CHAPTER III.—WAGES AND HOURS.

§ 1. Arbitration and Wages Boards Acts and Associated Legislation.

1. **General.**—Particulars regarding the operation of Commonwealth and State Acts for the regulation of wages, hours and conditions of labour were first compiled for the year 1913 and revised particulars have appeared annually in each issue of the Labour Report.

2. **Laws Regulating Industrial Matters.**—The Principal Acts in force regulating rates of wage, hours of labour and working conditions generally in both Commonwealth and State jurisdictions at the end of 1957 are listed below:—

COMMONWEALTH.

Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904–1956.
Public Service Arbitration Act 1920–1957.
Coal Industry Act 1946–1957.
Stevedoring Industry Act 1949–1957.
Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Power Act 1949–1956.
Navigation Act 1912–1956.

STATES.

New South Wales ..	Industrial Arbitration Act, 1940–1957. Coal Industry Act, 1946–1957.
Victoria ..	Labour and Industry Acts 1953–1957.
Queensland ..	Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts, 1932 to 1955.
South Australia ..	Industrial Code, 1920–1955.
Western Australia ..	Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912–1952. Mining Act, 1904–1955.
Tasmania	Wages Boards Act 1920–1951.

3. **Methods of Administration.**—(i) *Commonwealth—(a) Conciliation and Arbitration Act.*—Under placitum (xxxv.) of section 51 of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution, the Commonwealth Parliament is empowered to make laws with respect to "conciliation and arbitration for the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes extending beyond the limits of any one State". The Parliament has made such a law, namely, the Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

The Conciliation and Arbitration Act was amended extensively in 1956 and the following is a brief description of the more important features of the Commonwealth arbitration machinery as now constituted (*see also* para. 5 on page 36).

This Act defines "an industrial dispute" as "(*a*) a dispute (including a threatened, impending or probable dispute) as to industrial matters which extends beyond the limits of any one State; and (*b*) a situation which is likely to give rise to a dispute as to industrial matters which so extends; and includes (*c*) such a dispute in relation to employment in an industry carried on by, or under the control of, a State or an Authority of a State; (*d*) a dispute in relation to employment in an industry carried on by, or under the control of, the Commonwealth or an Authority of the Commonwealth, whether or not the dispute extends beyond the limits of any one State; and (*e*) a claim which an organization is entitled to submit to the Commission [*see* page 33] under section

eleven A of the *Public Service Arbitration Act* 1920–1957 or an application or matter which the Public Service Arbitrator has refrained from hearing, or from further hearing, or from determining under section fourteen A of that Act, whether or not there exists in relation to the claim, application or matter a dispute as to industrial matters which extends beyond the limits of any one State ".

The main feature of the new arbitration machinery is the separation of judicial and arbitral functions, as follows:—The Commonwealth Industrial Court deals with judicial matters under the Act, while the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission handles the function of conciliation and arbitration.

(*b*) *The Commonwealth Industrial Court.*—The Commonwealth Industrial Court is composed of a Chief Judge and two other Judges and the Act provides that the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Industrial Court shall be exercised by not less than two Judges except in the following circumstances. A single Judge may exercise the jurisdiction of the Court with respect to a dismissal or injury of an employee on account of industrial action, interpretation of awards, appeals to the Court from an act or decision of the Registrar, questions concerning eligibility of membership of an organization, the adoption, alteration or enforcement of rules of an organization, disputes between an organization and its members and a prescribed matter of practice or procedure. A single Judge may refer a question of law for the opinion of the Court constituted by not less than two Judges. The Court is a Superior Court of Record with the same power to punish contempts of its power and authority as is possessed by the High Court in respect of contempts of the High Court. In general, decisions of the Industrial Court are final; however, an appeal lies to the High Court, but only when the latter grants leave to appeal. Provision is also made under the Act for the registration of associations of employees and employers. In matters involving disputed elections in organizations, the Court may direct the Registrar to make investigations, and if necessary order a new election.

Special provision is made under the Act concerning the right of audience before the Commonwealth Industrial Court. Briefly, except in proceedings which, in general, involve questions of law or offences against the Act, parties are able to elect whether to appear personally or to be represented by lawyers or officials. Even in proceedings involving questions of law, except appeals from other Courts to the Industrial Court, the parties may, if they wish and the Court grants leave, be represented by officials.

(*c*) *The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.*—The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission is composed of a President, not less than two Deputy Presidents, a Senior Commissioner, not less than five Commissioners and a number of Conciliators. The presidential members of the Commission must have been solicitors or barristers of the High Court or of the Supreme Court of a State of not less than five years standing or Judges of the previously existing Court of Conciliation and Arbitration.

The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission is empowered to prevent or settle industrial disputes by (*a*) effecting a reconciliation between the parties to industrial disputes; (*b*) preventing and settling industrial disputes by amicable agreement; and (*c*) preventing and settling, by conciliation or arbitration, industrial disputes not prevented or settled by amicable agreement. The Commission may exercise its power on its own motion or on the application of a party.

The President may assign a Commissioner to deal with industrial disputes relating to particular industries, or members of the Commission to deal with a particular industrial dispute. However, subject to the approval of the President, it is the duty of the Senior Commissioner to organize and allocate the work of the Commissioners and Conciliators.

When an industrial dispute occurs or is likely to occur, the Act provides that a Commissioner shall take steps for the prompt prevention or settlement of that dispute by conciliation, or, if in his opinion conciliation is unlikely to succeed or has failed, by arbitration. A Commissioner may arrange with the Senior Commissioner for a Conciliator to assist the parties to reach an amicable agreement. If the agreement is reached, a memorandum of its terms shall be made in writing, and may be certified by a Commissioner. A certified memorandum shall have the same effect as an award.

The Commission in Presidential Session, that is, the Commission constituted by at least three presidential members, and not otherwise, is empowered to deal with the making of awards, or the certifying of agreements, in so far as they concern standard hours, basic wages and long service leave.

Upon application by a party to an industrial dispute, a Commissioner shall decide, in consultation with the President, whether, in the public interest, the dispute should be dealt with by a Commission constituted of not less than three members nominated by the President. The President may direct the Commission to hear the dispute; however, after consideration, the Commission may refer the dispute back for determination to the Commissioner originally dealing with the dispute.

An appeal against the decision of a Commissioner shall be heard by not less than three members nominated by the President, of whom at least two are presidential members of the Commission. However, an appeal will not be heard unless the Commission considers it is a matter of public interest.

Provision is also made in the Act for a presidential member of the Commission to handle industrial matters in connexion with the Maritime Industries, Snowy Mountains Area and Stevedoring Industry, except in those matters where the Act requires that the Commission shall be constituted by more than one member.

The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission also deals with disputes and industrial matters, interstate or intra-State, associated with undertakings or projects of the Commonwealth Government which have been declared by the Minister to be Commonwealth projects for the purposes of this Act. In effect, this places employees of Commonwealth projects, so declared, under the jurisdiction of the Commission. The Minister has the power to exempt certain persons or classes of persons working on the project from the jurisdiction of the Commission.

The Commission is empowered, under the Act, to make an award in relation to an industrial dispute where the Public Service Arbitrator has refrained from dealing with claims made by a Public Service employee organization or consents to the claims being presented to the Commission, though such an award may be inconsistent with a law of the Commonwealth relating to salaries, wages, rates of pay or terms or conditions of service of employees in the Public Service as defined by section three of the Public Service Arbitration Act 1920–1957, not being the Commonwealth Employees Compensation Act 1930–1956, the Commonwealth Employees' Furlough Act 1943–1953, the Superannuation Act 1922–1957 or any other prescribed Act.

The Act provides that where a State law, or an order, award, decision or determination of a State industrial authority is inconsistent with or deals with a matter dealt with in an award of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, the latter shall prevail, and the former, to the extent of the inconsistency or in relation to the matter dealt with, shall be invalid.

(*d*) *Coal Industry Tribunal.*—The Coal Industry Tribunal was established under the Commonwealth Coal Industry Act 1946 and the New South Wales Coal Industry Act, 1946 to consider and determine interstate disputes and, in respect of New South Wales only, intra-State disputes between the Australian Coal and Shale Employees' Federation and employers in the coal-mining industry.

Special war-time bodies were created to deal with specific aspects of the coal industry, reference to which was made in earlier issues of the Labour Report (*see* No. 41, page 53). Under amending legislation passed jointly by the Commonwealth and New South Wales Parliaments in 1951, the Tribunal was vested with authority to deal with all interstate industrial disputes in the coal-mining industry, irrespective of the trade union involved, and, in the case of New South Wales, intra-State disputes also. The Tribunal consists of one person, who may appoint two assessors nominated by the parties to advise him in matters relating to any dispute. Subsidiary authorities are the Local Coal Authorities and Mine Conciliation Committees, who may be appointed to assist in the prevention and settlement of certain disputes. An amendment to the Commonwealth Coal Industry Act passed in 1952 makes it obligatory for the Tribunal to use conciliation and arbitration to settle industrial disputes.

(*e*) *Commonwealth Public Service Arbitrator.*—Wages, hours of labour and working conditions in the Commonwealth Public Service are regulated by the Commonwealth Public Service Arbitrator, under powers conferred by the Public Service Arbitration Act 1920–1957. The system of arbitration commenced to operate in 1912, cases being heard by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration as part of the ordinary work of that Court. From 1920, however, the control was transferred to the Arbitrator, who is appointed by the Government for a term of seven years, and who need not necessarily have legal qualifications. In 1952 amending legislation made provision for reference of matters of general importance to the Full Court of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration and also for appeals from decisions of the Arbitrator.

Amending legislation, assented to on 15th November, 1956, provided that an organization of employees in the Public Service may submit a claim to the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission with the consent of the Public Service Arbitrator or where the Arbitrator has, other than on the grounds of triviality, refrained from hearing or determining the claim. The amending legislation also provided that appeals from decisions of the Arbitrator may be made to the Commission.

(*f*) *Australian Capital Territory Industrial Board.*—The regulation of industrial matters in the Australian Capital Territory under a local Industrial Board commenced in the year 1922. However, an amending Ordinance gazetted on 19th May, 1949, abolished the Board and transferred its functions to authorities established by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act. A separate Registry of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration was established in Canberra and a Commissioner was assigned to the Australian Capital Territory.

The amendment to Commonwealth industrial legislation introduced in June, 1956 made little practical change in the day-to-day industrial administration of the Australian Capital Territory. In effect, the Conciliation Commissioner of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration became the Commissioner for the Australian Capital Territory under the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. In addition, the Industrial Court and the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission replaced the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in those matters outside the jurisdiction of the Commissioner.

Details of the provisions relating to the Board during its period of jurisdiction may be found in issues of the Labour Report prior to No. 37 (*see* No. 36, p. 51).

(ii) *States*—(*a*) *New South Wales.*—The controlling authority is the Industrial Commission of New South Wales, consisting of a President and five other Judges. Subsidiary tribunals are the Conciliation Commissioners, the Apprenticeship Commissioner, Conciliation Committees and Apprenticeship Councils constituted for particular industries. Each Conciliation Committee consists of a Conciliation Commissioner as Chairman and equal numbers of representatives of employers and employees. The Apprenticeship Commissioner and the members of the Conciliation Committee for an industry constitute the Apprenticeship Council for the industry. These subsidiary tribunals may make awards binding on industries, but an appeal to the Industrial Commission may be made against any award. Special Commissioners with conciliatory powers only may be appointed. Compulsory control commenced in 1901, after the earlier Acts of 1892 and 1899 providing for voluntary submission of matters in dispute had proved abortive.

(*b*) *Victoria.*—The authorities are separate Wages Boards for the occupations and industries covered, each consisting of a chairman and equal numbers of representatives of employers and employees, and a Court of Industrial Appeals, the latter presided over by a Judge of the County Court. The system was instituted in the State in 1896, and represented the first example in Australia of legal regulation of wage rates.

(*c*) *Queensland.*—The authority is the Industrial Court, consisting of a Judge of the Supreme Court and not more than four members appointed by the Governor in Council. Legal control was first instituted in 1907 with the passing of the Wages Board Act.

(*d*) *South Australia.*—The principal tribunal is the Industrial Court, composed of the President (a person eligible for appointment as a Judge of the Supreme Court) who may be joined by two assessors employed in the industry concerned; also Deputy Presidents may be appointed. There are also Industrial Boards, for the various industries, consisting of a chairman and equal numbers of representatives of employers and employees. Another tribunal provided for under the Industrial Code is the Board of Industry, composed of a President, who shall be the President or a Deputy President of the Industrial Court, and four Commissioners. Broadly speaking, the functions of these three tribunals are:—(i) the Industrial Court delivers awards concerning workers who do not come under the jurisdiction of the Industrial Boards and hears appeals from decisions of Industrial Boards; (ii) the determinations of the Industrial Boards apply to most industries in the metropolitan area; however, for

employees of the Public Service, Railways and councils of a municipality or district, determinations of Industrial Boards apply to the whole of the State; (iii) the Board of Industry declares the " living wage ".

(*e*) *Western Australia.*—The system of control comprises an Arbitration Court, Industrial Boards, Conciliation Committees and a Conciliation Commissioner. Employers and employees are equally represented on both Boards and Committees. The Court consists of a Judge of the Supreme Court and two members. Commissioners may also be appointed by the Minister for the settlement of particular disputes. Legal control dates back to 1900.

Since 1949, legislation has provided for the appointment of a Western Australian Coal Industry Tribunal to settle intra-State disputes in the coal-mining industry in Western Australia. It was not, however, until April, 1952, that persons were appointed to the Tribunal. The Tribunal consists of a Chairman and four other members (two representatives each of employers and employees). Boards of reference may be appointed by the Tribunal and decisions of the Tribunal may be reviewed by the President of the Arbitration Court.

(*f*) *Tasmania.*—The authority consists of Wages Boards for separate industries, comprising a Chairman, appointed by the Governor, and equal numbers of representatives of employers and workers, appointed by the Minister administering the Act. The system was instituted in 1910.

4. Awards, Determinations, and Agreements in Force.—In each issue of the Labour Report from 1913–14 to 1947 (Reports Nos. 5–36) statistics were published of the number of awards, determinations made and industrial agreements filed, excluding variations, in each State and under Commonwealth legislation dealing with these matters. Statistics were also published, up to and including 1939, showing the number of awards, determinations and industrial agreements in force at the end of each year. These details are not now published because of the difficulty of obtaining precise data. One of the reasons for this decision is explained in the following paragraph.

It is difficult to establish the exact number of industrial awards and registered industrial agreements in force at the end of any period, because awards and determinations made by both State and Commonwealth tribunals generally continue in force, after the term of operation mentioned therein has expired, until rescinded or superseded by a subsequent order or award. Section 58 (2) of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act provides that, after the expiration of the period specified, the award shall, unless the Court otherwise orders, continue in force until a new award has been made; provided that, where in pursuance of this sub-section an award has continued in force after the expiration of the period specified in the award, any award made by the Court for the settlement of a new industrial dispute between the parties may, if the Court so orders, be made retrospective to a date not earlier than the date upon which the Court first had cognizance of that dispute. In the Industrial Code of South Australia, section 47 (2), and in legislation for other States, similar provisions are in force. All industrial agreements continue in force after the expiration of the term mentioned until rescinded or superseded by a subsequent agreement or order. The Tasmanian Wages Boards Act 1934 repealed Part IV. of the Principal Act providing for industrial agreements and all such agreements ceased to operate from the commencement of the Act unless an agreement existed in a trade to which no determination of a Board was applicable, in which case the agreement remained in force until its expiry or until a determination was made.

5. **New Legislation and Special Reports.**—Information concerning the main provisions of various Industrial Acts in force throughout Australia was given in earlier Reports, and brief reviews are furnished in each issue of the more important aspects of new industrial legislation having special application to the terms of awards or determinations. The period April to December, 1957 is covered in this issue.

(i) *Commonwealth.*—(*a*) The Coal Industry Act 1946–1956 was amended by an Act, assented to on 20th November, 1957, enabling Gallagher *J.* to be appointed a member of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and to continue as the Coal Industry Tribunal. Gallagher *J.* was appointed a presidential member of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission on 19th December, 1957. The Coal Industry Act 1955, enabling Gallagher *J.* to hold concurrently the office of Coal Industry Tribunal and membership of the Industrial Commission of New South Wales, was repealed.

(*b*) The Stevedoring Industry Act, No. 93 of 1957, assented to on 12th December, 1957, which amended sections 35 and 37 of the Stevedoring Industry Act 1956, provides that these amendments shall come into operation only on such dates as are respectively fixed by proclamation, dependent upon a possible pronouncement by the High Court against these sections of the 1956 Act. In that case, the amending Act makes provision for matters covered by these sections to be dealt with by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and not the Commonwealth Industrial Court. The sections concerned deal respectively with applications by the Authority for the suspension or cancellation of the registration of an employer and appeals against the suspension or cancellation of the registration of a waterside worker by the Authority.

(ii) *New South Wales.*—(*a*) The Industrial Arbitration Act, 1940–1956, was further amended by Act No. 23 of 1957, assented to on 30th April, 1957, which brings within the scope of the Act certain classes of contracts of personal service involving (*a*) bread delivery, (*b*) milk delivery, (*c*) driving a motor vehicle, (*d*) leasing of premises, etc., for hairdressing and (*e*) any other class of contract work specified by regulation. Persons proposing to enter into any such contract are required to submit the conditions of the contract for approval to the Industrial Commission of New South Wales or the appropriate Conciliation Committee. The Commission or Committee shall refuse to approve the contract unless it is satisfied that the contract will be bona fide and will not be entered into for the purpose of avoiding the operation of an award or agreement, and that the benefits under the contract to the person actually carrying out the work will be not less favourable than the benefits provided for employees by an award or agreement, and by the Annual Holidays Act, 1944 and the Long Service Leave Act, 1955.

