

Review of ANZSCO – ACTU input

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the desirability of a review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). The ACTU uses ANZSCO extensively in its policy work, representation of workers in cases at the Fair Work Commission, in our submission on the minimum wage to the Annual Wage Review, and in analysing changes and trends in union membership. As a result, we regard the up-to-date nature of the ANZSCO as crucial.

The ACTU strongly supports a comprehensive update of the ANZSCO. We believe that, as it has been 15 years since the last comprehensive review, that such a review is now needed. We note that 15 years was the interval initially set for comprehensive reviews, though we are of the opinion that change within the labour market has been such that a review has been necessary for quite some time. While the short timeframes imposed for this consultation process, and the period over which it has been held, has precluded a comprehensive analysis of the issues with the ANZSCO, some clear issues necessitating a review are:

- The necessity for changes to reflect the introduction of widespread / universal access to internet and smart phones over the last 15 years and the accompanying widespread introduction of digital content to occupations, including increases in required digital skill levels across many occupations.
- The need to identify new occupations in relation to social media and other new digital industries and review their current placement in the current version. New subdivisions, to reflect the substitutability of skills between occupations at various levels, are also needed.
- Changes to reflect the changing complexity of services provided by different levels of occupation

The ACTU believes that many more issues will become apparent as part of a review. We understand that a comprehensive review represents a significant investment of resources by the ABS, but we believe that any attempt to save those resources by not conducting a review now would represent a false economy. For the ANZSCO to remain a relevant and useful data tool, it must be kept up-to-date.

We thank you once again for the opportunity to provide input on this matter.