**Minimum Wage**

It’s that annual review time again in the Cook Islands and I would urge all workers in the Cook Islands to have your say with the minimum wage review whether you are a private or public worker, foreign worker, contract worker or an independent worker. Last year we heard quite a number of submission from the general public but not enough says the President of CIWA Mr Anthony Turua.

There is no point complaining and moaning that the minimum wage is too low or too high therefore I am pledging workers representatives to come out in force and give us your comment as, to what is the fairest minimum wage that is affordable to manage and sustain our living standards both in Rarotonga and the Pa Enua. Last year the Minimum Wage Committee recommended to government to increase the minimum wage from $5 to $6 which was an increase of 20%. The $5 was in place for almost 6 years and we are fortunate the Employment Relation Bill 2012 mandates government to review the minimum wage annually to stay in line with the cost of living standards and inflation rates. The Pa Enua are the vulnerable ones for minimum wage because of isolation, limited resources and employment therefore basic food commodities and infrastructure resources are more expensive compared to Rarotonga and the Southern Group Islands. We need to be more innovative how we can provide equitable wage rate for the Pa Enua that is equitable, affordable and fair. Send us your recommendation and let the committee look at it and we will provide recommendation to government as how it will fit in our review. You can send your submission by email, or social media to Ministry of Internal Affairs or contact the Director of Labour for more information. No reira e tama e maine ma, eaatatou e kopekopeua e meangitiroatemonitutaki ate arongaanganaga, tepatiiatuneikotoukiatukumai to kotoumanakokiamatou, “Eaatemoni tau note akamataangaitetuatau e anaganagaai to tatouititangata” What is the fairest minimum wage that is equitable and affordable for our workers”.