Any person who performs work outside a factory for an occupier of a factory or trader in the clothing trade shall be considered an employee in regard to provisions in the Annual Holidays Act, 1944, the Long Service Leave Act, 1955 and the Workers Compensation Act, 1926.

The Industrial Arbitration Act was also amended by an Act, assented to on 4th October, 1957, which provides that a Conciliation Commissioner shall not be appointed or hold office once he attains the age of 65 years. A Conciliation Commissioner shall be appointed for a period of seven years (and is eligible for reappointment) or for a term which expires when he reaches the age of 65 years.

(*b*) The Coal Industry Act, 1946 was further amended by Act No. 49 of 1957, operative from 9th December, 1957, enabling Gallagher *J.* to hold concurrently the office of Coal Industry Tribunal and membership of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The Coal Industry (Amendment) Act, 1955, which enabled Gallagher *J.* to hold the office of Coal Industry Tribunal and membership of the Industrial Commission of New South Wales, was repealed.

(iii) *Victoria.*—No major amendments were made to the Labour and Industry Acts during the period under review.

(iv) *Queensland.*—There were no amendments to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts from April to December, 1957.

(v) *South Australia.*—(*a*) The Long Service Leave Act, 1957, assented to on 14th November, 1957, came into force by proclamation on 21st November, 1957. It provided that, subject to certain exemptions, every worker shall be entitled to long service leave on ordinary rates of pay, and the leave entitlement shall be seven consecutive days in the eighth and each successive year of continuous service with his employer. The date from which leave could be granted was 1st July, 1957. Continuous service prior to that date was to be taken into account in assessing leave due, with the condition that a worker who had completed seven years or more of continuous service on or before 1st July, 1957 was from that date to be considered as commencing his eighth year of service.

Leave can be taken in any year in which it is due, at a time agreed upon by the worker and the employer or at a time fixed by the employer upon giving at least four weeks notice to the worker. The employer can, under certain circumstances, postpone the leave, but this postponement is limited to four years after the leave becomes due. By agreement between the worker and his employer, leave can accumulate from year to year. By agreement, also, payment can be made in lieu of leave due.

An employer is exempt from the provisions of the Act (*a*) in respect of his employees who are covered by an award or agreement which provides for long service leave; (*b*) if the majority of his employees are covered by such an award or agreement and he extends the long service leave provisions to include the remainder of his employees; or (*c*) if he operates a scheme of long service leave, superannuation or other similar benefit which is not less favourable than the provisions under the Act.

The Act does not apply to Crown employees or any Authority representing the Crown.

(*b*) During the months October to December, 1957, a number of agreements between employer and employee organizations, providing long service leave for employees, were filed in the office of the Industrial Registrar. These agreements have wide industrial coverage. The major provisions of these agreements were as follows:—(*a*) Long service leave of 13 weeks at the end of 20 years' continuous service with *pro rata* leave for subsequent shorter periods of service; (*b*) Continuous service to date from the commencement of employment up to 20 years preceding the date of operation of the scheme. Some agreements, notably those in the motor vehicle industry, took the maximum length of service prior

to the date of operation back to 26th November, 1933. In general, these agreements made no provision for payment in lieu of leave except at the termination of employment.

(vi) *Western Australia.*—No amendments were made in 1957 to either the Industrial Arbitration or Mining Acts.

(vii) *Tasmania.*—The Wages Boards Act 1920–1951 was not amended in 1957.

(viii) *Australian Capital Territory.*—There was no special industrial legislation affecting only the Australian Capital Territory passed in 1957.

§ 2. Rates of Wage and Hours of Labour.

1. **General.**—The collection of data for nominal rates of wage payable in different callings and in occupations in various industries carried on in each State was first undertaken by this Bureau in the early part of the year 1913. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining reliable particulars of the numbers of apprentices, improvers and other juvenile workers to whom progressive rates of wage fixed according to increasing age or experience were payable from year to year, the inquiry was confined to the rates of wage payable to adult workers only, and was further limited generally to those industries in operation within the metropolitan area of each State. In order to make the inquiry comprehensive, however, certain industries were included which were not carried on in the capital cities, e.g., mining, shipping, agriculture and the pastoral industry. The particulars acquired were obtained primarily from awards, determinations and industrial agreements under Commonwealth and State Acts, and related to the minimum wage prescribed. In those cases where no award, determination or agreement was in force, the ruling union or predominant rate of wage was ascertained from employers and secretaries of trade unions. For convenience of comparison weekly rates of wage were adopted. In many instances, however, the wages were based on daily or hourly rates, since in many industries and occupations in which employment is casual or intermittent, wages are so fixed; hence the average weekly earnings in such occupations may fall short of the computed weekly rates. The information thus obtained referred to the weekly rate of wage in upwards of 400 specific occupations. Rates of wage were of course not available for each of these occupations in every State but the aggregate collection for the six States amounted to 1,569 male occupations or callings. These particulars furnished the necessary data for the computation of average rates of wage in various industrial groups* and in each State and Australia as a whole. The average rate of wage for each industrial group in each State was computed by taking the arithmetical average† of the rates of wage payable for all classified occupations within that group. A more detailed system of weighting could not be applied owing to the difficulty in the past of obtaining satisfactory data as to the number of persons engaged in each of the occupations for which rates of wage had been obtained. Though a considerable amount of information as to the number of persons engaged in different industries and occupations was available from subsequent Census results, it was found impracticable to bring the classification of these results into line with the detailed classification of occupations in the various industries as set out in the awards and determinations. For final results for each State

* The adopted classification of industries is shown in the Preface. † The sum of the weekly rates of wage divided by the number of occupations included.

and for each industrial group throughout the States, however, a careful system of weighting according to industrial groups was adopted. For example, in computing the result for any State in any period, the computed average wage rate in each industrial group was multiplied by a number (weight) representing the relative number of all male workers engaged in that group of industries in the particular State. The sum of the products thus obtained divided by the sum of the weights represented the average wage rate for that State for the particular period. The weights used for each industrial group in the computations of the average wage for male and female occupations were published in issues of the Labour Report prior to No. 20, 1929.

The results thus ascertained for the year 1913 were published in Labour Report No. 2, pp. 28–43. In the early part of the year 1914, the scope of the inquiry was considerably extended, and particulars were included of the weekly rates of wage in respect of 930 specific occupations. The aggregate collection for the six States amounted to 4,256 adult occupations (3,948 male and 308 female). The results obtained thereby to 30th April, 1914, were published in Labour Report No. 5, pp. 44–50. These results were further analysed, and the average number of working hours which constituted a full week's work in each occupation was ascertained and weighted in a manner similar to that for the rates of wage. This course was adopted in order to overcome the difficulty of making comparisons between States of the rates of wage in any specified occupation, since, in many instances, a different number of working hours constituted a full week's work in different States. By dividing the weighted average number of working hours into the weighted average weekly rate of wage a more satisfactory standard of comparison was ascertained. Results obtained from these computations were given for each industrial group for each State.

Since 30th April, 1914, the number of occupations included in comparative computations has been slightly reduced. When technical change or some other factor has led to the disappearance of the original occupation from an award, agreement or determination, the usual practice has been to substitute a similar occupation with a comparable rate of wage. In some cases, however, such a substitution could not be made and the slight drop in the total number of occupations included has resulted. The particulars of wages given in the Appendix (Sections III. and IV.) include all the more important occupations. These have been taken from awards or determinations made by industrial tribunals, or from agreements registered under Commonwealth or State Acts.

To supplement the results thus obtained, investigations were made regarding rates of wage in earlier years with a view to showing their general trend in each State and in the several industrial groups. The total number of occupations for which particulars were available back to 1891 was 652.

The particulars given in this chapter show variations in nominal wage rates from year to year in each State and in various industrial groups. Index numbers are also given showing variations in *real* wage rates in each State. The figures of nominal wages and hours of labour are in course of revision to meet changes in industrial structure. The amounts should not be regarded as actual current averages but as an index of changes expressed in money and hour terms.

A comparison of wage rates and hours of labour for certain occupations in Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand will be found in Section V. of the Appendix.

2. **Adult Male Weekly Wage Rates.**—(i) *States.* The following table shows the weighted average nominal weekly rates of wage payable to adult male workers at the dates specified for a full week's work in each State and Australia. Index numbers are also given for each State with the average for Australia for the year 1911 as base (= 1,000):—

WEEKLY WAGE RATES(*a*): ADULT MALES, "ALL GROUPS".

Weighted Average Nominal Weekly Rates payable for a Full Week's Work (excluding Overtime) and Index Numbers of Wage Rates.

Particulars.	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'land.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	Australia.
No. of Occupations included.(*b*)	870	894	615	562	477	466	3,884

RATES OF WAGE.

	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
31st December, 1891	44 1	40 5	46 6	41 7	52 4	38 6	43 5
" " 1901	43 11	40 9	46 2	42 0	53 11	36 10	43 5
" " 1911	51 5	50 6	51 1	51 11	59 0	41 0	51 3
" " 1914	56 2	54 7	53 5	54 5	62 10	52 8	55 7
" " 1921	95 10	93 7	96 8	89 5	95 0	91 8	94 6
" " 1929	102 11	101 1	101 2	97 2	100 7	94 8	101 2
" " 1931 ..	93 5	82 2	89 0	75 0	84 1	79 9	86 10
" " 1939	96 7	93 6	97 5	88 11	100 6	89 5	95 3
" " 1941	105 4	104 5	101 9	100 3	110 2	99 3	104 3
" " 1951	255 0	245 5	240 10	241 8	251 4	247 3	248 7
" " 1953	296 8	282 6	273 10	278 9	292 5	296 11	287 7
" " 1954	298 4	284 3	278 7	282 2	293 3	299 2	290 0
" " 1955	310 1	296 7	284 11	284 9	304 9	302 7	300 0
" " 1956(c)	331 3	312 9	301 3	297 11	318 1	319 9	317 7
31st March, 1957(c)	329 3	313 1	301 4	297 11	319 8	319 9	317 1
30th June, 1957(c)	331 9	318 1	302 2	308 7	322 11	326 11	321 0
30th September, 1957 ..	333 2	318 2	303 10	308 8	326 5	326 11	321 6
31st December, 1957	333 2	318 2	304 0	309 2	326 6	326 11	322 2

INDEX NUMBERS.

(*Base: Weighted Average Wage for Australia* (51*s.* 3*d.*), 1911 = 1,000.)

31st December, 1891	861	789	908	811	1,022	751	848
" " 1901	858	796	901	819	1,052	719	848
" " 1911	1,003	985	997	1,013	1,152	799	1,000
" " 1914	1,096	1,065	1,042	1,062	1,226	1,028	1,085
" " 1921	1,869	1,826	1,886	1,745	1,853	1,788	1,844
" " 1929 ..	2,007	1,972	1,975	1,896	1,963	1,848	1,974
" " 1931 ..	1,823	1,603	1,737	1,463	1,641	1,556	1,694
" " 1939	1,885	1,825	1,900	1,735	1,962	1,745	1,858
" " 1941 ..	2,056	2,037	1,985	1,957	2,149	1,937	2,034
" " 1951	4,975	4,789	4,699	4,715	4,904	4,825	4,850
" " 1953	5,788	5,513	5,342	5,439	5,705	5,794	5,611
" " 1954	5,820	5,547	5,435	5,506	5,722	5,837	5,658
" " 1955	6,051	5,787	5,559	5,555	5,946	5,905	5,853
" " 1956(c)	6,463	6,102	5,878	5,812	6,206	6,239	6,197
31st March, 1957(c)	6,425	6,108	5,879	5,813	6,238	6,239	6,187
30th June, 1957(c)	6,473	6,206	5,896	6,022	6,301	6,378	6,264
30th September, 1957 ..	6,500	6,208	5,928	6,023	6,369	6,378	6,273
31st December, 1957	6,500	6,208	5,931	6,032	6,370	6,378	6,286

(*a*) The figures of nominal wages and hours of labour are in course of revision to meet changes in industrial structure. The amounts shown should not be regarded as actual current averages, but as an index of changes expressed in money and hour terms. (*b*) As at 31st December, 1957. (*c*) Partly estimated. *See* Group XII., p. 41.

(ii) *Industrial Groups, Australia.*—The following table shows for Australia (*a*) the weighted average weekly rate of wage in each of the industrial groups, and (*b*) the weighted average wage for all groups combined, at the dates specified. Index numbers are also given for each industrial group with the average for all groups for the year 1911 as base (= 1,000).

WEEKLY WAGE RATES(a): ADULT MALES, INDUSTRIAL GROUPS, AUSTRALIA.

Weighted Average Nominal Weekly Rates payable for a Full Week's Work (excluding Overtime) and Index Numbers of Wage Rates in each Industrial Group.

Date.	Industrial Group. I. Wood, Furniture, etc.	II. Engineering, etc.	III. Food, Drink, etc.	IV. Clothing, Textiles, etc.	V. Books, Printing, etc.	VI. Other Manufacturing.	VII. Building.	VIII. Mining, etc.	IX. Railways, etc.	X. Air and Other Land Transport.	XI. Shipping, etc.(b)	XII. Pastoral, etc.(b)	XIII. Domestic, etc.(b)	XIV. Miscellaneous.	All Industrial Groups.
RATES OF WAGE.															
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
31st December, 1891 ..	52 5	47 8	38 2	36 8	53 5	46 4	50 6	58 1	50 10	39 6	38 2	34 10	32 10	39 7	43 5
" " 1901 ..	52 3	48 5	44 7	36 3	51 0	46 5	53 10	54 8	52 4	40 9	38 5	32 1	30 8	38 10	43 5
" " 1911 ..	57 8	54 6	50 9	50 3	58 11	51 11	62 1	61 2	57 0	46 7	44 7	43 0	45 5	47 7	51 3
" " 1914 ..	59 6	57 9	55 8	53 0	63 10	56 0	65 5	65 2	59 8	52 8	49 10	49 5	47 11	54 0	55 7
" " 1921 ..	98 2	98 2	93 10	93 3	104 7	95 0	102 5	105 4	97 5	90 2	101 8	89 0	84 2	91 1	94 6
" " 1929	104 10	103 6	100 10	99 6	119 1	102 2	113 0	110 7	105 2	96 9	107 0	95 6	92 6	96 8	101 2
" " 1931 .	85 7	86 3	88 6	83 11	102 0	85 4	98 9	102 5	86 7	83 11	81 10	80 3	85 3	83 11	86 10
" " 1939	100 1	99 3	96 9	93 2	114 3	95 8	106 5	109 1	96 6	92 10	98 6	84 0	89 11	92 10	95 3
" " 1941 ..	108 5	110 0	106 1	105 7	119 6	107 0	116 11	115 1	108 8	101 11	106 9	93 6	97 10	101 2	104 3
" " 1951 ..	238 8	237 1	239 3	242 10	274 5	238 10	259 0	249 2	238 0	233 2	271 11	279 1	224 8	232 0	248 7
" " 1953 .	276 11	274 2	279 5	278 10	313 11	276 10	301 3	288 2	278 3	270 3	308 9	319 8	262 5	270 1	287 7
" " 1954	281 11	284 1	280 9	278 10	324 11	279 7	307 6	288 0	289 9	273 3	308 9	319 7	263 0	270 5	290 0
" " 1955 .	295 11	288 8	290 4	283 4	332 2	288 9	323 1	300 4	301 11	281 3	310 0	326 8	273 6	282 10	300 0
" " 1956 ..	309 4	303 5	307 3	294 2	348 9	304 1	340 0	313 9	322 1	298 3	324 9	c351 0	287 7	300 1	c317 7
31st March, 1957 ..	308 9	302 11	306 5	294 0	347 11	303 10	340 1	313 9	320 8	296 8	324 7	c350 11	287 5	299 0	c317 1
30th June, 1957 ..	313 9	308 9	310 3	308 10	352 8	309 6	343 4	318 4	321 4	301 0	334 6	c353 8	291 10	301 6	c321 0
30th September, 1957 .	315 0	309 6	312 3	308 11	353 4	310 2	344 7	319 2	323 2	302 3	334 7	354 5	292 9	302 8	321 6
31st December, 1957 .	315 0	309 6	312 3	308 11	353 4	310 6	344 7	319 4	323 2	302 4	334 7	354 8	292 9	302 9	322 2
INDEX NUMBERS.															
(Base: Weighted Average Wage for Australia (51s. 3d.), 1911 = 1,000.)															
31st December, 1891 ..	1,023	931	745	716	1,043	904	986	1,134	992	772	745	680	641	773	848
" " 1901 ..	1,019	945	871	708	996	907	1,050	1,067	1,021	795	751	627	598	759	848
" " 1911 ..	1,125	1,064	991	981	1,149	1,013	1,213	1,194	1,113	910	871	839	887	929	1,000
" " 1914 ..	1,161	1,127	1,085	1,034	1,246	1,093	1,276	1,272	1,165	1,026	972	965	935	1,054	1,085
" " 1921 ..	1,916	1,915	1,832	1,819	2,040	1,854	1,999	2,056	1,901	1,760	1,984	1,736	1,642	1,778	1,844
" " 1929	2,046	2,019	1,967	1,942	2,323	1,994	2,205	2,157	2,052	1,888	2,087	1,863	1,804	1,886	1,974
" " 1931 ..	1,669	1,683	1,727	1,638	1,991	1,664	1,926	1,999	1,690	1,638	1,596	1,566	1,663	1,637	1,694
" " 1939 ..	1,953	1,936	1,888	1,817	2,229	1,867	2,076	2,142	1,884	1,812	1,922	1,639	1,755	1,811	1,858
" " 1941 ..	2,116	2,147	2,071	2,060	2,332	2,088	2,282	2,245	2,121	1,989	2,082	1,825	1,908	1,974	2,034
" " 1951 ..	4,656	4,626	4,668	4,738	5,355	4,661	5,054	4,861	4,643	4,550	5,306	5,445	4,384	4,927	4,850
" " 1953 ..	5,403	5,349	5,452	5,441	6,124	5,401	5,878	5,622	5,429	5,274	6,025	6,237	5,121	5,269	5,611
" " 1954 ..	5,501	5,542	5,478	5,441	6,340	5,455	6,000	5,620	5,654	5,332	6,025	6,236	5,132	5,276	5,658
" " 1955 ..	5,774	5,632	5,665	5,529	6,481	5,635	6,305	5,861	5,891	5,488	6,049	6,374	5,337	5,519	5,853
" " 1956 ..	6,036	5,921	5,995	5,740	6 805	5,933	6,634	6,121	6,284	5,820	6,337	(c)6.849	5,611	5,855	(c)6,197
31st March, 1957 ..	6,025	5,910	5,979	5,736	6,789	5,928	6,636	6,122	6,258	5,789	6,333	(c)6.847	5,609	5,835	(c)6,187
30th June, 1957 ..	6,122	6,025	6,054	6,026	6,881	6,039	6,698	6,211	6,270	5,872	6,527	(c)6,901	5,694	5,883	(c)6,264
30th September, 1957 ..	6,146	6,039	6,092	6,028	6,893	6,052	6,723	6,227	6,305	5,897	6,529	6,920	5,713	5,905	6,273
31st December, 1957 ..	6,146	6,039	6,093	6,028	6,893	6,059	6,724	6,231	6,305	5,899	6,529	6,920	5,713	5,908	6,286

(a) *See* note (a) to table on page 40. (b) Includes the value of keep, where supplied. (c) Partly estimated.

