

27th August 2008**Submission Number: 71****Date Received: 29/8/08** *A*

Ms Cheryl Scarlett
Inquiry Secretary
Employment and Workplace Relations Committee
PO Box 6021,
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Scarlett,

Re: Pay equity and associated issues related to increasing female participation in the workforce

In response to your request for my comments on current policies and suggestions on how they can be improved I provide the following response:

- **The adequacy of current data to reliably monitor employment changes that may impact on pay equity issues**
Whilst Industry bodies and Government departments attempt to service this need, to date supply does not meet demand. There is an issue in respect to the accuracy and currency of the information that is available to industry in respect to pay equity. For organizations to address this issue they must have current and up to date information.
- **The need for education and information among employers, employees and trade unions in relation to pay equity issues**
Education or a lack there of is not perceived to be a road block in respect to pay equity. However greater sharing of this information would help to address the issue.
- **Current structural arrangements in the negotiation of wages that may impact disproportionately on women**
The current wage negotiation structural arrangements appear to be unbiased and equitable. The area of possible impact is the classification structures that exist within various awards.
- **The adequacy of recent and current equal remuneration provisions in state and federal workplace relations legislation**
The recent and current equal remuneration provisions in state and federal workplace relations legislation is perceived to be adequate. The issue appears to have more of a historical and cultural basis and further legislation may only complicate the issue. Simplification of the recent and current equal remuneration provisions in state and federal workplace relations legislation would be of a benefit.
- **The adequacy of current arrangements to ensure fair access to training and promotion for women who have taken maternity leave and or return to work part time and or sought flexible work hours**
The issue appears to be more related to industries ability to afford the addition costs or the flexibility of work load required to provide part time and flexible work hours. An incentive system to encourage employers down this path would be better than a punitive system that punishes employers for not complying.
- **The need for further legislative reform to address pay equity in Australia**
In order to gain acceptance and participation from industry, any further legislative reform should look at removing complexity and be more supportive than punitive.

I trust that this input will assist your inquiry.

Yours sincerely,



John Carew
Managing Director
Frigrite Refrigeration Pty Ltd