

Submission

INQUIRY INTO ISSUES SPECIFIC TO MATURE AGE EMPLOYMENT

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION 21 MARCH 2000

As an observer to the round table discussion Volunteering ACT would support the following criteria and believes these should be considered with regard to mature age unemployment.

Retrenchment

1. That a best practice standard should be established so that businesses that are about to retrench employees can be guided through the process.
2. That employees about to be retrenched are fully informed about any potential retrenchment at least two months prior to the event taking place, this would benefit employees by giving them enough time to:
 - a) overcome the initial shock
 - b) start to formulate a plan for their future.
3. That all stake holders, eg. Centrelink, State / Territory Volunteer Agencies and support organisations are encouraged to be involved in the retrenchment process by contacting all retrenchment employees giving them assistance through the period of adjustment.

Although a best practice standard should be descriptive and not prescriptive, a form of penalty should be able to be applied to a business that patently does not and will not comply with the spirit of the standards set.

Long term unemployment

All long term unemployed mature aged workers should be encouraged to utilise and/or develop skills in the community arena. For example by volunteering in a not for profit organisation. This has many benefits to the mature age long term unemployed:

- a) develop networks
- b) maintain a work ethic
- c) develop networks
- d) maintain self esteem

For the above reason Volunteering ACT would encourage that any process established from this inquiry encourages the inclusion of volunteering as a positive step towards, for the mature long term unemployed, future paid employment.

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