3. **Adult Female Weekly Wage Rates.**—(i) *States.* The index numbers given in the preceding paragraphs for male adult workers were computed with the weighted average wage in 1911 as base (= 1,000). In the case of females, however, it has not been possible to secure information for years prior to 1914, and the index numbers are therefore computed with the weighted average rate of wage payable to adult female workers in Australia at 30th April, 1914, as base (=1,000).

The following table shows the weighted average nominal weekly rates of wage payable to adult female workers for a full week's work in each State and Australia at the dates specified. Index numbers are also given for each State with the average for Australia at 30th April, 1914, as base (= 1,000).

WEEKLY WAGE RATES(*a*): ADULT FEMALES.

Weighted Average Nominal Weekly Rates payable for a Full Week's Work (excluding Overtime) and Index Numbers of Wage Rates.

Particulars.	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'land.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	Australia.
No. of Occupations included.(*b*) ..	84	87	38	47	24	32	312

RATES OF WAGE.

	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
31st December, 1914	26 10	27 9	27 1	24 1	37 4	25 10	27 5
" " 1921	49 0	47 10	50 3	45 2	56 4	47 6	48 8
" " 1929 .. .	53 11	54 1	54 10	51 4	58 10	53 9	54 1
" " 1931	49 8	45 10	47 11	43 1	51 7	45 8	47 5
" " 1939 .. .	53 3	51 9	55 2	49 7	55 8	50 8	52 8
" " 1941	57 11	58 4	59 6	55 5	60 4	56 7	58 2
" " 1951 .. .	171 1	172 10	161 7	171 4	163 2	168 7	170 4
" " 1953	198 5	200 10	188 7	199 6	190 5	196 4	197 11
" " 1954	198 9	200 2	190 0	199 5	190 5	196 7	197 11
" " 1955	205 3	206 9	192 10	199 11	193 7	197 11	203 4
" " 1956	216 10	216 2	201 3	207 5	201 8	207 10	213 2
31st March, 1957	215 5	216 2	201 3	207 5	203 6	207 10	212 9
30th June, 1957	219 5	222 2	207 11	216 6	209 7	215 4	218 5
30th September, 1957	220 1	222 2	207 11	216 6	210 11	215 4	218 9
31st December, 1957	220 1	222 2	207 11	217 11	210 11	215 4	218 10

INDEX NUMBERS.

(*Base: Weighted Average Wage for Australia* (27*s.* 2*d.*), 30*th April*, 1914 = 1,000.)

31st December, 1914	987	1,022	996	885	1,373	950	1,008
" " 1921	1,803	1,761	1,849	1,661	2,074	1,749	1,790
" " 1929	1,983	1,990	2,020	1,838	2,165	1,978	1,990
" " 1931	1,828	1,688	1,765	1,584	1,900	1,681	1,746
" " 1939 .. .	1,960	1,906	2,031	1,826	2,049	1,866	1,938
" " 1941	2,133	2,148	2,191	2,038	2,220	2,082	2,141
" " 1951	6,296	6,362	5,948	6,305	6,007	6,204	6,268
" " 1953	7,302	7,392	6,940	7,342	7,007	7,226	7,285
" " 1954	7,314	7,367	6,994	7,339	7,007	7,236	7,285
" " 1955	7,554	7,608	7,098	7,358	7,125	7,284	7,483
" " 1956	7,981	7,955	7,406	7,635	7,423	7,649	7,846
31st March, 1957	7,929	7,956	7,406	7,635	7,491	7,649	7,831
30th June, 1957	8,076	8,176	7,652	7,967	7,715	7,926	8,039
30th September, 1957 .. .	8,101	8,176	7,652	7,967	7,764	7,926	8,050
31st December, 1957 .. .	8,101	8,176	7,652	8,021	7,764	7,926	8,054

(*a*) *See* note (*a*) to table on page 40. (*b*) As at 31st December, 1957.

(ii) *Industrial Groups, Australia.* The following table shows for Australia (*a*) the weighted average weekly rate of wage in each of the industrial groups in which the number of females is significant, and (*b*) the weighted average wage for all groups combined, at the dates specified. Index numbers are also given for each industrial group with the average for all groups at 30th April, 1914, as base (=1,000).

WEEKLY WAGE RATES(*a*): ADULT FEMALES, INDUSTRIAL GROUPS, AUSTRALIA.

Weighted Average Nominal Weekly Rates payable for a full Week's Work (excluding Overtime) and Index Numbers of Wage Rates in Industrial Groups.

Date.	Industrial Group.					
	III. Food, Drink, etc.	IV. Clothing, Textiles, etc.	I., II., V., and VI. All Other Manufacturing.	XIII. Domestic, Hotels, etc.(*b*)	XIV. Miscellaneous.	All Groups.
RATES OF WAGE.						
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
31st December, 1914 ..	23 5	24 11	27 0	30 2	31 4	27 5
" " 1921 ..	43 9	48 7	48 0	48 6	50 0	48 8
" " 1929 ..	49 4	54 4	53 11	54 9	53 10	54 1
" " 1931 ..	44 4	45 5	46 11	50 9	49 10	47 5
" " 1939 ..	48 9	50 9	51 11	54 5	56 8	52 8
" " 1941 ..	53 5	57 4	58 0	58 9	60 7	58 2
" " 1951 ..	164 2	169 6	177 1	160 10	179 10	170 4
" " 1953 ..	191 3	196 6	201 3	188 7	210 2	197 11
" " 1954 ..	191 2	196 6	201 8	188 11	209 11	197 11
" " 1955 .	198 7	197 6	205 6	195 1	225 1	203 4
" " 1956 ..	210 9	205 2	215 8	205 11	238 7	213 2
31st March, 1957 . .	209 10	205 1	215 1	205 9	237 5	212 9
30th June, 1957 ..	211 8	214 4	219 11	208 4	238 5	218 5
30th September, 1957 ..	212 2	214 5	220 2	209 0	239 0	218 9
31st December, 1957 ..	212 2	214 5	220 2	209 0	239 7	218 10
INDEX NUMBERS.						
(Base: Weighted Average Wage for Australia (27s. 2d.) 30th April, 1914 = 1,000.)						
31st December, 1914 ..	862	917	994	1,110	1,153	1,008
" " 1921 ..	1,609	1,789	1,766	1,787	1,841	1,790
" " 1929 ..	1,815	1,999	1,984	2,015	1,982	1,990
" " 1931 ..	1,630	1,672	1,728	1,869	1,834	1,746
" " 1939 ..	1,795	1,869	1,910	2,003	2,085	1,938
" " 1941 ..	1,967	2,110	2,134	2,163	2,229	2,141
" " 1951 ..	6,043	6,238	6,517	5,919	6,618	6,268
" " 1953 ..	7,039	7,232	7,407	6,941	7,735	7,285
" " 1954 ..	7,036	7,232	7,422	6,951	7,725	7,285
" " 1955 ..	7,308	7,268	7,563	7,180	8,285	7,483
" " 1956 ..	7,757	7,551	7,936	7,580	8,782	7,846
31st March, 1957 .. .	7,724	7,549	7,916	7,572	8,737	7,831
30th June, 1957 ..	7,789	7,889	8,095	7,669	8,774	8,039
30th September, 1957 ..	7,808	7,890	8,102	7,691	8,797	8,050
31st December, 1957 ..	7,808	7,890	8,102	7,691	8,818	8,054

(*a*) *See* note (*a*) to table on page 40. (*b*) Includes the value of board and lodging, where supplied.

4. Weekly and Hourly Rates of Wage, and Weekly Hours of Labour, 31st December, 1957.—(i) *General.* The rates of wage referred to in the preceding paragraphs are the minima payable for a full week's work (excluding overtime). The number of hours constituting a full week's work differs, however, in some

instances, between various trades and occupations in each State, and between the same trades and occupations in the several States. To secure what may be for some purposes a better comparison, the results in the preceding paragraphs are reduced to a common basis, namely, the rate of wage per hour in industrial groups in each State and in all States. In the Appendix (Sections III. and IV.), details are given of the number of hours worked per week in the various industries. The following tables include the average number of hours per week in industrial groups for each State.

The tables show (*a*) the average weekly wage rate; (*b*) the average number of working hours per week for a full week's work; and (*c*) the average hourly wage rate for adult male and female workers in each State and industrial group except Groups XI. (Shipping, etc.) and XII. (Pastoral, Agricultural, etc.). These have been excluded because of the difficulty of obtaining, for some of the occupations in these groups, definite particulars for the computation of average working hours and hourly rates of wage.

(ii) *Adult Males.*—The following table shows the average nominal weekly and hourly rates of wage payable to adult male workers and the weekly hours of labour at 31st December, 1957.

WEEKLY AND HOURLY WAGE RATES AND WEEKLY HOURS OF LABOUR(*a*): ADULT MALES, INDUSTRIAL GROUPS.

Average Rates of Wage Payable and Weekly Hours of Labour, 31st December, 1957.

(Weekly wage rates are expressed in shillings and pence; hourly wage rates in pence).

Industrial Group.	Particulars.	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	Australia. (*b*)
I. Wood, Furniture, etc.	Weekly Wage	327/4	310/3	292/8	305/2	324/3	315/8	315/0
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	98 19	93 06	87.80	91.56	97.28	94.71	94.50
II. Engineering, Metal Works; etc.	Weekly Wage	312/8	303/2	318/9	299/4	325/0	317/9	309/6
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	93.79	90.95	95.62	89.79	97 50	95.33	92.85
III. Food, Drink, etc.	Weekly Wage	317/6	319/5	288/2	313/11	316/0	325/9	312/3
	Working Hours	40.00	39.93	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	39.98
	Hourly Wage	95 24	96.00	86.46	94.19	94.79	97.73	93.73
IV. Clothing, Textiles, etc.	Weekly Wage	305/9	308/3	316/0	316/0	320/11	303/7	308/11
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	91.73	92 47	94.80	94.80	96.27	91.08	92.67
V. Books, Printing, etc.	Weekly Wage	359/10	351/2	339/10	33/89	370/11	355/10	353/4
	Working Hours	40.00	39.51	40.00	40.00	37.69	40.00	39.72
	Hourly Wage	107.96	106.66	101.95	101.62	118.11	106.75	106.73
VI. Other Manufacturing	Weekly Wage	318/5	306/5	291/5	306/0	314/6	320/1	310/6
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	95.53	91 93	87.42	91.81	94.35	96.03	93.16
VII. Building	Weekly Wage	356/6	344/6	325/5	324/3	345/11	331/0	344/7
	Working Hours	39.94	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	39.98
	Hourly Wage	107.10	103.34	97 62	97.22	103 77	99.30	103 43
VIII. Mining(c)	Weekly Wage	321/4	315/11	307/9	298/1	*d*336/2	311/5	319/4
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	38.15	40.00	39.69
	Hourly Wage	96.39	94.77	92.33	89.43	105.75	93 43	96.54
IX. Rail and Tram Services	Weekly Wage	333/3	322/5	309/3	304/6	323/1	335/10	323/2
	Working Hours	40.00	40 00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	99 97	96.73	92.78	91.34	96 93	100.74	96.95
X. Air and Other Land Transport	Weekly Wage	315/11	294/3	282/0	288/4	314/1	303/6	302/4
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	94.77	88 28	84.59	86 50	94.22	91 05	90.69
XI. Shipping, etc.(e)(*f*)	Weekly Wage	334/4	336/3	333/5	334/1	334/10	335/8	334/7
XII. Pastoral, Agricultural,etc.(*f*)	Weekly Wage	380/8	343/6	326/5	336/8	348/10	361/8	354/8

For footnotes *see* next page.

WEEKLY AND HOURLY WAGE RATES AND WEEKLY HOURS OF LABOUR(a): ADULT MALES, INDUSTRIAL GROUPS—*continued.*

Average Rates of Wage Payable and Weekly Hours of Labour, 31st December, 1957—continued.

Industrial Group.	Particulars.	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	Australia. (b)
XIII. Domestic, Hotels, etc.	Weekly Wage	302/3	296/2	266/9	275/11	293/7	288/6	292/9
	Working Hours	40 00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	90 68	88 86	80 02	82.77	88.07	86 56	87.83
XIV. Miscellaneous	Weekly Wage	312/9	304/4	281/0	285/8	306/0	300/1	302/9
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	93.82	91.30	84.31	85.70	91 79	90 04	90.83
All Groups(b)	Weekly Wage	333/2	318/2	304/0	309/2	326/6	326/11	322/2
All Groups except XI. and XII.(b)	Weekly Wage	321/0	312/3	296/0	299/3	321/5	311/11	313/1
	Working Hours	39.99	39.98	40 00	40.00	39.51	40.00	39.95
	Hourly Wage	96.33	93.72	88.79	89 77	97.62	93.59	94.03

(a) *See* note (a) to table on page 40. (b) Weighted average. (c) Average rates of wage and hours prevailing at the principal mining centres in each State. (d) Excludes district allowances in the gold-mining industry. (e) Average rates of wage are for occupations other than Masters, Officers and Engineers in the Merchant Marine Service, and include the value of keep, where supplied. (f) Definite particulars for the computation of average working hours and hourly rates of wages are not available.

(iii) *Adult Females.*—The following table shows the average nominal weekly and hourly rates of wage payable to adult female workers and the weekly hours of labour at 31st December, 1957.

WEEKLY AND HOURLY WAGE RATES AND WEEKLY HOURS OF LABOUR(a): ADULT FEMALES, INDUSTRIAL GROUPS.

Average Rates of Wage Payable and Weekly Hours of Labour, 31st December, 1957.

(Weekly wage rates are expressed in shillings and pence; hourly wage rates in pence).

Industrial Group.	Particulars.	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	Australia. (b)
III. Food, Drink, etc.	Weekly Wage	214/10	214/3	190/4	214/11	188/10	214/8	212/2
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40 00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	64 45	64.28	57 10	64.48	56 65	64.39	63 64
IV. Clothing, Textiles, etc.	Weekly Wage	212/7	213/6	217/11	218/6	219/4	216/6	214/5
	Working Hours	40 00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40 00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	63.77	64 05	65 37	65.56	65 81	64.95	64.31
I., II., V., & VI. All Other Manufacturing	Weekly Wage	226/11	216/8	205/6	223/2		215/6	220/2
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	68 08	65 01	61 65	66 95	..	64 65	66.04
XIII. Domestic, Hotels, etc.	Weekly Wage	211/6	219/10	186/4	211/10	203/4	212/10	209/0
	Working Hours	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40 00	40.00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	63.45	65.96	55.90	63 54	61 00	63.85	62.69
XIV. Shop Assistant, Clerks, etc.	Weekly Wage	239/9	253/6	216/0	220/3	..		239/7
	Working Hours	40.00	40 00	40.00	40.00	..		40.00
	Hourly Wage	71 93	76 05	64 80	66 08			71 88
All Groups(b)	Weekly Wage	220/1	222/2	207/11	217/11	210/11	215/4	218/10
	Working Hours	40 00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40 00	40 00	40.00
	Hourly Wage	66.03	66 64	62.37	65 38	63 29	64.61	65.65

(a) *See* note (a) to table on page 40. (b) Weighted average.

