



**Opening statement to Senate Select Committee on Job Security
27 July 2021
Ken Phillips: Executive Director**

The Terms of Reference for the Committee are: "...to inquire into and report on the impact of insecure or precarious employment on the economy, wages, social cohesion and workplace rights and conditions, with particular reference to..."

Self Employed Australia says that

1. There is no such thing as 'secure job'. Rather it is a figment of imaginations searching for legal expression.
 - Covid is a major demonstration that 'security of work' is entirely subject to the whims of events way beyond the control of words contained in legislation.
2. SEA's focus is on the self-employed, people who are often referred to as being involved in 'insecure' or 'precarious' work.
 - The number of self-employed has sat at around 17-18% of the workforce for the last 15 years or so. Largest % are in white collar areas. Diverse.
 - Primary motivation of the self-employed is to have self-control of ones working life.
3. SEA's advocates for the rights of self-employed in practical ways. There has been much progress on these 'protections' in Australia.

3a. Achievements to date:

- *Independent Contractors Act 2006*- secures the definition in statute as per ILO requirements to which Australia is a signatory
- *Dispute Resolution* – Around 2010 on. Small Business Commissioner/Ombudsman in each state provide outstanding service.
- *Unfair Contract laws 2016* – And in the process of being 'beefed' up.
- *Pay on Time laws* – Currently being implemented.
- *Collective bargaining exemptions* for small business- ACCC changes 3rd June 2021.
- *Food delivery safety*- Sector has recently committed

3b. Areas needing attention

- *ATO*: Fair treatment of self-employed, small business by ATO is an ongoing campaign.
- *Workers compensation*- needs to be addressed because the state systems ban sole trader, self-employed people from accessing the schemes.
- *Digital platforms dispute*: ACCC is developing a resolution scheme