



Shellharbour
CITY COUNCIL

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12 October 2017

FAIR WORK COMMISSION
4 Yearly Review Modern Awards
Supported Employment Services Award

Matter Number AM2014/286

Submission by Shellharbour City Council

To whom it may concern

On behalf of the Shellharbour City Council, I wish to make the following submission in the above matter.

On 10 of October 2017, the Council unanimously passed the following resolution:

That Council forward a letter of support for Greenacres, The Flagstaff Group and The Disability Trust to the Fair Work Commission requesting that the Fair Work Commission not make a decision that could otherwise create job losses for supported employees.

The Council is aware of the very valuable role that disability enterprises like Greenacres, the Flagstaff Group and Disability Trust (IVS) play in providing supported employment in the region.

These organisations have a combined history of over 100 years in supporting people with disabilities.

Employment opportunities for people with disabilities are difficult to find particularly in the Illawarra region where unemployment is well above the national average. For many people with disabilities their chances of finding open employment are negligible particularly when they have high support needs.

The vast majority of people with disabilities who work in the above mentioned disability enterprises choose so because these organisations provide them with an environment where they can foster friendships, learn valuable skills, be provided with ongoing and targeted support, and earn an income which supplements their disability support pension.

The Council has been made aware that the Fair Work Commission (FWC) will decide on the best method of determining wage outcomes for supported employees in disability enterprises. We understand that the (FWC) will consider whether such wage levels should be determined primarily on how fast a

supported employee works (productive output) or the skills, level of support and supervision that a person requires to carry out their work.

The Council is not in a position to provide an expert opinion about which assessment system might be better other than to say that if the outcome of the FWC decision leads to the job loses of the very people that the decision is intended to advantage then it will have been a bad decision.

As the Lord Mayor of Shellharbour Council, I attended a Rally in Wollongong on the 26th of September of over 400 supported employees and their carers. Their message was clear. They love their jobs, their working environment and could not understand why anyone would want to change things in a way that could jeopardise things. The speeches given by the supported employees and their carers at the Rally were genuine and heart felt.

I believe the voices of those most affected by any decision the FWC need to be heard. It is for this reason as elected representatives in the region we are lending our voices to their concerns.

We would respectfully request that the FWC consider the implications of its decision on the lives of people with disabilities such as those that work in organisations like Greenacres, the Flagstaff Group and IVS. Any decision which leads to job loses will not be good for the workers themselves, their carers or indeed the region.

I sincerely hope the FWC will take into consideration the views of our Council when making its decision.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Marianne Saliba
Mayor