



**Media Release  
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## **Catholic body seeks inquiry into needs of Low Paid Workers**

The Catholic Church's employment relations body will ask the Australian Industrial Relations Commission to establish an inquiry into the needs of low paid employees.

In its written submission to the current Safety Net Review Case, the Australian Catholic Commission for Employment Relations (ACCER) says there is an urgent need to address the position of those low paid employees who do not receive fair and just wages.

"ACCER believes that the present level of the Federal Minimum Wage is manifestly inadequate and that it must be reviewed as a matter of urgency," the submission says.

In past Safety Net Review hearings ACCER and other organisations have submitted that the AIRC should conduct an investigation or inquiry into the needs of the low paid and review the Federal Minimum Wage.

ACCER also previously called on the Commission to establish a benchmark against which the Federal Minimum Wage should be set.

"ACCER again presses the need for an inquiry, through which an appropriate benchmark can be established," the current submission says.

ACCER's submission is underpinned by a long tradition of Catholic social teaching on the employment relationship.

"Since the publication of the papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, the Catholic Church has consistently affirmed the dignity of labour and the right of the employee to earn a just wage," it says.

The ACCER submission supports as an interim measure, an increase in the Federal Minimum Wage of \$24.60 per week or 65 cents an hour, thereby moving the minimum wage to \$456 or \$12 an hour.

For more information contact ACCER Executive Officer, John Ryan on (03) 9614 8644.