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Australians get a chance to have their say on insecure work; inquiry opens for submissions today

Submissions will open today for Australia's first formal investigation into the rise of insecure work and its effect on families and communities.

Workers will have the opportunity to share their stories about the impact of casual, labour hire and contract employment alongside community groups, unions and employers in a new national independent inquiry to investigate the extent of insecure work in Australia.

The Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work has been commissioned by the ACTU to analyse the increase in casual, contract, labour hire and other forms of insecure work in Australia over recent decades, and the impact it has on workplace rights, household finances, and wider society.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said insecure work made up about 40% of the workforce and many Australians were being asked to choose between insecure employment or no work at all.

The inquiry is being chaired by former Deputy Prime Minister Brian Howe, with Paul Munro, a former Senior Presidential Member of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, as deputy chair.

"Casual employment alone has almost doubled in 25 years," Ms Kearney said.

"More and more families are having to pay housing costs and other bills without knowing what their income will be from week to week," Ms Kearney said.

"Workers have told us that insecure work is making it harder to manage household finances, spend time with their family and friends, and to plan for the future. More and more risk is being shifted from employers to workers.

"This Inquiry will shine a light on the situation of insecure workers in Australia, and work out what government, employers and unions should be doing to help them."

Ms Kearney said the inquiry panel would be required to prepare a report and recommendations for the ACTU Congress in May next year.

Submissions can be lodged from today until 16 December, and the Inquiry will hold public hearings across Australia in February and March next year.

Ms Kearney said that she wanted all voices represented in the Inquiry including workers, employers and community groups.

The full terms of reference and more details about the inquiry are available at www.securejobs.org.au or by phoning 1300 362 223 (toll free).

Media contact:

Rebecca Tucker ph (03) 9664 7359 or 0428 584 458; rtucker@actu.org.au