

24 January 2000

Alastair Wilson

## Concepts

24 Acacia Street  
Katoomba NSW 2780  
Phone: 61 2 4782 9314  
Fax: 61 2 4782 2277  
Mob: 0417 684 162  
e-mail address:  
[awilson@pnc.com.au](mailto:awilson@pnc.com.au)

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the advice (your letter of 20 December), received via Kerry Bartlett MP on 17 January, that your committee will meet in d Canberra on 14 February 2000 to hear further submissions from concerned organisations. And a further thankyou for the invitation to attend as observers.

As the facilitator of our previous attendance at your Inquiry in Sydney, Martin Ryman of the Blue *Mountains Resource* Network, may have advised, a small group of us are endeavouring to attend.

I would, however, like to register my personal disappointment that those you have invited to attend on the 14 February are all representing organisations or government departments. I am sure they will all make very worthwhile and serious recommendations. But where is the opportunity for an individual, someone with actual on-the-ground experience, to address the committee. You may recall that in my speech to the Inquiry I spoke about say experience of being made redundant. The total lack of any support, advice or understanding by the federal department for which I worked. No exit interview, no-one hearing my concerns, how I might be feeling. No-one wanted to know if I wanted to make my contributions towards helping the employer treat their employees with respect and provide an opportunity for me to retain some dignity, rather than encouraging the feeling that I was being dumped on the scrap heap.

One of your Inquiry panel asked me specific questions about retrenchment and if I had any suggestions on how the issue could be better handled by employers. I certainly agree that some form of a *code of conduct* would encourage better practice in this area. And I would like very much to be a part of any group preparing such a code. After all I have spent some years drafting various bits of government policy for Australia.

Do you honestly anticipate realistic recommendations from these organisations you have invited, when very few of those manage men t people who will stand before your inquiry panel, would have ever actually been made redundant or been involuntarily retired? Yes some will give considered opinion, but that is all it will be. If you want a genuine passionate response about how it really feels, then ask someone who has been there. Will you ask each of the representatives of the organisations you have invited, whether they have personally experienced retrenchment?

AS you may know, I have, since we last met in Sydney, been working on a part-time contract for Mission Employment job Network centre in Katoomba. Sadly this contract will conclude at the end of February. But I have been humbled to have spent time with many Australians who have been made redundant and remain unemployed. Most of them desperately want to return to the workforce. And I have to tell them that in this new round of tender contracts, there was NO Mature Workers Program granted to the Blue Mountains - even though this region has a higher than average number of mature unemployed people. I prepared the submission on behalf of Mission, so I know the details. But to no avail.

Thank you for your time and for reading of my concerns. If I come to Canberra on the 14<sup>th</sup> February, and there is time in your busy day, I would be privileged to add some real experience to your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

Alastair Wilson