**Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination against Older Australians and Australians with Disability**

# Submission No 13

**Name** Clive Rodney Seiffert

**Submission made by**

[x]  Older Australian looking for work

[x]  Older Australian who would like to work

# Submission regarding Older Australians

### **Your experience**

**Gender**

[ ]  Female

[x]  Male

[ ]  X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified)

**Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent?**

[ ]  Aboriginal

[ ]  Torres Strait Islander

[ ]  Both

[x]  No

**Are you from a culturally and linguistically diverse background?**

[ ] Yes

[x] No

**Have you (or the person you are submitting on behalf of) experienced employment discrimination?**

[x]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Did you take any action in relation to the employment discrimination you experienced?**

[x]  Yes

[ ]  No

**Please tell us more, for example, what action you took and how effective you felt it was; or why you chose not to take any action.**

After being retrenched in my late 50s I have applied for countless jobs for which I am fully qualified and fully experienced but either get no response or a meaningless rejection.

I have never taken action for discrimination when looking for work as I dont have proven evidence .

When I was laid off initially, I did lodge an unfair dismissal case which was settled before formal hearing. As mentioned in my attachment I was retrenched and replaced by a 457 foreign worker.

**Did your experience of employment discrimination impact on your participation in the workforce? (For example, did you have to stop work, change jobs or take sick leave?)**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

**Please tell us more**

As above and also refer to Attachment

### **Barriers**

**Do you think older Australians/Australians with disability face barriers when they look for work or are in a job?**

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**If yes, or not sure, what do you think these barriers might be?**

Especially in my field ( ICT) competition for jobs is fierce. So when the market is flooded with temporary foreign workers, only the very few lucky workers survive.

It is too easy for an employer to ignore the pool of local unemployed and hire a 457 visa worker.

Employers should be forced to hire locals who are available and if necessary provide gap training.

It also is too easy to sack locals and hire 457 replacements.

How can an Employer retrench loyal skilled older workers and replace them with temporary 457 workers ?

Why are employers rewarded for neglected to invest in the local workers and keeping up with the new skills needed by the company ?

**Does employment discrimination have an impact on gaining and keeping employment for older Australians/Australians with disability?**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**Are there any practices, attitudes or laws which discourage or prevent equal participation in employment of older Australians/Australians with disability?**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**Please tell us more**

As Suggested in my attachment , Employers should be discouraged from using temporary foreign workers and then they would value old (and young) locals fairly.

**What are the incentives and disincentives for older Australians/Australians with disability to work?**

**Incentives:**

The restart allowance is not working and will never work. From an employers point of view the subsidy is small compensation for the (often wrongly) perceived risks. From the Older workers point of view the subsidy is unnecessary and embarrasing and not seen as a positive asset to sell themselves. If employers were could not resort to 457 workers and forced to look local , they would get the job and be paid fairly whether they were old or young, male or female, disabled or abled.

**Disincentives:**

None really, except with some manual workers who may be physically affected in some limitted number of situations. In nearly all cases, the worker wants to work and is prevented by employers. Few have the resources to be self employed.

### **Good practice**

**Are there examples of good practice and workplace policies in employing and retaining older Australians/ Australians with disability?**

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**Please tell us of examples of good practice in employing and retaining older Australians/ Australians with disability in work that you are aware of.**

Some good employers doing their bit eg. Bunnings but not enough in general to make a difference

### **Solutions**

**What action should be taken to address employment discrimination against older Australians/Australians with disability?**

As I implied in my attachment discrimination seems to be more of an resulting effect than a root cause.

The root cause is lack of jobs and other opportunities generally for local Australians .

The few jobs that are available are swamped by the flood of foreign tempory workers especially in areas like ICT, Nursing and Engineering.

**What should be done to enhance workforce participation of older Australians/Australians with disability?**

As mentioned in my attachment reduce the availability of 457 visas by hiring and training local workers.

A reduction in Standard Work hours may be eventually be needed as automation bites.

My main suggestion as made in the attachment, is to have a public register of jobs which supposedly need 457 sponsorship

If an employer really believes it cannot find a suitable local worker they should list the job and the associated skills gap on an open public register so that locals can identify opportunities and bid for the role.

If necessary they could negotiate a skills gap plan and maybe a compensating reduced interim rate for the position .

Sensitive information could be kept private and only released by mutual consent.

This register could also be used for a low cost general recruitment also.

Some of you may remember the CES Job boards we had in the 1980s where jobs open for foreign workers were clearly highlighted and this new register would be similar but online and maybe part of an existing related national system like the Australian Jobsearch system. You could even use social media to create a low key register until a fully function system could be developed.

The long term benefits of this proposal are huge with reduced costs to Government, Employers and getting Australians off newstart and other welfare and the increased economic output through higher productivity.

**What outcomes or recommendations would you like to see from this National Inquiry?**

A recommendation to reduce reliance on foreign workers

**Willing To Work Submission**

Question:

How can you encourage employers to hire and retain older (and younger) workers ?

Answer:

Reduce the number of temporary foreigner workers flooding into the Country.

It is too easy for an employer to ignore the pool of local unemployed and hire a 457 visa worker.

Employers should be forced to hire locals who are available and if necessary provide gap training.

It also is too easy to sack locals and hire 457 replacements.

How can an Employer retrench loyal skilled older workers and replace them with temporary 457 workers ?

Why are employers rewarded for neglected to invest in the local workers and keeping up with the new skills needed by the company ?

I know the employee also needs to take charge of their own development but that is expensive if unemployed and even if working, it is not always possible when you are dedicating your time and effort to the requirements of an employer.

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on an open public register so that locals can identify opportunities and bid for the role.

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Clive Seiffert