5. **Hourly Wage Rates.**—(i) *Adult Males.* The following table shows the weighted average nominal hourly rates of wage payable to adult male workers in each State and Australia at the dates specified. Index numbers are also given for each State with the average for Australia at 30th April, 1914 as base (= 1,000).

HOURLY WAGE RATES(*a*): ADULT MALES, "ALL GROUPS".

Weighted Average Nominal Hourly Rates Payable and Index Numbers of Hourly Rates.

At 31st December—	New South Wales.	Victoria.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	Australia.
RATES OF WAGE.							
(Pence.)							
1914	14.00	13.75	13.75	13.75	16.25	13.00	14.00
1921	25.25	24 25	26.00	22.75	25.00	23 50	24.75
1929	28.07	26.46	27.93	25.24	26.85	24.44	27.08
1931	26.15	21.31	24.42	19.30	22.58	20.66	23.40
1939	27.41	25.60	27.62	23.62	27.94	23.97	26.55
1941	29.85	28.91	29.21	27.31	31.27	27.05	29.29
1951	74.24	71.78	66.39	69.08	74.26	70.90	71.94
1952	83.55	80.76	76.28	79.53	84.68	80.72	81.43
1953	85.55	83.19	78.16	80.78	87.09	84.34	83.57
1954	86.20	83.97	80.35	82.19	87.42	85.32	84.51
1955	90.22	87.73	82.51	83.22	91.48	86.65	87.87
1956	95.89	91.97	87.99	86.28	95.14	91.19	92.68
1957	96.33	93.72	88.79	89.77	97.62	93.59	94.03
INDEX NUMBERS.							
(*Base: Weighted Average for Australia* (13.96*d.*), 30*th April*, 1914 = 1,000.)							
1914	1,010	990	985	993	1,173	936	1,009
1921	1,817	1,741	1,865	1,637	1,796	1,675	1,779
1929	2,011	1,895	2,001	1,808	1,923	1,751	1,940
1931	1,873	1,527	1,749	1,383	1,617	1,480	1,676
1939	1,963	1,834	1,979	1,692	2,001	1,717	1,903
1941	2,138	2,071	2,092	1,956	2,240	1,938	2,098
1951	5,318	5,142	4,756	4,948	5,319	5,079	5,153
1952	5,985	5,785	5,464	5,697	6,066	5,782	5,833
1953	6,128	5,959	5,599	5,787	6,239	6,042	5,986
1954	6,175	6,015	5,756	5,888	6,262	6,112	6,054
1955	6,463	6,284	5,910	5,961	6,553	6,207	6,294
1956	6,869	6,588	6,303	6,181	6,815	6,532	6,639
1957	6,900	6,713	6,360	6,431	6,993	6,704	6,736

(*a*) Weighted average hourly rates of wage for all industrial groups except Groups XI. (Shipping, etc.) and XII. (Pastoral, Agricultural, etc.), for which definite particulars for the computation of hourly wage rates are not available. *See also* note (*a*) to table on page 40.

(ii) *Adult Females.*—The following table shows the weighted average nominal hourly rates of wage payable to adult female workers in each State and Australia at the dates specified. Index numbers are also given for each State with the average for Australia at 30th April, 1914 as base (= 1,000).

HOURLY WAGE RATES(*a*): ADULT FEMALES, "ALL GROUPS".

Weighted Average Nominal Hourly Rates Payable and Index Numbers of Hourly Rates.

At 31st December—	New South Wales.	Victoria.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	Australia.
RATES OF WAGE.							
(Pence.)							
1914	6.50	6.75	6.50	5.75	9.00	6.00	6.75
1921	13.00	12.50	13.25	11.75	14.75	12.00	12.75
1929	14.73	14.30	14.95	13.38	15.49	14.00	14.49
1931	13.57	12.10	12.90	11.21	13.58	11.89	12.68
1939	14.56	13.99	15.05	12.96	14.72	13.49	14.24
1941	15.85	15.85	16.23	15.10	16.45	15.43	15.85
1951	51.32	51.86	48.48	51.40	48.96	50.57	51.09
1952	58.18	58.85	55.30	58.70	55.80	57.36	58.03
1953	59.52	60.25	56.57	59.84	57.11	58.90	59.38
1954	59.62	60.05	57.01	59.82	57.11	58.98	59.38
1955	61 57	62.01	57.86	59.98	58.07	59.37	61.00
1956	65.05	64.84	60.36	62.24	60.50	62.35	63.95
1957	66.03	66.64	62.37	65.38	63.29	64.61	65.65
INDEX NUMBERS.							
(*Base: Weighted Average for Australia* (6.64*d.*), 30*th April*, 1914 = 1,000.)							
1914	983	1,035	983	881	1,364	920	1,009
1921	1,965	1,878	1,989	1,770	2,215	1,794	1,923
1929	2,218	2,154	2,252	2,015	2,333	2,108	2,182
1931	2,044	1,822	1,943	1,688	2,045	1,791	1,910
1939	2,193	2,107	2,267	1,952	2,217	2,032	2,145
1941	2,387	2,387	2,444	2,274	2,477	2,324	2,387
1951	7,729	7,810	7,301	7,741	7,373	7,616	7,694
1952	8,762	8,863	8,328	8,840	8,404	8,639	8,739
1953	8,964	9,074	8,520	9,012	8,601	8,870	8,943
1954	8,979	9,044	8,586	9,009	8,601	8,883	8,943
1955	9,273	9,339	8,714	9,033	8,745	8,941	9,187
1956	9,797	9,765	9,090	9,373	9,111	9,390	9,630
1957	9,944	10,036	9,393	9,846	9,532	9,730	9,887

(*a*) *See* note (*a*) to table on page 40.

6. **Nominal Weekly Hours of Labour.**—(i) *Adult Males.*—The following table shows the weighted average nominal hours of labour (excluding overtime) in a full working week for adult male workers in each State and Australia at 31st December, 1914 to 1957. Index numbers are given for each State with the weighted average hours of labour for Australia at 30th April, 1914, as base (= 1,000).

WEEKLY HOURS OF LABOUR (EXCLUDING OVERTIME)(*a*): ADULT MALES.

Weighted Average Nominal Hours of Labour (excluding Overtime) worked during a Full Working Week and Index Numbers of Hours of Labour.

At 31st December—	New South Wales.	Victoria.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	Australia.
WEEKLY HOURS OF LABOUR.							
1914	49.35	48.66	48.64	48.59	48.18	48.62	48.87
1921 .. .	45.66	46.95	45.52	47.07	46.24	46.84	46.22
1929	44.14	46.83	43.96	46.83	45.58	47.09	45.34
1931	44.22	46.88	44.98	46.83	45.55	46.76	45.51
1939	43.92	44 61	43.46	45.83	44.33	45.33	44.29
1941 . .	43 68	44.12	43 43	44.49	43.13	44.42	43.83
1946	43.50	43.82	43 18	44.07	43.15	43.38	43.57
1947	41.11	43.68	43.18	42.84	43.15	43.27	42.51
1948 .. .	40.00	39.99	40 00	40.00	39.57	40.00	39.96
1954 .. .	39.99	39.98	40 00	40.00	39.51	40.00	39.95
1955 .	39.99	39.98	40.00	40 00	39.51	40.00	39.95
1956 .. .	39.99	39.98	40.00	40.00	39.51	40.00	39.95
1957	39.99	39.98	40.00	40.00	39.51	40.00	39.95
INDEX NUMBERS.							
(Base: Weighted Average for Australia (48.93), *30th April*, 1914 = 1,000.)							
1914 .. .	1,009	994	994	993	985	994	999
1921 . ..	933	960	930	962	945	957	945
1929 . .	902	957	898	957	932	962	927
1931 ..	904	958	919	957	931	956	930
1939 . .	898	912	888	937	906	926	905
1941 .. .	893	902	888	909	881	908	896
1946 . .	889	896	882	901	882	887	890
1947 . .	840	893	882	876	882	884	869
1948 . ..	817	817	817	817	809	817	817
1954 . ..	817	817	817	817	807	817	816
1955	817	817	817	817	807	817	816
1956 . ..	817	817	817	817	807	817	816
1957 . ..	817	817	817	817	807	817	816

(*a*) Weighted average working hours per week for all industrial groups except Groups XI. (Shipping, etc.) and XII. (Pastoral, Agricultural, etc.), for which definite particulars for the computation of hourly wage rates are not available. *See also* note (*a*) to table on page 40.

(ii) *Adult Females.* The following table shows the weighted average nominal hours of labour (excluding overtime) in a full working week for adult female workers in each State and Australia at 31st December, 1914 to 1957. Index numbers are given for each State with the weighted average hours of labour for Australia at 30th April, 1914, as base (= 1,000).

WEEKLY HOURS OF LABOUR (EXCLUDING OVERTIME)(a): ADULT FEMALES.

Weighted Average Nominal Hours of Labour (excluding Overtime) worked during a Full Working Week and Index Numbers of Hours of Labour.

At 31st December—	New South Wales.	Victoria.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	Australia.
WEEKLY HOURS OF LABOUR.							
1914	49.34	48.54	49 82	49.33	49.44	50.76	49.11
1921	45.06	46.04	45.66	46.10	45.97	47.86	45.69
1929	43.93	45.40	44.01	46.03	45.57	46.07	44.79
1931	43.93	45.44	44.56	46.03	45.57	46.07	44.88
1939	43.88	44.42	44.01	45.96	45.38	45.10	44.36
1941	43.88	44 19	44.00	44.00	44.00	44.00	44.03
1946	43 88	44.19	44.00	43.99	44.00	44.00	44.03
1947	41.78	43.99	44 00	42.19	44.00	44.00	43 08
1948	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1954 .. .	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1955	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1956	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
1957	40.00	40.00	40 00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
INDEX NUMBERS. (*Base: Weighted Average for Australia* (49.08), *30th April*, 1914 = 1,000.)							
1914	1,005	989	1,015	1,005	1,007	1,034	1,001
1921	918	938	930	939	937	975	931
1929	895	925	897	938	928	939	913
1931 . ..	895	926	908	938	928	939	914
1939	894	905	897	936	925	919	904
1941	894	900	896	.896	.896	.896	.897
1946	894	900	896	.896	896	896	897
1947	851	896	896	.860	896	896	878
1948	814	814	814	814	814	814	814
1954 . ..	814	814	814	814	814	814	814
1955 . ..	814	814	814	814	814	814	814
1956	814	814	814	814	814	814	814
1957 . ..	814	814	814	814	814	814	814

(a) *See* note (a) to table on page 40.

7. **Nominal and "Real" Wage Rates.**—(i) *General.*—Index numbers of wage rates are said to be *nominal* when they represent changes in the wage rates themselves but are described as *real* when they represent changes in equivalent purchasing power, that is, the purchasing power of the corresponding wages in terms of some definite composite unit or list of items the cost of which can be ascertained at different times. The relation between *nominal* and *real* wages was discussed at some length in Labour Report No. 6, and was also referred to in Labour Report No. 11.

Prior to 1936 it was the practice of the Bureau to compute *real* wage rate index numbers by dividing the nominal wage rate index numbers by the corresponding retail price index numbers for food, groceries and rent of all houses ("A"* Series). While wage rates were generally varied on the basis of the "A" Series index numbers there was a good deal to be said for this procedure. When the Commonwealth Court abandoned the "A" Series, the merits of the "C"* Series of retail price index numbers for "deflating" nominal wage rates were strengthened. The "C" Series covers food, groceries, rent of four and five roomed houses, clothing and miscellaneous household requirements. As the computation of the "A" Series index by this Bureau was discontinued after the June quarter, 1938, *real* wage rates are measured in terms of their purchasing power over the "C" Series only. A table showing for each State and for Australia *real* wage rates to the end of 1937 measured in terms of their purchasing power over the "A" Series appeared in earlier issues of the Labour Report (*see* No. 38, page 70).

A graph showing nominal and *real* wage rate index numbers for the period 1911 to 1957 appears on page 65.

(ii) *Nominal Weekly Wage Rate Index Numbers.*—The following table shows, for the period 1911 to 1957, index numbers of the weighted average nominal weekly rates of wage payable for adult males in each State, the weighted average rate for Australia in 1911 being taken as the base (= 1,000). These results are based generally upon the rates of wage prevailing in the capital city of each State, but in certain industries, such as mining, rates are necessarily taken for places other than the capital cities. The index numbers for 1911 are based on rates current at the end of December, 1911, annual averages not being available. For 1914 and subsequent years, however, the index numbers are based on the average of the rates operative at the end of each of the four quarters.

NOMINAL WEEKLY WAGE RATE(*a*) INDEX NUMBERS: ADULT MALES.

(*Base: Weighted Average Nominal Weekly Wage(a) for Australia*, 1911 = 1,000.)

State.	1911.	1914.	1921.	1929.	1931.	1939.	1954.	1955.	1956. (*b*)	1957.
New South Wales ..	1,003	1,093	1,862	2,012	1,851	1,874	5,797	5,942	6,254	6,475
Victoria	985	1,062	1,803	1,964	1,683	1,808	5,523	5,699	6,000	6,183
Queensland	997	1,035	1,879	1,976	1,769	1,885	5,419	5,508	5,737	*b*5,909
South Australia	1,013	1,061	1,697	1,891	1,580	1,725	5,456	5,548	5,721	5,973
Western Australia ..	1,152	1,223	1,832	1,960	1,745	1,956	5,709	5,869	6,084	6,320
Tasmania	799	1,027	1,745	1,840	1,625	1,738	5,805	5,899	6,144	6,343
Australia .. .	1,000	1,081	1,826	1,972	1,752	1,846	5,632	5,773	6,049	*b*6,253

(*a*) For a full week's work (excluding overtime). (*b*) Partly estimated. *See* Group XII., p. 41.

(iii) "*Real*" *Weekly Wage Rate Index Numbers.*—In obtaining the *real* wage rate index numbers in the following table the nominal wage rate index numbers shown above have been divided by the corresponding retail price index numbers for the capital city and multiplied by 1,000.

Since the "C" Series index numbers were not compiled for periods prior to November, 1914, it has been assumed for the purpose of the following table that fluctuations between 1911 (the base of the table) and 1914 in the "C" Series would have been similar to the fluctuations observed in the "A" Series.

* For explanation of "A" Series and "C" Series *see* page 4.

"REAL" WEEKLY WAGE RATE INDEX NUMBERS(*a*): ADULT MALES.

MEASURED IN TERMS OF PURCHASING POWER OVER THE "C" SERIES LIST OF ITEMS.

(*Base: Weighted Average Real Wage(a) for Australia,* 1911 = 1,000.)

State.	1911.	1914.	1921.	1929.	1931.	1939.	1954.	1955	1956.		1957.	
									A.	B.	A.	B.
New South Wales ..	..	925	1,073	1,130	1,210	1,207	1,467	1,469	1,493	1,459	1,491	1,493
Victoria ..	..	954	1,084	1,164	1,200	1,180	1,455	1,453	1,451	1,409	1,458	1,454
Queensland ..	..	1,022	1,227	1,290	1,336	1,306	1,506	1,501	1,521	1,493	1,509	1,520
South Australia ..		914	1,034	1,099	1,137	1,147	1,444	1,421	1,432	1,398	1,459	1,461
Western Australia ..	..	1,043	1,096	1,152	1,189	1,308	1,400	1,385	1,382	1,381	1,397	1,395
Tasmania ..	..	902	984	1,108	1,120	1,153	1,454	1,447	1,412	1,390	1,416	1,421
Australia	1,000	948	1,087	1,151	1,210	1,211	1,459	1,454	1,465	1,431	1,468	1,469

(*a*) Indexes of nominal weekly wage rates for adult males divided by the "C" Series retail price index, in which for 1956 and 1957 Column A excludes, and Column B includes, the price movement of potatoes and onions.

In the above table the *real* wage rate index numbers are computed to the one base, that of Australia for 1911. As the index numbers are comparable in all respects, comparisons may be made as to the increase or decrease in the *real* wage rate index number for any State over any period of years.

In Labour Report No. 40, page 70, a table was included showing, at intervals from 1901 to 1929 and for each year from 1931 to 1951, *real* wage rate index numbers for Australia based on the "C" Series. *Real* wage rate index numbers based on the "A" Series were also shown for years prior to 1938.

8. **Productive Activity.**—The table above shows the movement in *real* wage rates, i.e., wages measured in terms of retail purchasing power. A parallel problem is the measure of productivity, i.e., the quantity of production (irrespective of prices) in relation to population or persons engaged in production. The tables formerly published in this section relating to gross value of Australian production and material production per head of population and per person engaged in material production (*see* Labour Report No. 35) have been discontinued in recent years. Alternative methods of measuring satisfactorily the productivity of the working population are being investigated.

9. **Average Weekly Wage Earnings.**—(i) *Average Weekly Total Wages Paid and Average Earnings, All Industries.*—The following figures are derived from employment and wages recorded on Pay-roll Tax returns, which cover approximately 75 per cent. of the estimated number of civilian wage and salary earners in employment, and from estimates of the unrecorded balance. The figures relate to civilian wages and salaries only, pay and allowances of members of the armed forces being excluded.

AVERAGE WEEKLY TOTAL WAGES PAID AND AVERAGE EARNINGS.

