



The Salvation Army Australia Territory

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Committee Secretary
Education, Employment and Small Business Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

VIA EMAIL: eesbc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

The Salvation Army Australia is pleased to make a brief submission to the *inquiry into Criminal Code and Other Legislation (Wage Theft) Amendment Bill 2020 (Bill)*. The Salvation Army is an international Christian movement with a strong presence in Queensland and throughout Australia. In addition to 120 years of experience providing housing and homelessness services, we also provide alcohol and other drug services, youth services, emergency relief, emergency management support and services to support individuals and families impacted by family and domestic violence. We also deliver networks of social support through hundreds of our corps (churches) in Queensland and across the country. Our vision is to confront hardship and injustice by living, loving and fighting alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time, with the love of Jesus.

Many of the networks described above provide pastoral and social support to workers, particularly temporary and migrant workers, who have been underpaid and/or exploited by their employers. We also provide support to workers in critical incidents and are in fact, responding to the needs of workers impacted by the Bundaberg hostel fire as we speak.

Bearing witness to the difficulties that wage theft and other forms of exploitation create for individuals, particularly those who lack personal networks, The Salvation Army has long supported the criminalisation of wage theft. Our experience aligns with the Committee's findings not only about the extent of wage theft, but also the barriers many workers face in reclaiming their wages and the endemic nature of wage theft in many employers' business models. We have argued that the low risk of getting caught, coupled with the relatively low cost of civil penalties perpetuates an operating environment in which the risk of drawing financial penalties for contravening the law is weighed positively against the benefits of underpayment and is therefore incorporated as a cost of doing business. Where there is no danger of a real prosecution, wage theft becomes widespread.

Founder William Booth
General Brian Peddle

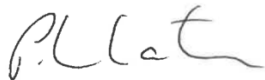
*Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight
alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus*

salvationarmy.org.au

Queensland's economy depends on many industries where wage theft has been widely documented and as such, the state is likely to have a higher amount of workers at risk of wage theft. Thus, The Salvation Army welcomes this legislation and encourages the Queensland Parliament to pass and enact it as soon as possible.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me on [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED] if you require additional information or would like to discuss this letter further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Hateley'.

Paul Hateley (Major)
Head of Government Relations
The Salvation Army Australia