

**SUBMISSION TO THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**  
**Inquiry into the**  
***Industrial Relations (Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015***

Attention:

Ms Deborah Jeffrey  
 Research Director  
 Finance and Administration Committee  
 Parliament House  
 George Street  
 BRISBANE QLD 4000

Monday 18th May 2015

Dear Ms Jeffrey

Re: Submission to Finance and Administration Committee  
*Industrial Relations (Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015*

Please find herewith my submission to the Finance and Administration Committee regarding the Industrial Relations (Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

I am a Senior Medical Officer at the [REDACTED]. Following the *Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation Number 2) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013*, the rights of employees in my workplace were eroded.

This had the following impact:

- My wife works a Monday to Friday job and we have school aged children. She has limited flexibility. Pre-contract we were able to balance our work schedules so our children were almost always able to be looked after by ourselves. As my wife is always home on the weekend I was able to always be available to work evening and on call shifts. This also helped out numerous other staff, mostly female doctors, who were having or had babies or very small children. The weekend evening and on call shifts were totally unsustainable for them and very stressful on their small children.
- Since the introduction of contracts there has been less ability to balance my work and commitments with regard to family life. Shifts are not flexible and weekend work is limited.
  - Emergency requires much out of hours work and is a 365 day 24 hour a year business. This has a huge and deleterious impact on ones' personal life and their wider family. It is a well known fact this type of work reduces life expectancy and is linked to depression, obesity, etc. Pre-contract, doctors worked out amongst them the best way to structure their work to lessen these effects. Another example is with many overseas trained doctors. Many are muslims, hindus etc. Their religion, as does ours, dictates certain special religious days. Jews are prohibited from working on Sundays. The effect, pre-contract, we could negotiate so that, for example, muslims, were more than happy to cover Christmas day or Easter and we were more than happy to cover for them on their religious days. I was always happy to do a Sunday. Under the current regime, this flexibility is now largely gone.
- Another issue is working beyond the stipulated shift quota, and being paid correctly.

I am currently not a member of the Queensland branch of the Australian Salaried Medical Officers Federation though support their position regarding the proposed amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 2009:

- That the Committee make a recommendation in favour of the Bill
- That the Committee consider the legislation pertaining to High Income Senior Employees (Chapter 6A) and make a recommendation to repeal this legislation
- That the deliberations of the Committee occur in a timely fashion to allow passage of the legislation to occur by June 2015.

The passage of the Bill, amended as above, will provide the following benefits to Queenslanders:

- Improved morale within the public health service
- Improved staff recruitment and retention
- Improved health service delivery
- Improved workplace safety practices
- Improved work life balance
- The removal of pro-rated after hours and weekend work requirements

Yours sincerely

Dr Matt Despot

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Dr Matt Despot.

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