



**Media Release
April 20 2007**

Catholic body calls for wage sufficient for low paid families

The Catholic Church's industrial relations advisory body has called for the Australian Fair Pay Commission to increase the federal minimum wage to assist low paid workers and their families.

ACCER filed written submissions to the AFPC 2007 Minimum Wage Review with substantial reference to the need for a family wage saying the Federal Minimum Wage must meet the needs of the worker and his or her family.

"When account is taken of taxation and transfer payments, that wage must be sufficient to enable a couple with two children to achieve an acceptable standard of living," the submissions said.

ACCER is seeking an increase of \$27.00 per week to increase the Federal Minimum Wage to \$538.86 per week for full time adult workers.

"We are encouraged by the work of the AFPC in the 2006 wage decision and your [AFPC] comments, ...the income support and family assistance safety net, and its continued improvement over recent years, allows people with family responsibilities to rely solely on a single wage to support their families," ACCER Councillor, Mr Brian Lawrence said in verbal submissions to the AFPC.

Mr Lawrence said however, that ACCER differed on the calculation of the figures to determine the amount considered adequate.

"Further research is needed into the needs and transfer payments available to families and the range of benchmarks used to determine the adequacy and quantification of future wage increases," he said. "ACCER would welcome further investigation in this area; in particular to the updating of the Henderson Poverty Line in order to accommodate the social changes of the three decades since its inception.

"While it may not be possible to achieve an acceptable Federal Minimum Wage in one year, the aim must be to achieve this over time. Appropriate research is required into the question of the quantum to achieve an acceptable standard of living for workers and their families in Australia."

**ACCER's full written submission is available on line www.accer.asn.au
To arrange further comment contact Mrs Susan O'Connor 0417 371 054**