



Online submission					
First name	Anonymous		Surname		
Age	41-50	Gender	Female	State	VIC
Occupation (if available)	Accounts clerk				
Text of submission	<p>I am Tracey and I'm 38 years old. I am in a defacto relationship, renting a property, and we have a daughter each that we pay maintenance for, see for a weekend fortnightly, and we still like them to have bedrooms, so we have to rent a three bedroom house.</p> <p>I am a member of the ASU. I have O H & S qualifications and have studied Industrial Relations.</p> <p>I am currently working for an small/medium very successful company in the advertising field. I have been there a month as a casual, assisting accounts and reception, paid by the hour. I have been working full-time regular office hours. There is no indication of if this is will be ongoing, and if so, what hours will be available. I have no rights for paid annual, sick, long service or parental leave, change of hours, control of work or notice period. Most people I meet these days in accounts start as a temp.</p> <p>I have been working in the accounts field for 20 years, and have found the last few years to be really unstable. I have been unfairly dismissed three times and driven to resign once. Two of the unfair dismissals were 'permanent' jobs. Of course, being under six months, I have no defence against this and just have to cop it sweet.</p> <p>I have become very withdrawn in the workplace - I no longer voice my opinion or issues, whether they be of a OH & S nature or otherwise. I also don't take leave, because I don't know when I will next be out of work and how long that will be. Hence, I have not had annual leave for two years, excepting for approx 6 weeks of unemployment where I have had to spend the time madly looking for employment and worrying about how to pay the bills. (I am not eligible for Centrelink benefits either)</p> <p>I find that the main problem is that accounts departments are frequently run understaffed and under resourced. I am finding that the new generations of accounts department managers (financial controllers etc) are not concerned with accuracy or legality or pressure on their staff. In all three instances where I have been 'let go' it has seemingly been</p>				

because I have brought up such issues. Identifying a problem that would need money spent on it (eg, not meeting privacy laws, not meeting OH & S laws, withholding funds from rightful owners due to system errors) in my experience, is something that is not acceptable in the workplace, whether it be big or small. My summary of the situation is that the people in these positions are filled by people who don't intend to stay in the company any longer than it takes to score a job with a higher pay in another company and only care about making improvements to the budget during their term (usually a couple of years), with complete disregard to the longevity of their decisions. Most also have very little knowledge or interest in the processes and strategies of collecting and paying money.

The wages I get and know of for permanent accounts staff are generally lower than they were 12 years ago. Most are expected to work free overtime.

The last company I worked for had a very high turnover in accounts and fired me for a performance issue that was completely untrue, and it was on the day my probation finished - which seemed like not much of a coincidence to me. I believe that was their way of not having to pay me temp/casual wages whilst never intending to keep me.

My financial situation is very tight. We do not have any money left over for savings or luxuries. I am unable to spend time with my child during school holidays unless I am unemployed (and so far, my sackings haven't coincided with the school holidays, so it's been 2 years since I did that). We don't envisage a holiday for at least the next couple of years. Time off without pay for a break is not an option, and the wages are not high enough to put away some for a rainy day. The impact on my family is also felt because when I am unemployed, I really struggle to hide my depression from the children, and my poor partner is sees it all. The guilt of not being able to support myself is destructive to our relationship. My self esteem has really taken a battering over the last couple of years.

In most jobs I have, I learn new computer packages, and in this current one, I am also learning the reception roll and increasing my experience in a field of accounts that I prefer. This will add a little something to my resume, but I don't believe I will ever be able to progress any further than an accounts officer due to my 'unsuitable personality' (that is - my tendency to point out inefficiencies of business practice).

I don't know what can be done to change my working conditions. I would like to see more accounts departments audited more carefully. Most places I have worked are very buddy-buddy with their auditors, and the books and procedures don't get looked at very closely. I worked for a publically listed company that had no idea how much money they were owed by customers, so they made up the figures and the board never even found out about it. I have never seen the privacy act enforced. Also, all these companies with the 'Standards Australia' certification don't

	<p>carry through with their criteria to meet the standards once the certification has been obtained.</p> <p>The six month's probation period is pretty harsh on employees too, though I understand it in an ideal world to be there to protect the employers and give them the right to choose fit to culture.</p> <p>I am currently considering bankruptcy so that I can throw away all of my experience and qualifications to change career path.</p>
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<http://securejobs.org.au/independent-inquiry-into-insecure-work-in-australia/>

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