Period.	N.S.W. (a)	Vic.	Q'land.	S. Aust. (b)	W. Aust.	Tas.	Aust.
AVERAGE WEEKLY TOTAL WAGES PAID. (£'000.)							
1945–46	4,966	3,378	1,563	947	689	344	11,887
1948–49	8,133	5,540	2,503	1,644	1,120	580	19,520
1949–50	9,018	6,370	2,838	1,894	1,315	672	22,107
1950–51	11,385	7,916	3,501	2,389	1,639	817	27,647
1951–52	14,364	9,816	4,319	3,018	2,108	1,059	34,684
1952–53	15,090	10,490	4,750	3,311	2,344	1,178	37,163
1953–54	16,043	11,305	5,065	3,561	2,586	1,280	39,840
1954–55	17,357	12,221	5,398	3,839	2,731	1,365	42,911
1955–56	18,955	13,358	5,809	4,195	2,897	1,476	46,690
1956–57	20,167	14,111	6,218	4,387	2,979	1,596	49,458
1956–57—							
September Qtr. ..	19,613	13,877	6,145	4,364	3,003	1,529	48,531
December „ ..	21,038	14,627	6,584	4,497	3,011	1,610	51,367
March „ ..	19,420	13,500	5,837	4,231	2,899	1,584	47,471
June „ ..	20,595	14,441	6,304	4,456	3,005	1,660	50,461
1957–58—							
September „ ..	20,493	14,372	6,356	4,495	3,101	1,548	50,365
December „ ..	21,896	15,343	6,675	4,672	3,176	1,644	53,406
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS PER EMPLOYED MALE UNIT.(c) (£.)							
1945–46	6.57	6.59	5.95	5.89	6.04	5.67	6.37
1948–49	8.73	8.84	7.63	8.03	7.75	7.56	8.44
1949–50	9.50	9.78	8.34	8.83	8.65	8.49	9.26
1950–51	11.46	11.70	9.82	10.58	10.23	9.99	11.09
1951–52	14.24	14.20	11.93	13.13	12.80	12.59	13.65
1952–53	15.50	15.46	13.32	14.58	14.13	13.97	14.95
1953–54	16.15	16.27	14.05	15.30	15.04	14.92	15.69
1954–55	16.96	17.06	14.51	16.09	15.55	15.60	16.42
1955–56	18.16	18.22	15.34	17.10	16.37	16.66	17.51
1956–57	19.20	19.13	16.24	17.70	17.02	17.73	18.43
1956–57—							
September Qtr. ..	18.75	18.87	15.97	17.63	17.14	17.15	18.12
December „ ..	20.01	19.84	17.14	18.20	17.19	18.04	19.13
March „ ..	18.45	18.27	15.37	17.01	16.57	17.43	17.67
June „ ..	19.60	19.54	16.46	17.94	17.18	18.30	18.78
1957–58—							
September „ ..	19.51	19.48	16.54	18.16	17.80	17.37	18.77
December „ ..	20.74	20.67	17.64	18.87	18.12	18.39	19.86

(a) Includes the Australian Capital Territory. (b) Includes the Northern Territory. (c) Male units represent total male employment plus a proportion of female employment based on the approximate ratio of female to male earnings. The same ratio has been used in each State; and because the average ratio of female to male earnings may vary between States, precise comparisons between average earnings in different States cannot be made on the basis of the figures above.

NOTE.—Comparisons as to trend should be made for complete years or corresponding periods of incomplete years. Quarterly totals and averages are affected by seasonal influences. This series is subject to revision.

(ii) *Average Weekly Wage Earnings Index Numbers.*—The following table shows, for "All Industries" and for "Manufacturing", the movement in average weekly wage earnings from 1945–46 to the December Quarter, 1957. The "All Industries" index is based on Pay-roll Tax returns and other data. The index for manufacturing industries for the years 1945–46 to 1955–56 is based on the average earnings of male wage and salary earners employed in factories as disclosed by annual factory returns. Figures subsequent to June, 1956 are preliminary estimates based on Pay-roll Tax returns.

The index numbers show for "All Industries" and "Manufacturing" the movement in average earnings over a period of time. However, they do not give, at any point of time, a comparison of actual earnings in the two groups. The base of each series is the year 1945–46 = 1,000 and both series have been seasonally adjusted.

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE EARNINGS(*a*) INDEX NUMBERS: AUSTRALIA.
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED.

(*Base of each Series: Year* 1945–46 = 1,000.)

Year.	All Industries.(*b*)	Manufacturing.	Quarter.	All Industries (*b*)	Manufacturing.
1945–46	1,000	1,000	1955—Sept. Qtr. ..	2,689	2,806
1946–47	1,037	1,056	Dec. ,, ..	2,731	2,849
1947–48	1,164	1,206			
1948–49	1,322	1,365	1956—March ,, ..	2,749	2,859
1949–50	1,451	1,505	June ,, ..	2,801	2,897
1950–51	1,742	1,810	Sept. ,, ..	2,863	2,968
			Dec. ,, ..	2,903	2,996
1951–52	2,145	2,213			
1952–53	2,350	2,394	1957—March ,, ..	2,910	2,983
1953–54	2,462	2,511	June ,, ..	2,921	2,986
1954–55	2,572	2,685	Sept. ,, ..	2,975	3,016
1955–56	2,743	2,853	Dec. ,, ..	2,996	3,056
1956–57	2,899	2,984			

(*a*) Including salaries. (*b*) Average earnings per male unit employed. Male units represent total male employment plus a proportion of female employment based on the approximate ratio of female to male earnings.

§ 3. Standard Hours of Work.

1. **General.**—In the fixation of weekly wage rates most industrial tribunals prescribe the number of hours constituting a full week's work for the wage rates specified. The hours of work so prescribed form the basis of the compilation of the index numbers on pages 46–49. The first year shown is 1914, at which time the 48-hour week was recognized as a standard working week for most industries. The main features of the reduction of hours from 48 to 40 per week are summarized below. In considering such changes it must be remembered that even within individual States the authority to alter conditions of labour is divided between Commonwealth and State industrial tribunals and the various legislatures, and that the State legislation does not apply to employees covered by awards of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

2. **The 44-hour Week.**—No permanent reduction to a 44-hour week was effected until 1925, although temporary reductions had been achieved earlier. In 1920 the New South Wales legislature granted a 44-hour week to most industries, but in the following year this provision was withdrawn. Also in 1920 the President of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration (Higgins *J.*), after inquiry, granted a 44-hour week to the Timber Workers' Union, and in the following year extended the same privilege to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. In 1921, however, a reconstituted Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration unanimously rejected applications by five trade unions for the shorter standard week and reintroduced the 48-hour week in the case of the above-mentioned two unions then working 44 hours. During 1924 the Queensland Parliament passed legislation to operate from 1st July, 1925, granting the 44-hour standard week to employees whose conditions of work were regulated by awards and agreements of the Queensland State industrial authority. Similar legislative action in New South Wales led to the re-introduction of the 44-hour week in that State as from 4th January, 1926.

In 1927 after an exhaustive inquiry the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration granted a 44-hour week to the Amalgamated Engineering Union and intimated that this reduction in standard hours of work would be extended to industries operating under conditions similar to those in the engineering industry. Applications for the shorter hours by other unions were, however, treated individually, the nature of the industry, the problem of production, the financial status and the amount of foreign competition being fully investigated. The economic depression delayed the extension of the standard 44-hour week until the subsequent improvement in economic conditions made possible its general extension to employees under Commonwealth awards.

In States other than New South Wales and Queensland no legislation was passed to reduce the standard hours of work so that, for employees not covered by Commonwealth awards, the change had to be effected by decisions of the appropriate industrial tribunals. In these cases the date on which the reduction to 44 hours was implemented depended on the decision of the tribunals in particular industries, employees in some industries receiving the benefit of the reduced hours years ahead of those in others. In these States the change to the shorter week extended over the years from 1926 to 1941.

3. **The 40-hour Week.**—(i) *Standard Hours Inquiry*, 1947.—Soon after the end of the 1939–45 War, applications were made to the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration for the introduction of a 40-hour week, and the hearing by the Court commenced in October, 1945. Before the Court gave its decision the New South Wales Parliament passed legislation granting a 40-hour week, operative from 1st July, 1947, to industries and trades regulated by State awards and agreements, and in Queensland similar legislation was introduced in Parliament providing for the 40-hour week to operate from 1st January, 1948.

The Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in its judgment on 8th September, 1947, granted the reduction to the 40-hour week from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in January, 1948. The Queensland Act was passed, and was proclaimed on 10th October, 1947. On 27th October, 1947, the South Australian Industrial Court, after hearing applications by unions, approved the incorporation of the 40-hour standard week in awards of that State. The Court of Arbitration of Western Australia on 6th November, 1947, approved that, on application, provision for a 40-hour week could be incorporated in awards of the Court, commencing from 1st January, 1948.

In Victoria and Tasmania the Wages Boards met and also incorporated the shorter working week in their determinations, so that from the beginning of 1948 practically all employees in Australia whose conditions of labour were regulated by industrial authorities had the advantages of a standard working week of 40 hours or, in certain cases, less.

(ii) *Basic Wage and Standard Hours Inquiry*, 1952–53.—In the 1952–53 Basic Wage and Standard Hours Inquiry the employers sought an increase in the standard hours of work per week, claiming that "one of the chief causes of the high costs and inflation has been the loss of production due to the introduction of the 40-hour week ".* This claim was rejected by the Court as it considered that the employers had not proved that the existing economic situation called for a reduction of general standards in the matter of the ordinary working week. (*See also* page 61.)

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 77, p. 505.

§ 4. Basic Wages in Australia.

1. **The Basic Wage.**—The concept of a "basic" or "living" wage is common to rates of wage determined by industrial authorities in Australia. Initially the concept was interpreted as the "minimum" or "basic" wage necessary to maintain an average employee and his family in a reasonable state of comfort. However, it is now generally accepted "that the dominant factor in fixing the basic wage . . . is the economic or productivity factor and that the basic wage must be the highest that industry as a whole can pay."*

Under the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act, the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission (prior to June, 1956 the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration) may, for the purpose of preventing or settling an industrial dispute extending beyond the limits of any State, make an order or award altering the basic wage (that is to say, that wage, or that part of a wage, which is just and reasonable, without regard to any circumstance pertaining to the work upon which, or the industry in which, the person is employed) or the principles upon which it is computed.

In practice, the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission holds general basic wage inquiries from time to time and its findings apply to industrial awards within its jurisdiction. Prior to the decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, announced on 12th September, 1953, discontinuing the automatic adjustment of basic wages in Commonwealth awards in accordance with variations occurring in retail price index numbers, the relevant basic wage of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration was adopted to a considerable extent by the State Industrial Tribunals. In New South Wales and South Australia the State industrial authorities adopted the relevant Commonwealth basic wage. In Victoria and Tasmania, where the Wages Boards systems operate, no provision was included in the industrial Acts for the declaration of a basic wage, although Wages Boards have in the past generally adopted basic wages based on those of the Commonwealth Court. In Queensland and Western Australia the determination of a basic wage is a function of the respective State Industrial or Arbitration Courts and, subject to State law, they have had regard to rates determined by the Commonwealth Court. Following the decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration to discontinue automatic quarterly adjustments to the basic wage, the various State industrial authorities determined State basic wages in accordance with the provisions of their respective State industrial legislation. Details of the action taken in each State and subsequent variations in State basic wages are set out in para. 5 (*see* pages 84-97).

In addition to the basic wage, "secondary" wage payments, including margins for skill, loadings and other special considerations peculiar to the occupations or industry, are determined by these authorities. The basic wage and the "secondary" wage, where prescribed, make up the "minimum" wage for a particular occupation. The term minimum wage (as distinct from the basic wage) is used currently to express the lowest rate payable for a particular occupation or industry.

In §1 of this chapter (pages 30–38) particulars are given of the current Commonwealth and State industrial Acts and the industrial authorities established by these Acts. The powers of these authorities include the determination and variation of basic wage rates.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 44, p. 57.

2. **The Commonwealth Basic Wage.**—(i) *Early Judgments.*—The principle of a living or basic wage was propounded as far back as 1890 by Sir Samuel Griffith, Premier of Queensland, but it was not until the year 1907 that a wage, as such, was declared by a Court in Australia. The declaration was made by way of an order in terms of section 2 (*d*) of the Excise Tariff 1906 in the matter of an application by H. V. McKay that the remuneration of labour employed by him at the Sunshine Harvester Works, Victoria, was " fair and reasonable ".

The Commonwealth Parliament had by the Act imposed certain excise duties on agricultural implements, but provided that the Act should not apply to goods manufactured in Australia " under conditions as to the remuneration of labour which are declared by the President of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration to be fair and reasonable ". Mr. Justice Higgins, President of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, discussed at length the meaning of " fair and reasonable ", and defined the standard of a " fair and reasonable " minimum wage for unskilled labourers as that appropriate to " the normal needs of the average employee, regarded as a human being living in a civilized community ".* The rate declared by the President in his judgment (known as the " Harvester Judgment ") was 7s. a day or £2 2s. a week for Melbourne, the amount considered reasonable for " a family of about five ".† According to a rough allocation by the Judge, the constituent parts of this amount were £1 5s. 5d. for food, 7s. for rent, and 9s. 7d. for all other expenditure.

The " Harvester " standard was adopted by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration for incorporation in its awards, and practically the same rates continued until the year 1913, when the Court took cognizance of the retail price index numbers, covering food and groceries and rent of all houses (" A " Series) for the 30 more important towns of Australia, which had been published by the Commonwealth Statistician for the first time in the preceding year. The basic wage rates for towns were thereafter varied in accordance with the respective retail price index numbers. Court practice was to equate the retail price index number 875 for Melbourne for the year 1907 to the " Harvester " rate of 42s. a week (or the base of the index (1,000) to 48s. a week). At intervals thereafter, as awards came before it for review, the Court usually revised the basic wage rate of the award in proportion to variations in the retail price index. In some country towns certain " loadings " were added by the Court to wage rates so derived to offset the effect of lower housing standards, and consequently lower rents, on the index number for these towns.

During the period of its operation, the adequacy or otherwise of the " Harvester " standard was the subject of much discussion, the author of the judgment himself urging on several occasions the need for its review. During the period of rapidly rising prices towards the end of the 1914–18 War, strong criticism developed that this system did not adequately maintain the " Harvester " equivalents. A Royal Commission was appointed in 1919 to inquire as to what it would actually cost a man, wife and three children under fourteen years of age to live in a reasonable standard of comfort, and as to how the basic wage might be automatically adjusted to maintain purchasing power. The Commission's Reports were presented in November, 1920 and

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol 2, p. 3. † The average number of dependent children per family was apparently regarded by the Court as about three, although statistical information available at the time did not permit of exact figures being ascertained. For particulars of available information which may have been considered by the Court, see Labour Report No. 41, footnote on page 73.

April, 1921.* An application by the unions to have the amounts arrived at by the inquiry declared as basic wage rates was not accepted by the Court because they were considerably in advance of existing rates and grave doubts were expressed by members of the Court as to the ability of industry to pay such rates.

The system of making automatic quarterly adjustments to the basic wage in direct ratio to variations in the retail price index ("A" Series) was first introduced in 1921. The practice then adopted was to calculate the adjustments to the basic wage quarterly on the index number for the preceding quarter. Previously adjustments had been made sporadically in relation to retail price indexes for the previous calendar year or the year ended with the preceding quarter. The practice adopted by the Commonwealth Court in 1921 of making automatic quarterly adjustments continued until the Court's judgment of 12th September, 1953.†

In 1922 an amount known as the "Powers' 3s." was added by the Court‡ as a general "loading" to the weekly basic wage, for the purpose of maintaining, during a period of rising prices, the full equivalent of the "Harvester" standard. This loading continued until 1934.

(ii) *Basic Wage Inquiries, 1930–31, 1932, 1933.*—No change was made in the method of fixation and adjustment of the basic wage until the onset of the depression, which began to be felt severely during 1930. Applications were then made to the Court for some greater measure of reduction of wages than that which resulted from the automatic adjustments due to falling retail prices. The Court held a general inquiry, and, while declining to make any change in the existing method of calculating the basic wage, reduced all wage rates under its jurisdiction by 10 per cent. from 1st February, 1931.§ In June, 1932, the Court refused applications by employee organizations for the cancellation of the 10 per cent. reduction of wage rates.‖ In May, 1933, the Court again refused to cancel the 10 per cent. reduction in wage rates, but decided that the existing method of adjustment of the basic wage in accordance with the "A" Series retail price index number had resulted in some instances in a reduction of more than 10 per cent. In order to rectify this the Court adopted the "D" Series of retail price index numbers for future quarterly adjustments of the basic wage.¶

(iii) *Basic Wage Inquiry, 1934.*—The "Harvester" standard, adjusted to retail price variations, continued to be the theoretical basis of the basic wage of the Commonwealth Court until the Court's judgment, delivered on 17th April, 1934,** declared new basic wage rates to operate from 1st May, 1934. The new rates were declared on the basis of the respective "C" Series retail price index numbers for the various cities for the December quarter, 1933, and ranged from 61s. for Brisbane to 67s. for Sydney and Hobart, the average wage for the six capital cities being 65s.

