

Homeworkers Code Committee Incorporated's Application for the revocation and substitution of authorisations

Submission by the Australian Council of Trade Unions

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) is the peak body for Australian unions, made up of 38 affiliated unions. We represent over 1.8 million working Australians and their families.

The ACTU welcomes the opportunity to make a submission regarding the Homeworkers Code Committee (HWCC) Incorporated's Application for the revocation and substitution of authorisations. The Homeworkers Code of Conduct (the **Code**) delivers significant public benefits across a range of areas. Those benefits are of fundamental importance for continued improvements in compliance with legal obligations designed to protect the rights of vulnerable workers.

1. It has been consistently recognised by the FWC and the courts that textile, clothing and footwear (TFC) outworkers are particularly vulnerable and special attention and particular regulation. We believe that the Code contributes to limiting the exploitation of homeworkers by imposing obligations on participants in the supply chain to provide award wages and conditions.
2. There is a trend towards greater public awareness by consumers of exploitation of workers in TFC supply chains. The Code provides consumers with the knowledge that participants' supply chains are legally compliant.
3. The Code offers companies in the TFC industry with the capacity to distinguish themselves as ethical supply chain participants. This enables participating companies to compete using their competitive advantage of the proper treatment of workers.

We strongly support the application by the Homeworkers Code Committee for re-authorisation from the ACCC in order to continue to give effect to the Homeworkers Code of Conduct, to be renamed 'Ethical Clothing Australia's Code of Practice, Incorporating Homeworkers'.

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