



Senate Inquiry Submission guideline for workers

This document is a short guide on how to draft a submission to a Senate.

The submissions workers make to inquiries are very important but they play a different role than the official AMWU submission. The union's officers will always draft a broad submission, making a broad economic case on an issue.

However, workers are best placed to draft submissions that explain how the issues the senate is looking into actually play out on the ground; how they affect workers (and their families), the running of the business and the local community.

Knowledge of the real world aspect of the issue is what you can bring to the inquiry.

The official guidelines for drafting a submission are very broad and allow the writer a lot of freedom. These read:

"A submission may be as short or as long as you like. It may contain facts, opinions, arguments or recommendations. It may cover all the points in the terms of reference or only some of them, depending on what interests you. Supporting documents may be attached."

In drafting a submission, it is useful to think through several steps to help you make your case to the Senate.

1. What is the issue more broadly and where your experience can give new insight for senators considering the issue.
 - a. Identify your role in the industry, and what expertise this role gives you.
2. What does working in the industry mean to you (and for your family). I.e. are you proud to work in the industry, why, etc...
3. What are the real challenges facing the industry from your point of view and the potential for the industry.
4. Identify what you think is needed to overcome the challenges and meet the potential.

We recommend your submission be around 2 pages long.

No single submission should try to explain all of the aspects of the issue.

The more focused a submission is on just one or two things, with real world examples, the more likely it will make an impression on Senators. That's also why a short submission (1-2 pages) is usually better than a long submission.

Giving concrete and personal examples is very important. Such examples are hard to argue against and give a clear insight that helps Senators understand the real issues facing and industry.

For example, in Naval Shipbuilding: how a lack of access to Intellectual Property has hampered the AWD build and made it seem like it was Australian industry not performing when this wasn't the issue.

If you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch with the AMWU National Economics and Industry Adviser, Tom Skladzien on (07) 8868 1571 or tom.skladzien@amwu.asn.au

Workers should always use their own words in writing a submission and not try to ‘fancy’ it up. Clear normal language is not only easier to write, it is more easily understood by senators.

Starting your submission.

Sometimes starting your submission is the hardest part. We suggest that the easiest way to start is as follows:

Heading: Submission to the Australian Senate Inquiry into Australia’s Shipbuilding Industry

Opening: My name is X, and I am [*a shipbuilder who works at ASC in Adelaide*]. I am pleased to write a submission for the Senate Inquiry into Australia’s Shipbuilding Industry.

I have worked in the industry for XX years. [explain your role and experience]

Now, make your main point that you want to get across.

Then, give some real life examples or experiences that back up your argument.

Closing: Thank you for allowing me to make a submission into this important inquiry.

Make sure you give your full name and contact details (including address, email and phone) at either the top or the bottom of the submission.