The 10 per cent. special reduction in wages referred to above ceased to operate upon the introduction of the new rates, and the automatic quarterly adjustment of the basic wage in accordance with variations in retail price index numbers was transferred from the "A" and the "D" Series to the "C" Series Retail Price Index.†† The base of the index (1,000) was taken by the Court as equal to 81s. a week. The new basic wage for the six capital cities

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* *See* Labour Report No. 41, 1952, pp. 102 and 103 for a summary of the Commission's findings. † *See* p. 62. ‡ *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 16, p. 32. § 30 *C.A.R.*, p. 2. ‖ 31 *C.A.R.*, p. 305. ¶ 32 *C.A.R.*, p. 90. For further particulars *see* Labour Report No. 22, pp. 45–8 and Labour Report No. 23, pp. 45–62. ** 33 *C.A.R.*, p. 144. †† For explanation of the "A", "C" and "D" Series *see* page 41 of this Report.

was the same as that previously paid under the "A" Series, without the "Powers' 3s." and without the 10 per cent. reduction. For further particulars of the judgment in this inquiry *see* Labour Report No. 26, p. 76.

(iv) *Basic Wage Inquiry*, 1937.—In May and June, 1937, the Commonwealth Court heard an application by the combined unions for an increase in the basic wage. The unions asked that the equivalent of the base (1,000) of the "C" Series index be increased from 81s. to 93s., which on index numbers then current would have represented an average increase of about 10s. a week. The chief features of the judgment, delivered on 23rd June,* were:—

(*a*) Amounts were added to the basic wage not as an integral, and therefore adjustable, part of that wage, but as "loadings" additional to the rates payable under the 1934 judgment. The wage assessed on the 1934 basis was designated in the new judgment as the "needs" portion of the total resultant basic wage. These loadings, referred to as "Prosperity" loadings, were 6s. for Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane; 4s. for Adelaide, Perth and Hobart; and 5s. for the six capitals basic wage. "Prosperity" loadings for the basic wage for provincial towns in each State, for combinations of towns and combinations of capital cities, and for railway, maritime and pastoral workers were also provided for in the judgment.

(*b*) The minimum adjustment of the basic wage was fixed at 1s. a week instead of 2s.

(*c*) The basis of the adjustment of the "needs" portion of the wage in accordance with the variations shown by retail price index numbers was transferred from the "C" Series to a special "Court" Series based upon the "C" Series. (*See* page 5.)

(*d*) Female and junior rates were left for adjustment by individual judges when dealing with specific awards.

The main parts of the judgment were reprinted in Labour Report No. 28, pp. 77–87.

(v) *Judgment, December*, 1939.—The Commonwealth Court on 19th December, 1939 heard an application by trade unions for an alteration in the date of adjustment of the basic wage in accordance with the variations in the "Court" Series of index numbers. On the same day, the Court directed that such adjustments be made operative from the beginning of the first pay-period to commence in February, May, August or November, one month earlier than the then current practice.†

(vi) *Basic Wage Inquiry*, 1940.—On 5th August, 1940 the Full Court commenced the hearing of an application by the combined unions for an increase in the existing basic wage by raising the value of 1,000 (the base of the "C" Series index upon which the "Court" Series was based) from 81s. to 100s. a week, and the incorporation of the existing "Prosperity" loadings in the new rate. In its judgment of 7th February, 1941‡ the Court unanimously refused to grant any increase, and decided that the application should not be dismissed but stood over for further consideration after 30th June, 1941. The application was refused mainly because of the uncertainty of the economic outlook under existing war conditions.

Concerning the concept of a basic wage providing for the needs of a specific family unit, Chief Judge Beeby in his judgment stated:—"The Court has always conceded that the 'needs' of an average family should be kept in mind in fixing a basic wage. But it has never, as the result of its own inquiry,

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 37, p. 583. † 41 *C.A.R.*, p. 520. ‡ 44 *C.A.R.*, p. 41.

specifically declared what is an average family, or what is the cost of a regimen of food, clothing, shelter and miscellaneous items necessary to maintain it in frugal comfort, or that a basic wage should give effect to any such finding. In the end economic possibilities have always been the determining factor . . what should be sought is the independent ascertainment and prescription of the highest basic wage that can be sustained by the total of industry in all its primary, secondary and ancillary forms. . . . More than ever before wage fixation is controlled by the economic outlook."

The Chief Judge suggested that the basic wage should be graded according to family responsibilities and that, notwithstanding the increase in aggregate wages, a reapportionment of national income to those with more than one dependent child would be of advantage to the Commonwealth. The relief afforded to those who needed it would more than offset the inflationary tendency of provision for a comprehensive scheme of child endowment. If a scheme of this nature were established, future fixations of the basic wage would be greatly simplified. (The Child Endowment Act came into operation on 1st July, 1941. *See* § 6 of this chapter for the main features as at 31st December, 1957.)

(vii) " *Interim* " *Basic Wage Inquiry, 1946.*—The Court, on 25th November, 1946, commenced the hearing of this case as the result of (*a*) an application made on 30th October, 1946 (during the course of the Standard Hours Case) by the Attorney-General of the Commonwealth for the restoration to the Full Court List of certain adjourned 1940 basic wage applications (*see* (vi) above); (*b*) a number of fresh cases which had come to the Court since 1941; and (*c*) an application by the Australian Council of Trade Unions on behalf of trade unions for an " interim " basic wage declaration.

Judgment was delivered on 13th December, 1946,* whereby an increase of 7s. was granted in the adjustable portion of the basic wage then current to operate from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in the month of December, 1946, except in the case of casual and maritime workers, for whom the increases operated from 1st December.

For the purpose of automatic quarterly adjustments a new " Court " Series of index numbers was created by increasing the base index number (1923–27) from 81.0 to 87.0. The " Court " Series index number calculated on this base for the September quarter, 1946 effected an increase in the basic wage for the weighted average of the six capital cities (as a whole) from 93s. to 100s. A similar increase of 7s. was recorded in the basic wage for each capital city except Hobart, where the amount was 6s. All " loadings " on the basic wage were retained at their existing amounts unless otherwise ordered by the Court.

This new series was designated " Court Index (Second Series) " to distinguish it from the " Court Index (First Series) " which was introduced after the 1937 Basic Wage Inquiry. The new " Court " index numbers were obtained by multiplying the " C " Series retail price index numbers (Base: 1923–27 = 1,000) by the factor 0.087, and taking the result to the first decimal place.

The wage rates for adult females and juveniles were to be increased proportionately to the increase granted to adult males, the amount of the increase being determined by the provisions in each award. For further particulars of the judgment *see* Labour Report No. 38, p. 79.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 57, p. 603.

(viii) *Basic Wage Inquiry*, 1949–50.—This finalized the case begun in 1940 and continued in 1946 (*see* above). In 1946, during the hearing of the Standard Hours Inquiry and following the restoration to the Full Court List of applications for an increased basic wage, the Chief Judge ruled that the claim for an increase in the basic wage should be heard concurrently with the " 40-hour week " claims then before the Court. The unions, however, objected to this course being followed, and, on appeal to the High Court, that Court in March, 1947, gave a decision which resulted in the Arbitration Court proceeding with the " Hours " Case to its conclusion.

The Basic Wage Inquiry, 1949–50, finally opened in February, 1949, and the general hearing of the unions' claims was commenced on 17th May, 1949. Evidence was completed on 22nd August, 1950, and the three Judges (Kelly *C.J.*, Foster and Dunphy *JJ.*) delivered separate judgments on 12th October, 1950.* In those judgments, which were in the nature of general declarations, a majority of the Court (Foster and Dunphy *JJ.*) was of the opinion that the basic wage for adult males should be increased by £1 a week, and that for adult females should be 75 per cent. of the adult male rate. Kelly *C.J.*, dissenting, considered that no increase in either the male or the female wage was justified.

On 24th October, 1950 and 23rd November, 1950 the Court made further declarations regarding the " Prosperity " loading of 1937 (*see* page 58), which was being paid at rates between 3s. and 6s. a week according to localities, etc., and the future basis of quarterly adjustments. The " Prosperity " loading was standardized at a uniform rate of 5s. a week for all localities and was declared to be an adjustable part of the basic wage. The Court also declared that the " War " loadings were not part of the basic wage.

With regard to other " loadings " the Court, on 17th November, 1950, proceeded to examine the individual awards in the claims before it, for the purpose of determining to what extent such " loadings " formed part of the basic wage. Any " loading " declared to be part of the basic wage ceased to be paid as a separate entity, but apart from the special case of the Australian Capital Territory there were very few " loadings " which fell within this category.

The new rates operated from the beginning of the first pay-period in December, 1950, in all cases being the rate based on the Court Index (2nd Series) for the September quarter, 1950 plus a flat-rate addition of £1, together with the standardized " Prosperity " loading of 5s.

The basic wage rate for the six capital cities (weighted average) arrived at by the Court after applying the foregoing declarations was £8 2s., comprising £6 17s. Court (2nd Series) plus 5s. uniform " Prosperity " loading plus the £1 addition. The declaration provided that the whole of this basic wage would be subject to automatic quarterly adjustments as from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in February, 1951, on the basis of the index numbers for the December quarter, 1950. For this purpose the new rate of £8 2s. was equated to the " C " Series retail price index number 1572 for the six capital cities (weighted average) for the September quarter, 1950. From this equation was derived a new " Court " Index (Third Series) with 103.0 equated to 1,000 in the " C " Series Index.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 68, p. 698.

The basic wage rates operative in November, 1950, in comparison with those operative from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in December, 1950, are shown below:—

Date of Operation.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
November, 1950 ..	146 0	143 0	135 0	137 0	139 0	139 0	142 0
December, 1950 ..	165 0	162 0	154 0	158 0	160 0	160 0	162 0

(ix) *Basic Wage and Standard Hours Inquiry, 1952–53.*—On 5th August, 1952, the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration began hearing claims by:—

1. The Metal Trades Employers' Association and other employers' organizations—
   - (*a*) that the basic wage for adult males be reduced;
   - (*b*) that the basic wage for adult females be reduced;
   - (*c*) that the standard hours of work be increased;
   - (*d*) that the system of adjusting the basic wages in accordance with variations occurring in retail price index numbers be abandoned.
2. The Metal Trades Federation, an association of employees' organizations, that the basic wage for adult males be increased, which would also have resulted in increasing the amount, though not the proportion it bore to the basic wage for adult males, of the basic wage for adult females.

A number of Governments, organizations and other bodies obtained leave to intervene and in this role the Australian Council of Trade Unions supported the claims of the Metal Trades Federation.

The Court consisted of Kelly *C.J.*, Foster, Kirby, Dunphy, Wright, McIntyre and Morgan *JJ.*, but before the hearing of evidence commenced Wright *J.* withdrew and during the hearing of the case Foster *J.* withdrew from the bench. The Court gave its decision on 12th September, 1953, and stated that reasons for its decision would be delivered later. Before the reasons for the judgment could be delivered McIntyre *J.* died.

In the early stages of the case the employers applied for an immediate and separate hearing on the question of suspension of the basic wage adjustment provisions in awards. However, after hearing argument, the Court indicated that it was not satisfied that a sufficient case had been made out for such a separate hearing.

Evidence in the employers' case began on 16th September, 1952. On completion of the employers' case the counsel for employee organizations submitted that there was "no case to answer" and asked for the dismissal of the case. The Court rejected this claim and the hearing of evidence for the employee organizations was concluded on 11th September, 1953.

The decision of the Court, announced on 12th September, 1953, was expressed in the following terms:—

"1. The employers' applications for reduction of the current basic wages for adult males and for reduction of the current basic wages for adult females are refused.

2. The employers' applications for an increase of the standard hours of work in the industries covered thereby are refused.

3. The employers' applications for omission or deletion of clauses or sub-clauses providing for the adjustment of basic wages are granted.

4. The Unions' applications for increases of basic wages are refused.

The Court makes orders accordingly, to operate as from today.

The reasons for the above decision will be delivered at a later date.

The form of the appropriate orders will be settled by the Industrial Registrar."

The reasons for the above decision were delivered on 27th October, 1953.

The Court in the course of its judgment said that in the present case nothing had been put before it in support of a departure from its now well-established principle that the basic wage should be the highest that the capacity of the community as a whole could sustain. If the Court is at any time asked to fix a basic wage on a true needs basis, the question of whether such a method is correct in principle and all questions as to the size of the family unit remain open.

No evidence was submitted in the inquiry to suggest that the basic wage in its character of a "foundational wage" of providing, or helping to provide, a just and reasonable standard of living to employees whose income is based or dependent upon it, was inadequate, and the arguments of both the employers and employees were directed towards a basic wage based on the capacity of industry to pay.

The Court, in reviewing the claims of the respondents, in the light of the existing economic situation, indicated that although aware of the difficulties besetting industry and of the dependence of Australia's prosperity upon that large part of her productive effort whose rewards are conditioned by good seasons and whose prices are largely beyond her control, the Court was satisfied that the employers had not discharged the onus of proving that the existing situation called for a reduction of general standards either in the matter of the basic wage or in the matter of the ordinary working week. On the other hand, the Court was satisfied that there could be, in the existing situation, no increase in the basic wage, as was claimed by the Metal Trades Federation.

The Court decided to discontinue the system of automatic adjustment of the basic wage in accordance with variations in retail price index numbers while the basic wage was assessed on the capacity of industry. It was considered that "the further the Court has withdrawn from relating the basic wage to the fulfilment of any particular standard of needs, the less has become the justification for keeping the nominal wage 'automatically adjusted' during

the currency of an award ".* Moreover, there was no ground for assuming that the capacity of industry to pay will be maintained at the same level or that it will rise or fall coincidentally with the purchasing power of money. The Court found that the system of automatic adjustments had undoubtedly been an accelerating factor in the rapid increase in prices in Australia, particularly in the years 1951 and 1952, and this factor supported its decision to discontinue the system.

In regard to the basic wage for female employees, the Court decided that no basis existed, on the material presented to it, for a review of the existing ratio of the female to the male basic wage, the Court being satisfied that industry had the capacity to maintain the existing female basic wage rates.

In rejecting the claim for an increase in the standard hours of work, the Court considered that the industry of the country was healthy and prosperous enough at present to sustain the existing standard (i.e., 40 hours a week).

The Court intimated that time would be saved in future inquiries if the parties to the disputes, in discussing the principle of the " capacity to pay ", directed their attention to the broader aspects of the economy, such as indicated by a study of employment, investment, production and productivity, oversea trade, oversea balances, the competitive position of secondary industry and retail trade.

In order to remove certain misconceptions about the function of the Court, it was stated during the course of the judgment that " the Arbitration Court is neither a social nor an economic legislature. Its function under section 25 of the Act is to prevent or settle specific industrial disputes ".† However, this function must be exercised in the social and economic setting of the time at which it makes its decision. It must settle industrial disputes upon terms which seem to it to be just, having regard to conditions which exist at the time of its decision. In addition, the Court stressed that " the primary rule that a claimant is required to substantiate his claim should always be observed."‡

In accordance with its decision to abolish the automatic adjustment clause from its awards, the Court began, on 21st October, 1953, to deal with awards which were not actually affected by the original order. During this process the Court announced that it had no other method in mind in substitution of the automatic adjustment clauses. In fact the only issue before the Court was the abolition or retention of the adjustment principle and that issue had been determined. The basic wage as fixed by the Court in the new or amended clauses in awards was that operating from August, 1953, and no provision was made for its automatic quarterly adjustment.

The last such adjustment had been made on the " Court " Series retail price index numbers for the June quarter, 1953.

After the Court had amended all the awards listed before it as a result of applications by one of the parties to the awards, the Court, on its own motion under section 49 of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act, listed those awards not the subject of an application by one of the parties and then proceeded to delete the clauses providing for the automatic adjustment of the basic wage.

The power of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration to vary awards not the subject of an application by one of the parties was unsuccessfully challenged in the High Court of Australia.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 77, p. 497. † Ibid., p. 506. ‡ Ibid., p. 507.

(x) *Basic Wage Inquiry, 1956.*—On 14th February, 1956 the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, consisting of Kirby, Dunphy, Wright and Morgan *JJ.*, commenced hearing an application by the Amalgamated Engineering Union and others made by summons for alteration of the basic wage prescribed in the Metal Trades Award in the following respects:—namely, for an increase in the basic wage to the amount it would have reached if automatic quarterly adjustments deleted by the Court in September, 1953 had remained in force; an increase of a further £1 in the basic wage; the re-introduction of automatic quarterly adjustments; and the abolition of what is known as the 3s. country differential. This application was regarded as a general application for variation of the basic wage in all awards of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration.

