

SOUTH COAST LABOUR COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 2006

Fair Pay Farce Hits the South Coast

The Australian Fair Pay Commission hearing in Wollongong last night turned into farce when none of the 5 Commissioners turned up to hear the submissions of the people of the Illawarra and South Coast.

The meeting was conducted by a PR Consultant who flatly refused the requests by the South Coast Labour Council on behalf thousands of working families directly affected by minimum wage levels to address the hearing and make a public submission.

All participants were directed to sit down with three or four other individuals around prepared tables and to 'jot down' on pieces of paper answers to carefully scripted questions.

Arthur Rorris, South Coast Labour Council Secretary said,

"This is arrogance at its worst, I can understand one commissioner missing the hearing due to ill health but all five of them ?"

"The no show by the Commissioners was bad enough, but to deny working people in this region and their representatives the opportunity to publicly put their case for relief from cost of living increases including rising petrol prices and interest rates is unforgivable.

"The process for setting minimum wages has been exposed as being literally nothing more than a cynical PR exercise, and they can't even get that right."

"The Labour Council will be demanding an explanation from the AFPC and Minister Andrews about this farce and answers to allegations by one participant, Mr Ben Jones of Wollongong as to who authorised a profile of his background to be undertaken prior to last night's 'hearing'.

Organising Workers



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