is actually quite disgusting.</p> <p>If it weren't for the retail employee's, businesses would not operate, period. Enough said.</p> <p>Now, think about that, <b>VERY HARD.</b></p>
Vines, Helen	<p>Sorry haven't got the time to put in my own submission on the Productivity Commission's report re: penalty rates etc but would appreciate it if you could pass on my thoughts.</p> <p>I am extremely concerned about any attempt to reduce workers' wages and conditions.</p> <p>Cutting pay and conditions is not good for the individual involved, or the economy. We already know from research that money is shifting from pay packets into company profits.</p> <p>The arguments in favour of cutting pay and conditions echo the arguments that were made against the abolition of slavery ... and they're not valid.</p> <p>We're also (thanks to the Howard government) lost the protection of the vital, historic Harvester Judgement principle that all workers should receive a 'living wage', not just some arbitrary amount that the employer deems appropriate. What's the point of jobs and working, if workers can't afford to live on their wages?</p> <p>For the sake of all workers and their families, wages, penalty rates, and conditions <b>MUST</b> be protected, not diminished.</p>
Winchester, John	<p>I have worked here for three years and I earn \$19.52 an hour and work 32 hours a week.</p> <p>I am currently paying off a home loan and the extra pay I get for working every second weekend is a big help in fact any extra cash is really.</p> <p>I think cutting wages and incentive's is just an easy way for employers to maximise their profits by cutting expenditure (wages) and working heir employees ragged these tactics are cheap, lazy and stupid.</p> <p>I don't like the idea of so called individual contracts that simply remove conditions that benefit ALL workers and make out jobs worth doing in the first place.</p> <p>The hardest thing about my job is having to put up with stupid things like this from managers or the government or whoever the best thing is talking to the people I work with and getting paid so I can keep living and eventually own my house.</p>