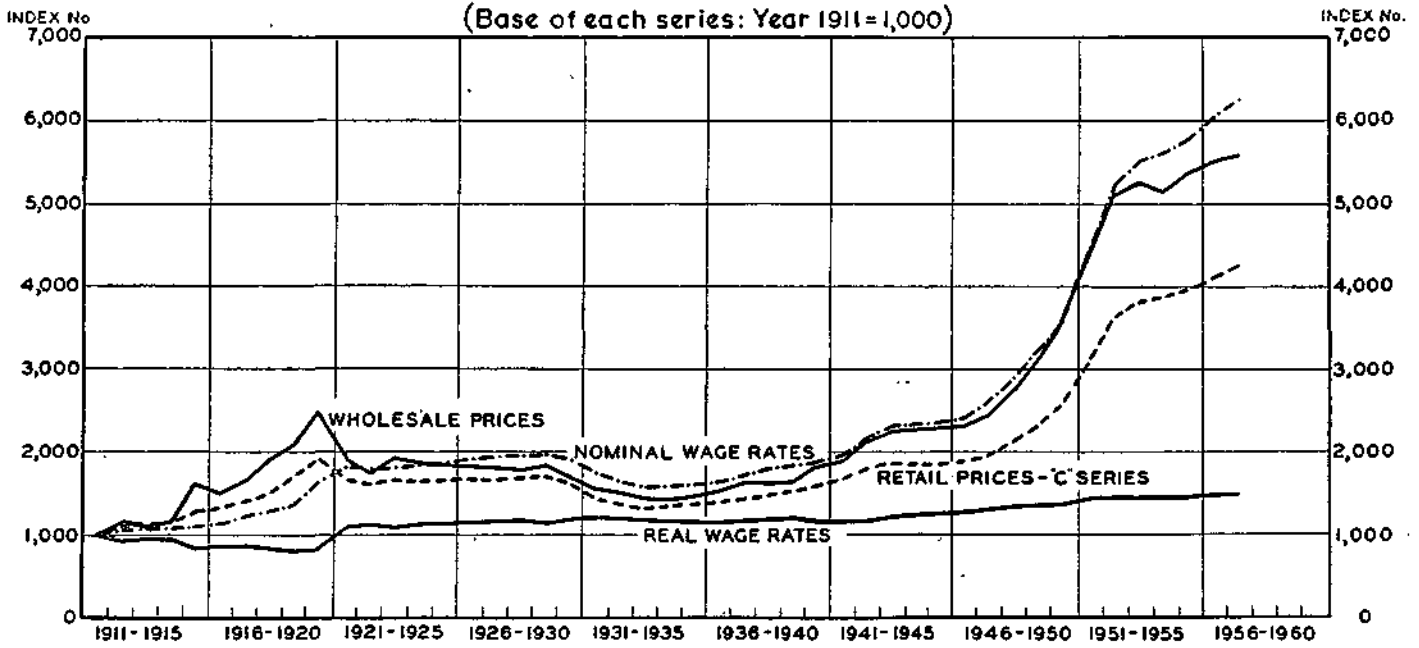
All the claims made by the unions were opposed by the respondent employers. The Attorney-General of the Commonwealth intervened in the public interest under section 26 (1.) of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and in the course of proceedings all six States were represented by counsel or a State official.

Counsel for the Commonwealth stressed that the Commonwealth appeared not as a party but in the public interest and supplied much factual and statistical material in a review of the economy from 1953. He submitted that the Australian economy " is to all appearances a prosperous economy," with two inherent weaknesses " in the state of our overseas trade and reserves " and " the rising tendency of costs and prices ". The Commonwealth made no submission as to the amount of the basic wage; however, it submitted that the Court had been correct in its decision of 1953 to abolish the system of automatic quarterly adjustments and that its grounds for doing so were valid

The States of New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania supported the union claims for the re-establishment of the system of automatic adjustments and the raising of the basic wage to the levels indicated by current " C " Series index numbers, but made no submission at all regarding the union claims for a further increase of £1 a week for adult males. The State of South Australia opposed the re-introduction of automatic adjustments, but conceded that " in making a review of the basic wage a substantial factor to be taken into account is the changed cost of living.". However, as regards the union claim for an increase in the basic wage to the amount it would have reached if automatic quarterly adjustments deleted by the Court in September, 1953 had remained in force, together with a £1 increase in the basic wage, amounting in total to 35s. a week at that time, the State submitted without elaboration " that there are grave doubts as to whether the increased basic wage to the extent asked by the applicant could be granted without serious damage to the economy ". The State of Victoria neither supported nor opposed the union claims, either as an employer or as representing all interests in the community, but supplied to the Court comprehensive statements relating to activities of the State Departments and instrumentalities and estimates of the amounts and effects of the claims before the Court.

In delivering its judgment on 26th May, 1956, the Court rejected each claim made by the unions but decided to increase the adult male basic wage by 10s. a week, payable from the beginning of the first pay-period in June. As a result of this decision, the basic wage for adult females was increased by 7s. 6d. a week with proportionate increase for juniors of both sexes and for apprentices. The Court in its decision to increase the Commonwealth basic wage stated " it may be taken that the increase would have been more if the burden on the economy of the increases in the State basic wages had not been imposed ".

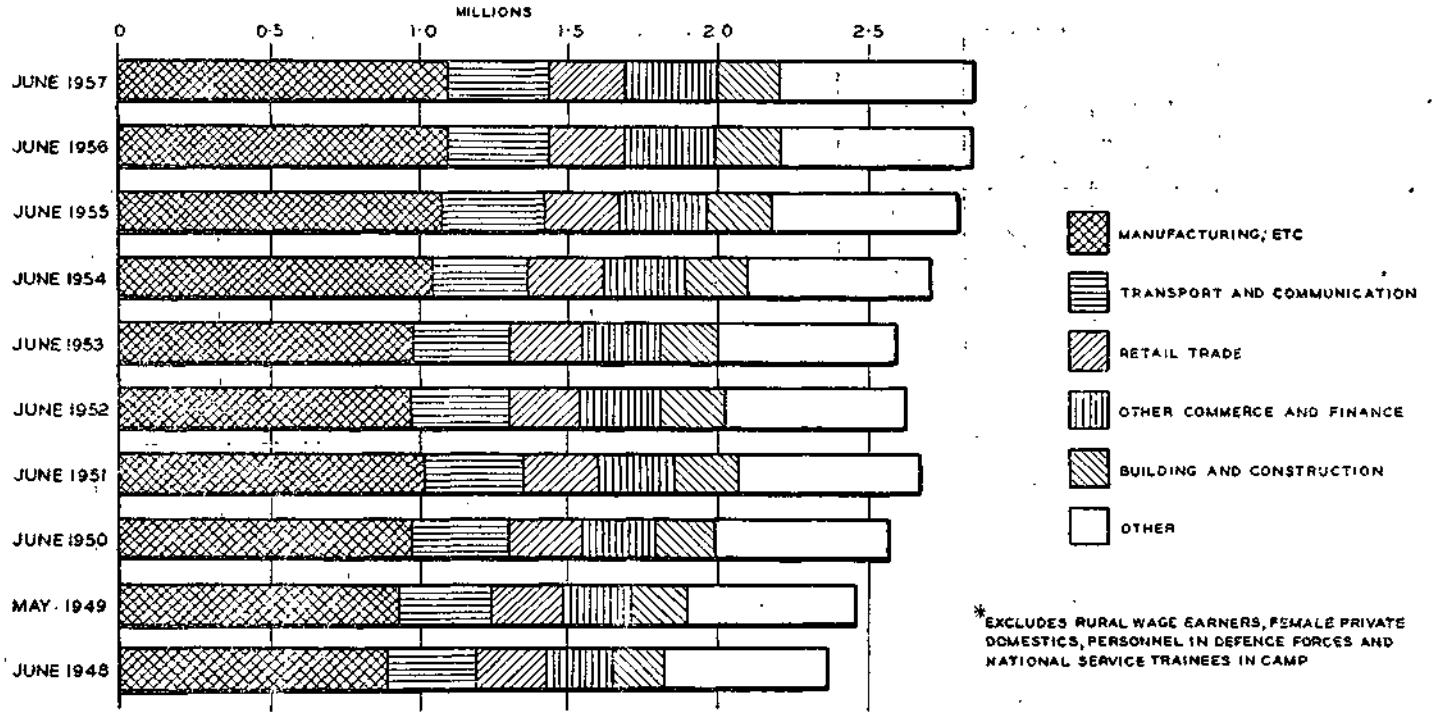
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL PRICES; NOMINAL AND REAL WAGE RATES
INDEX NUMBERS, AUSTRALIA, 1911 TO 1957
(Base of each series: Year 1911 = 1,000)



NOTE.—Index numbers in this graph are for the six capital cities as a whole, except for those for wholesale prices up to December quarter, 1927, which are for Melbourne. The wholesale prices graph shows the trend of prices according to the "old" Melbourne Index up to December quarter, 1927, but thereafter, this index having been "spliced" with the Basic Materials and Foodstuffs Index, the curve moves in accordance with the variations of the latter. The price quotations for this index are, in the main, obtained from Melbourne sources, but their movements may be taken as representative of fluctuations in most Australian markets. For the period 1911–1914 the "C" Series index numbers are taken back from the true base (November, 1914 = 1,000) by means of the "A" Series Index (Food and Rent of All Houses). From September quarter, 1955 these "C" Series index numbers exclude the price movement of potatoes and onions. *See* para. 6, p. 15. Real wage rates are computed on the basis of the "C" Series Retail Price Index.

WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS IN CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT*

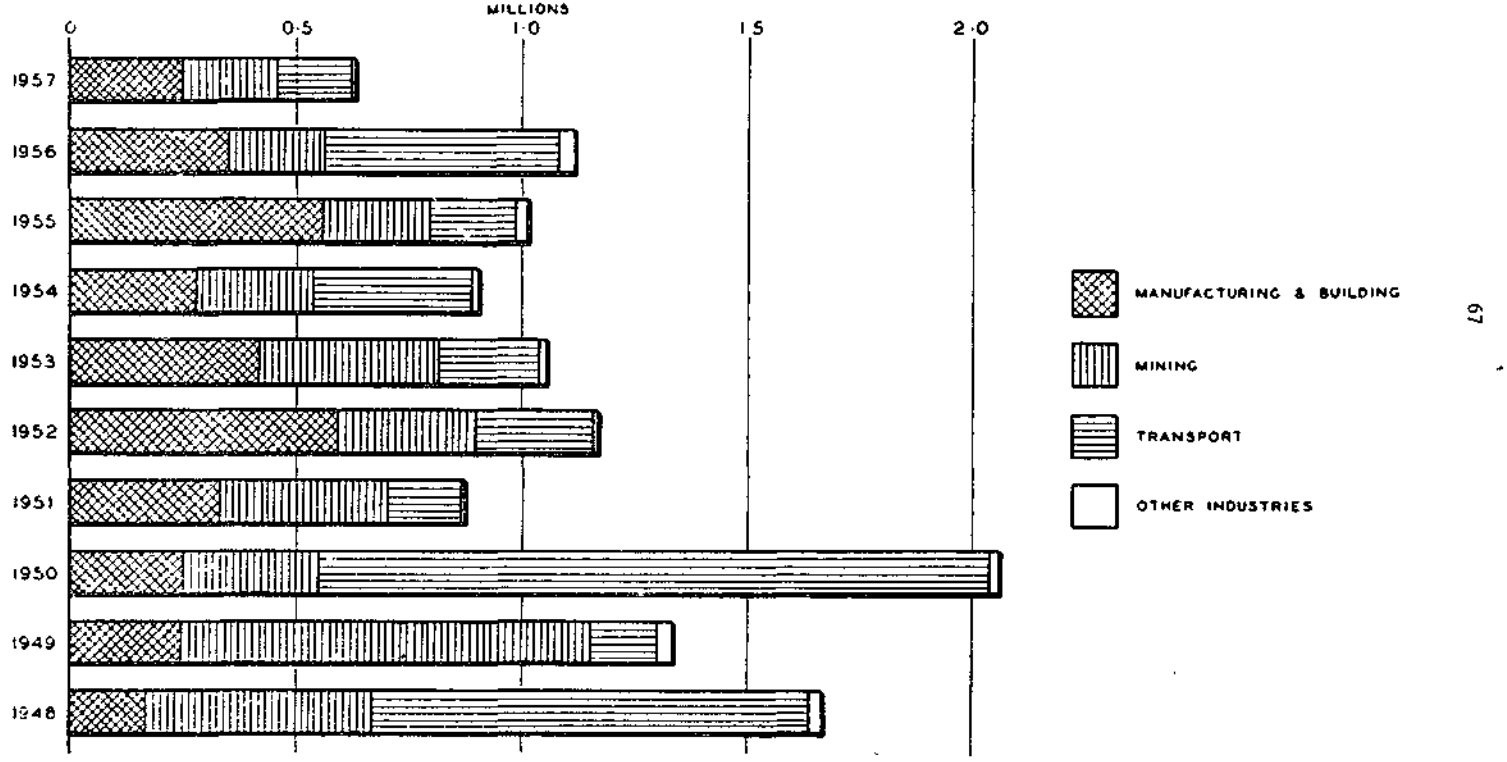
AUSTRALIA, 1948 TO 1957



*EXCLUDES RURAL WAGE EARNERS, FEMALE PRIVATE DOMESTICS, PERSONNEL IN DEFENCE FORCES AND NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINEES IN CAMP

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, AUSTRALIA, 1948 TO 1957

WORKING DAYS LOST - INDUSTRIAL GROUPS



The Court took the view that its decision in 1953 to abandon the system of quarterly adjustments was clearly right and that " so long as the assessment of the basic wage is made as the highest which the capacity of the economy can sustain, the automatic adjustment of that basic wage upon price index numbers cannot be justified, since movements in the index have no relation to the movements in the capacity of the economy ". The Court was satisfied " that a basic wage assessed at the highest amount which the economy can afford to pay cannot in any way be arrived at on the current price of listed commodities. There is simply no relationship between the two methods of assessment."

" The Court's examination of the economy and of its indicators—employment, investment, production and productivity, overseas trade, overseas balances, the competitive position of secondary industry and retail trade and its consideration of inflation and its possible disastrous extension has led to the Court's conclusion that the nation now has not the capacity to pay a basic wage of the amount to which automatic quarterly adjustments would have brought it."

As far as the application for the abolition of the 3s. country differential was concerned, the Court stated: " The onus lies on a party seeking a change of present prescription to establish its case. The Court holds that the present claim for abolition of the country differential of 3s. has not been made out of the evidence and submissions presented to the Court and the claim is rejected."

In the course of setting out the reasons for its decision the Court considered the period over which the capacity of the economy should be assessed, and concluded: " A year has been found almost universally to be a sensible and practicable period for such a purpose in the case of trading institutions the world over. The Court considers—fortified by the Judges' experience of considering from time to time Australia's capacity—that a yearly assessment of the capacity of Australia for the purpose of fixing a basic wage would be most appropriate. We would encourage any steps to have the Court fulfil such a task each year."*

(xi) *Basic Wage Inquiry*, 1956–57.—Following a summons filed on 26th October, 1956 by the Amalgamated Engineering Union and others, the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in Presidential Session (consisting of Kirby *C.J.*, Wright and Ashburner *JJ.*) on 13th November, 1956 commenced to hear claims for alteration of the basic wage prescribed in the Metal Trades Award. The claims made were as follows:—

1. " For the increase of the basic wage in all its manifestations to the amount it would have reached if there had remained in the award provisions for automatic quarterly adjustments which had been deleted in September, 1953, ... "

2. " For the re-insertion in the award of the provisions for the automatic quarterly adjustment of the basic wage. . . . . "

In accordance with past practice this application in respect of the Metal Trades Award was treated by the Commission as a general application for alteration of the basic wage in all Federal awards.

By leave of the Commission the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations intervened in support of the applicant unions.

The claims of the unions were opposed by the respondent employers. Victoria and South Australia were the only States to appear before the Commission and the Attorney-General of the Commonwealth intervened in the public interest under section 36 (1.) of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

* Print No. A4771, p. 21.

The State of South Australia opposed the unions' claims and suggested that if, contrary to that State's opposition, an increase in the basic wage were prescribed, the Commission should first decide upon the increase to be added to the six capitals basic wage and then apportion that increase amongst the six capital cities on a basis accurately reflecting the differences in cost of living in the different cities.

The State of Victoria neither supported nor opposed the application by the unions and during the hearing, at the request of counsel for the employers, submitted statistics relating to Victorian State Government Departments and Instrumentalities.

The Attorney-General of the Commonwealth intervened in the public interest but the only issue on which his counsel made a positive submission was the application for the restoration of the automatic adjustment system. The Commonwealth opposed such a system whatever index were used. The Commonwealth did not make any submission in regard to the amount of the basic wage. However, counsel for the Commonwealth, after supplying information on all aspects of the national economy, made this general statement: " It is submitted that it remains true that any steps that would lead to a general increase in the level of demand and of the level of costs and prices would run counter to the best interests of the Australian economy at the present time ". The Commonwealth also proposed that the Commission should, in the absence of an adjustment system, undertake an annual review of the basic wage.

The Commission decided that before it could reach a decision it would have to examine, in detail, three main issues, namely, (i) should the system of automatic adjustment be restored? (ii) should there be an increase in the basic wage and, if so, of what amount? and, (iii) should the increase, if there be one, be of a uniform amount, or should it be variable as between capital cities?

(i) *Should the System of Automatic Adjustment Be Restored?*—The Commission set out the reasons why the Court in 1953 repealed the provisions for automatic quarterly adjustment of the basic wage then contained in awards and orders of the Court. " The Court's decision was primarily based on the view that there is no justification for automatically adjusting in accordance with a price index a wage assessed as the highest that the capacity of the community as a whole can sustain."

Counsel for the unions argued that the Court in 1956 had misdirected itself in holding that in its judgments given before 1953 the Court had been considering the capacity of the economy to bear the monetary wage at the time of making the decisions. He argued from judgments delivered in the period 1931 to 1950 that the Court was dealing with " the capacity of the economy to pay a real wage ". The Commission stated that " even if, contrary to the opinion of the Court in 1956, during that period [1931–1950] the Court had been considering the capacity to pay a real wage . . . . the fact is that in 1953 and 1956, the issue on those occasions having been expressly raised and fought, the Court held that capacity to pay cannot be measured by a price index ".

