



INDEPENDENT  
INQUIRY into  
**Insecure Work**

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Online submission					
<b>First name</b>	Josie		<b>Surname</b>		
<b>Age</b>	57	<b>Gender</b>	Female	<b>State</b>	NSW
<b>Occupation (if available)</b>	TAFE teacher				
<b>Text of submission</b>	<p>My name is Josie and I have been a qualified teacher for over 35 years. I have a Diploma of Education, a post graduate degree in Adult Education and Training and a Master Degree in Teaching English for Speakers of Other languages and Adult Education and Training.</p> <p>Unfortunately, because of my personal circumstances, I had to give up my permanent employment as a primary school teacher and therefore had to rely on casual employment or the DOLE for my financial security. I soon realised that if I got over 12 hours teaching in a fortnight and less than 20 I actually lost money for that fortnight. However, I had to accept the work as I believed it would lead to some permanent arrangement and more security.</p> <p>This is when I decided to upgrade my qualifications hoping for permanent work at TAFE.</p> <p>I soon found out that casual work at TAFE was for the long term as a permanent position was not advertised for 15 years although there were many casual positions available. Many of the casuals were like me, working the same as their permanently employed colleagues but without the same conditions.</p> <p>This was extremely difficult during the Christmas break as PTC teachers were always the first to stop work and the last to begin the following year. That meant a period of 3 months without any income during the time when others had holiday pay. It made for an extremely difficult Xmas period, relying on credit cards and also having to stop into the local Centrelink every two weeks.</p> <p>Not only this, although you always ended up with work no guarantee was ever made and at the end of the year we heard the same stories that there would be cut backs and there may not be any work.</p>				

Living like this of course had social and emotional consequences. It got to a stage where I was so distressed I was willing to give up my vocation of teaching and work for Woolworths as the pay and conditions were better there. My superior actually told me why should I employ a permanent teacher when I can get 2 casuals for the same money.

Luckily that year a permanent position was finally advertised but it was 160 kms away from home. I applied and with my experience and qualifications was the lucky one to get the job.

There are so many others in my position, that need permanent employment, many have left the teaching workforce because since NSWTF in 2005 won equal pay for PTC teachers working over half a permanent workload TAFE has made an effort to cutback hours for casuals so they do not receive this benefit., thereby resulting in teachers only receiving less than 10 hours work for 36 weeks a year. Who can survive on that kind of work?

I have now been a permanent teacher for 8 years. It has been extremely difficult working so far from home, with travelling and living away from home. However I feel lucky. I also feel sorry that I am treated so differently from my casual colleagues.

I do not have to feel vulnerable anymore and work without pay just to make sure my head teacher will look favourably on me. I can be sick and stay at home. I can enjoy my well deserved holidays. I know my working hours and my weekly wage. I have bought a home and a new car. I can make improvements to my home. I can go on holidays or celebrate a special occasion. Especially, I don't have the stress of not being able to pay my bills or having to apply for unemployment benefits and all that entails.

My only regret is that I am the lucky one and all I can see in the future is a further casualisation of the workforce for our children and their children. In NSW TAFE teachers are retiring and many are not replaced permanently. TAFE NSW is over 70% casual teachers. these teachers are vulnerable and work many hours unpaid. Many don't even know their award conditions. As casuals they miss out on important information as they are only at the workplace when they are teaching.

Our society cannot put up with this situation where the workers are put in a position of insecurity and the bosses keep all the profits. I have a lot more to contribute and if case studies are required I would be most happy to assist.

*This submission was received online at the Inquiry's web site: <http://securejobs.org.au/independent-inquiry-into-insecure-work-in-australia/> Certain information, including full contact details, have been withheld to respect the privacy of the submitter. Further details about the publication of submissions and a privacy statement are available at the website.*

