

2 Tilba Avenue
BALMAIN NSW 2041
24 January 2000

**INQUIRY INTO ISSUES SPECIFIC TO MATURE-AGE EMPLOYMENT -
ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

Thank you for your letter of 20 December 2000 which invited me to attend the discussion on 14 February 2000 as an observer. Unfortunately I will be unable to attend.

As I am still very interested in all issues involving mature age unemployment I am supplying additional information to support my original submission of 29 July 1999. I suggested that the operation of the Recruitment and Consulting Services Association (RCSA) industry and its 300 plus members needed investigating. In a recent media article (November 1999) the RCSA claimed that service to both employers/clients and candidates was its focus. However, as many mature age applicants know agencies practise covert discrimination by deliberately ignoring us after we have registered. I actually asked a number of agencies why this pattern occurred and they stated that they were obliged to do what the employer requested. This entailed not putting forward older (45+) applicants for positions. For a newly retrenched mature worker to register with an agency can be a very daunting experience, especially in regards to self esteem and confidence. It can leave you feeling extremely disillusioned.

One of the fundamental question that needs to be deliberated at the discussion is how to change the mindset of employers and recruitment agencies that mature people can add real value in terms of know-how and experience. In the UK and the USA the value of corporate downsizing and its impact on older workers has been questioned as it relates to an ageing population and the ramifications.

Thank you for inviting me to the discussion on 14 February 2000. I look forward to receiving a copy of the outcomes and strategies to be adopted to overcome the issues in the future.

Yours sincerely

Anne M Collins