



Public Hearings in Canberra 9 and 12 May 2005

Independent Contracting and Labour Hire Arrangements: employment options - now and for the future?

Business groups, unions, and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations are among the organisations to appear before a House of Representatives committee inquiry into independent contractor and labour hire arrangements.

The hearings on **Monday 9 May**, 11:15 am to 1:30 pm, Committee Room 1R6, Parliament House, Canberra include the:

- National Farmers' Federation,
- Master Builders Australia, and
- Housing Industry Association.

On **Thursday 12 May** a video conference to Brisbane with:

- Queensland Council of Unions, and
- Aged Care Queensland,

will be followed by a Canberra hearing with:

- Group Training Australia and
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

The Thursday hearings will take place between 10:30 am and 1:30pm in Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra.

New forms of employment arrangements characterise the Australian workforce of today. Amongst the changes in forms of employment is a rise in independent contractors and labour hire placements.

The Committee Chair, Phillip Barresi, said "The growth in labour hire has provided many organisations with greater flexibility in meeting work demands. Concerns regarding occupational health and safety, and skills development require the Committee to look closely at the responsibilities of labour hire agencies, client organisations and the workers involved".

"Strong defence of independent contracting arrangements has been provided to the Committee as a beneficial work and lifestyle choice. However, claims that workers are being pressured to convert to such arrangements need to be investigated," Mr Barresi said.

The inquiry was referred by Federal Minister Kevin Andrews, the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations. The committee anticipates reporting mid year.

Further details on the inquiry, including the complete terms of reference, membership of the Committee and submissions received can be obtained on the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ewrwp or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4162 or emailing ewrwp.reps@aph.gov.au

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Phil Barresi, on (03) 9873 8351 or (02) 6277 4350

For background information, contact the Committee Secretary, on (02) 6277 4162