



2015 MINIMUM WAGE REVIEW

Under the Employment Relations Act 2012, the Minister of Internal Affairs must review the Minimum Wage annually. The Minimum Wage rate will affect everyone in the Cook Islands. In deciding on a minimum wage there needs to be a balance between needs of workers and the ability of all sectors to afford any increase.

As a worker, your views are important! In setting the minimum wage, we invite you to provide comment on the below considerations and questions. All points raised are confidential and will be reviewed by the Minimum Wage Review Panel only.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION – WORKERS

1. What do you feel is a realistic minimum wage for an entry level worker?
2. Do you think there is a need for youth or industry specific minimum wage rates?
3. Are you currently paid the minimum wage or \$6/hour? Do you think the current wage is fair relative to other wages?
4. Is the level of the minimum wage a factor in deciding whether to take up unskilled work locally, rather than leave for work overseas?
5. Is the current minimum wage of \$6/hour, enough to meet minimum living costs for a single person? for a couple? for a family?
6. Is employment on the minimum wage preferable to subsistence work such as planting or fishing?
7. Would students' decisions about when to leave school and enter employment be influenced by a higher minimum wage rate?
8. Is the current minimum wage suitable for workers in the Pa Enua? Or should the Pa Enua have a different minimum wage rate?
9. Any minimum wage increase must be paid for from somewhere. It can come from diverted government funds, increased prices, reduced company profits and increased company losses.
10. Employers need to access labour efficiently and affordably.
11. The minimum wage should strike a balance at the economy wide level between workers and employers.
12. Please add other points that you think are important for the review.

Copies of the full Issues Paper are available in Maori and English at <http://www.intaff.gov.ck/?p=719>.

Please submit your comments in writing to employment@cookislands.gov.ck, faxed to +682 26370 or delivered by hand to the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Tupapa. The closing date for submission is **Friday 20 February 2015**.

You are also invited to attend public meeting to discuss the Minimum Wage held on **Tuesday 17 February 2015**, from 12pm, at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management Conference Room, Avarua.