The argument of the unions' counsel continued " that it is a ' plain and inevitable principle ' that the capacity of the community to pay wages alters with the general level of prices and that the " C " Series index approximately measures the general level of prices and therefore approximately measures the capacity of the economy to pay ".

The Commission rejected both sections of the unions' argument and the claim for restoration of automatic quarterly adjustments was refused.

(ii) *Should there be an Increase in the Basic Wage and, if so, of what Amount?* The Commission reaffirmed the principles used to determine the basic wage in the 1953 and 1956 judgments of the Court and accepted as correct the decision of the Court in 1956 to increase the then existing basic wages by 10s. This led the Commission to a comparison of the state of the national economy at the time of the 1956 basic wage inquiry and the current inquiry.

The Commission stated that " In assessing the highest basic wage that the community could afford to pay to employees covered by federal awards, account has been taken of the fact that somewhere about half the wage earners in Australia are entitled under State awards to a basic wage, not fixed in relation to the capacity of the community to pay . . . . "

The Commission considered all aspects of the economy and in particular the indicators of oversea reserves, oversea balances, rural industries, production and productivity other than rural, investment including company profits, the competitive position of secondary industry, employment, retail trade the relaxed policy of import restrictions and the reasons of the government for such relaxation, and above all the change for the better in Australia's trading position and her strengthened reserves and decided that the basic wages in federal awards should be increased.

The Commission decided that the increase to the six capital cities basic wage should be 10s. a week for adult males.

(iii) *Should the Increase be of a Uniform Amount?*—The historical background of differential rates of basic wage for respective cities and towns was examined by the Commission and it acknowledged that the Federal basic wage had two components. The first and greater component differs for each capital city and is based on the " C " Series retail price index numbers for the June quarter, 1953, and the second component, common to all places, is the uniform 10s. awarded by the Court in 1956.

On the question of whether the increase should be of a uniform amount the alternatives open to the Commission appeared to be " either to follow what the Court did in 1956, or to recalculate the inter-capital-city differentials of the newly-fixed standard basic wage according to the latest " C " Series index numbers ". The Commission decided to grant an increase of a uniform amount, and stated, " The immediate reason impelling the Commission to its decision is the evidence given in these proceedings by the Acting Commonwealth Statistician, in the course of which he expressed emphatically the opinion that the relative levels of living costs in Australian capital cities are not, and cannot be, measured by retail price index numbers in current circumstances; also that changes in relative living costs in this sense are a matter for consideration quite apart from retail price index numbers, at the same time conceding that some of the price index *data* could assist materially in measuring relative levels of living costs in Australian capital cities."

In the judgment delivered on 29th April, 1957 the Commission rejected the claims made by the unions and granted a uniform increase of 10s. a week in the basic wage for adult males to come into effect from the first pay-period to commence on or after 15th May, 1957. As a result of this decision the basic wage for adult females was increased by 7s. 6d. with proportionate increases for juniors of both sexes and for apprentices. The Commission also advised that it approved an annual review of the basic wage and would be available for this purpose in February, 1958. However, although favouring an annual review of the basic wage, the Commission did not consider that " it would be proper for it, nor would it wish, to curtail the existing right of disputants to make an application at whatever time they think it necessary to do so ".

(xii) *Basic Wage Inquiry*, 1958.—The judgment was delivered on 12th May, 1958. Particulars of the claims made by employee organizations and the decision given will be found in Section VI. of the Appendix.

(xiii) *Rates Operative, Principal Towns.*—The "basic" wage rates of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission for adult males and females, operative in the principal towns of Australia as from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing on or after 15th May, 1957, are shown in the following table:—

COMMONWEALTH BASIC WAGE: WEEKLY RATES (*a*), MAY, 1957.

City or Town.	Rate of Wage.		City or Town.	Rate of Wage.	
	Males.	Females.		Males.	Females.
	s. d.	*s. d.*		*s. d.*	*s. d.*
New South Wales—			Western Australia—		
Sydney	263 0	197 0	Perth	256 0	192 0
Newcastle ..	263 0	197 0	Kalgoorlie	263 0	197 0
Port Kembla-Wollongong. ..	263 0	197 0	Geraldton	269 0	201 6
Broken Hill ..	267 0	200 0	Five Towns (*b*) ..	257 0	192 6
Five Towns (*b*) ..	262 0	196 6	Tasmania—		
Victoria—			Hobart	262 0	196 6
Melbourne ..	255 0	191 0	Launceston . ..	258 0	193 6
Geelong	255 0	191 0	Queenstown ..	253 0	189 6
Warrnambool ..	255 0	191 0	Five Towns (*b*) .	260 0	195 0
Mildura	255 0	191 0	Thirty Towns (*b*) ..	256 0	192 0
Yallourn (*c*) .	261 6	196 0			
Five Towns (*b*) ..	255 0	191 0	Six Capital Cities (*b*) ..	256 0	192 0
Queensland—			Australian Capital Territory—		
Brisbane	238 0	178 6	Canberra ..	258 0	193 6
Five Towns (*b*) ..	239 0	178 6	Northern Territory (*e*)—		
South Australia—			Darwin	275 0	206 0
Adelaide	251 0	188 0	South of 20th Parallel	262 0	196 6
Whyalla and Iron Knob (*d*) ..	256 0	192 0			
Five Towns (*b*) ..	250 0	187 6			

(*a*) Operative from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing on or after 15th May, 1957. (*b*) Weighted average. (*c*) Melbourne rate plus 6s. 6d. for males; 75 per cent. of male rate for females. (*d*) Adelaide rate plus 5s. for males; 75 per cent. of male rate for females. (*e*) *See* pp. 82 and 84 regarding special loadings.

The rate for provincial towns, other than those mentioned above, is 3s. less than that for their respective capital cities.

The rate for adult females is 75 per cent. of the male rate.

A table of adult male basic wage rates from 1923 to 1958 will be found in Section VII. of the Appendix.

3. **Basic Wage Rates for Females.**—(i) *General.*—In its judgment of 17th April, 1934, wherein the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration laid down the basis of its "needs" basic wage for adult males, the Court made the following statement in regard to the female rate:—

> "The Court does not think it necessary or desirable, at any rate at the present time, to declare any wage as a basic wage for female employees. Generally speaking they carry no family responsibilities. The minimum wage should, of course, never be too low for the reasonable needs of the employee, but those needs may vary in different industries. In the variations now to be made the proportion in each award of the minimum wage for females to that of males will be preserved."

The previous practice of the Court was therefore continued whereby each judge granted such proportion of the male rate as he deemed suited to the nature of the industry and the general circumstances of the case. Generally speaking, this proportion was in the vicinity of 54 per cent. of the male rate; although in some cases the proportion was about 56 per cent.

Until 1942 this continued to be substantially the practice of all Commonwealth and State industrial tribunals and in the main its continuance was then made mandatory by Part V. of the National Security (Economic Organization) Regulations which " pegged ", as at 10th February, 1942, all rates of remuneration previously prevailing in any employment. The only exceptions allowed were variations to rectify anomalies, variations resultant from hearings pending prior to 10th February, 1942 and " cost of living " variations.

In March, 1942, however, special action was taken to constitute a Women's Employment Board in conjunction with measures to encourage women to undertake, in war-time, work which would normally have been performed by men. This Board was given special jurisdiction to determine terms and conditions of such employment. The Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration and State Industrial Tribunals continued to determine rates of pay, etc., of women engaged in what may broadly be described as " women's work " in the pre-war sense, while the jurisdiction of the Women's Employment Board was made to cover women engaged during the war in work formerly performed by men or in new work which immediately prior to the outbreak of the war was not performed in Australia by any person.

In July, 1944, National Security (Female Minimum Rates) Regulations authorized the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration to make comprehensive investigations (*a*) as to whether minimum rates of wage payable to females in industries considered by the Government to be necessary for war purposes were unreasonably low in comparison with minimum rates payable to females in other essential industries, (*b*) if so, as to whether it was in the national interest, and fair and just, to increase such rates, and (*c*) as to the amount of such increases. Determinations could be made for any period specified by the Court but not extending beyond six months after the end of the war. In making such determinations the Court was not bound by Part V. of the National Security (Economic Organization) Regulations, although such regulations applied to the new rates after determination. The objective of the National Security (Female Minimum Rates) Regulations was to remove disparities which were creating discontent and impeding the manpower authority in redistributing female labour to vital industries. This review commenced in the Court on 23rd February, 1945 and ended on 23rd March, judgment being reserved.

Judgment was delivered by the Full Court on 4th May, 1945,* to the effect that, in regard to (*a*) above, the majority of the Full Court (Piper *C.J.*, O'Mara and Kelly *JJ.*) found itself unable to declare that the rates in the " referred "† industries were unreasonably low compared with those in the three industries submitted by the Crown and the union representatives as the standard rates for comparison, namely, those of the Clothing, Rubber and Metal industries, and that there was consequently no necessity to answer question (*b*). In a minority judgment, Drake-Brockman and Foster *JJ.* answered (*a*) and (*b*) in the affirmative.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 54, p. 613.

† Twelve vital industries were " referred " by the Government for consideration.

Following this negative result, the Government, by National Security (Female Minimum Rates) Regulations (S.R., 1945, No. 139) dated 13th August, 1945, provided in respect of " vital " industries specified by the Minister by notice published in the *Gazette* that the remuneration of females employed therein should not be less than 75 per cent. of the corresponding minimum male rate. The validity of this Regulation was challenged in the High Court but, in a judgment dated 3rd December, 1945, the Court (Starke *J.* dissenting) held that the Regulations were a valid exercise of the powers under the National Security Act 1939–1943. The rates under this Regulation commenced to operate from 31st August, 1945.

As from 12th October, 1944, the Women's Employment Board was abolished. The function of the Board under the Women's Employment Act then devolved upon the Court as constituted by a judge designated by the Chief Judge. (*See* S.R. 1944, No. 149.)

The following sub-sections give a brief account of the functions allotted to and of the principles followed by the Women's Employment Board, and a summary of an important judgment delivered by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in 1943 stating the principles followed by the Court in fixing the basic rates payable to female workers and the difference between the rates payable to the women engaged in " women's work " and those payable to the special group of women engaged in " men's work " in war-time under the jurisdiction of the Women's Employment Board. The judgment also dealt with the question of anomalies as between the rates payable to the two classes of women workers.

(ii) *Women's Employment Board.*—The functions of the Women's Employment Board were specified by the Women's Employment Act 1942.* The purpose of the Act as expressed in the title was " to encourage and regulate the employment of women for the purpose of aiding the prosecution of the present war ". The jurisdiction of the Board was limited to females employed (after 2nd March, 1942) on work usually performed by males or which, immediately prior to the outbreak of the war, was not performed in Australia by any person.

Briefly, the functions of the Board were to decide what work and what female workers came within its jurisdiction (as defined) and the terms and conditions upon which women might be so employed, including hours and special conditions as to safety, welfare and health. The Board was required to fix rates of payment for such women with regard to their efficiency and productivity in relation to that of males engaged in such work and the Regulations provided that payment to females (engaged on "men's work") should be not less than 60 per cent. nor more than 100 per cent. of the male rate.

The Board ceased to function in 1944 but the Women's Employment Regulations continued to operate until 1949, when, by a judgment of the High Court, such continuation was declared invalid. A summary of the activities of the Board during its period of operation was given in previous issues of the Labour Report (*see* No. 36, page 84).

* The Board was originally created under regulations under the National Security Act 1939–1940, dated 25th March, 1942 (Statutory Rules 1942, No. 146), but owing to the disallowance of such regulations by the Senate on 23rd September, 1942, the Board operated as from 6th October, 1942, under the Women's Employment Act, No. 55 of 1942, which validated all previous decisions, etc., of the first Board (gazetted on 11th June, 1942). The second Board was created on 10th November, 1942.

(iii) *Judgment by Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration.*—On 24th March, 1943, a case involving determination of general principles as to rates of wage of female employees not within the jurisdiction of the Women's Employment Board was remitted to the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration by the Minister for Labour and National Service under Regulation 9 of the National Security (Industrial Peace) Regulations, particularly as affecting female workers at Government small arms ammunition factories. The rates in these cases were considered by their trade union to be anomalous compared with those awarded by the Women's Employment Board to certain other women employed in those factories. The Court, in its judgment dated 17th June, 1943,* rejected the contentions of the union (The Arms, Explosives and Munition Workers Federation of Australia) and enunciated in full the principles followed by the Court in determining female rates of wage within its jurisdiction.

In order to place the matter in perspective in its relation to the basic wage for males, the Court traced the history of the principles on which the basic wage for males was determined from its original declaration by Mr. Justice Higgins in his "Harvester" judgment of 1907 (*see* page 56) and continued—

> "Although since 1930, when the 'economic or productivity factor' emerged as the 'dominant factor' in the problem of assessment (of the basic wage of adult male employees), the adequacy of the wage to meet the requirements of any 'specified family unit' has been only a subsidiary consideration, subsidiary that is to say to the question of the capacity of the national production to sustain a particular wage level, it is plain that the Court has not held that its basic wage has been fixed at too low a figure to meet the normal and reasonable needs of a family of husband, wife and at least one child. Nor has its adequacy to that extent been questioned. In this sense it can still be regarded as a family wage, inasmuch as it has been accepted as sufficient at all events to provide 'frugal comfort' for a man, his wife and at least one dependent child. For present purposes it is enough to say that, until a proper investigation demonstrates the contrary to be the case, we cannot but hold that the amount provided is more than sufficient to meet the normal and reasonable requirements of an unmarried worker with no dependants to support out of his earnings. And the same may be said of the living or basic wages determined by authorities functioning under State legislation as appropriate for male employees within their jurisdiction. The method of assessment of wage rates for adult male workers adopted and followed by industrial authorities throughout Australia has been to fix a basic wage portion adequate for the estimated needs of some family group and to add to that some additional payment in recognition of the skill or experience possessed by the worker or the special conditions met with in his particular occupation. The basic wage portion has had no reference to work value; it has been assessed in accordance with needs and it has never been either held or suggested to be inadequate to meet the normal and reasonable needs not only of the worker himself but also of his wife and at least one dependent child."

The Court in its judgment then set out decisions arrived at by various Commonwealth and State Courts since 1912, when the Commonwealth Court first dealt directly with the problem of women's wages. Mr. Justice Higgins dealt with the case, and stated "I fixed the minimum in 1907 of 7s. per day by

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 50, p. 191.

finding the sum which would meet the normal needs of an average employee, one of his normal needs being the need for domestic life. If he has a wife and children, he is under an obligation—even a legal obligation—to maintain them. How is such a minimum applicable to the case of a woman . . . . ? She is not, unless perhaps in very exceptional circumstance, under any such obligation. The minimum cannot be based on exceptional cases."

In respect of the "minimum rate" enjoined by the Commonwealth Arbitration Act, he held that "Nothing is clearer than that the 'minimum rate' referred to in section 40 means the minimum rate for a class of workers, those who do work of a certain character. If blacksmiths are the class of workers, the minimum rate must be such as recognizes that blacksmiths are usually men. If fruit-pickers are the class of workers, the minimum rate must be such as recognizes that, up to the present at least, most of the pickers are men (although women have been usually paid less), and that men and women are fairly in competition as to that class of work. If milliners are the class of workers, the minimum rate must, I think, be such as recognizes that all or nearly all milliners are women, and that men are not usually in competition with them."*

In its review the Court stated "the fixation of the basic wage for women at amounts below 60 per cent. of that fixed for men has been general in the awards and determination of this Court and other industrial authorities of Australia".

The Court laid down general principles in the following words:—

"It is beyond question that the general rule adopted and followed by the Australian industrial authorities in the assessment of wages for adult women workers, engaged upon work suitable for women in which they cannot fairly be said to be in competition with men for employment, has been and still is to fix a foundational amount, calculated with reference to the needs of a single woman who has to pay for her board and lodging, has to maintain herself out of her earnings, but has no dependants to support; and to add to this foundational or basic amount such marginal amounts as may be appropriate in recognition of the particular skill or experience of the particular workers in question or as compensation for the particular conditions which they encounter in their occupations . . . .

"Just as the wages for male workers are assessed by adopting first a foundational wage—the basic wage—and adding to it marginal amounts fixed according to the relative skill and experience of particular workers or groups of workers, or to the special conditions they encounter, so too are women's wages, for work suitable to them in which they will not be disadvantaged by male competition, fixed by adding to a foundational or basic amount analogous margins. But in each case the foundational wage is in principle and justice different. The man's basic wage is more than sufficient for his personal needs; it purports to provide him with enough to support some family. The women's, on the other hand, purports to be enough for her to maintain herself only. No allowance is made for the support of any dependants. The men's wage has been measured by this Court with reference to the dominating factor of the productive capacity of industry to sustain it and with due regard consequently to what its application in industry will mean, to the marginal structure which rises above it, and to the consequent wages which will in accordance with established rules and practice be paid to women and to minors.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 6, p 72.

"In the course of the hearing the Chief Judge drew attention to the necessity which would occur, if women's rates were to be assessed on the basis that relative efficiency and productivity (as between men and women) were to constitute the dominant factor, for a review of the principles in accordance with which the basic wage has been determined. That this necessity would arise must be apparent. For the basic wage for adult males has been fixed at as high an amount as the Court has thought practicable in all the circumstances of the case, including the circumstances of the existing proportionate levels of wages for women and minors. The share of men workers in the fruits of production will need to be reduced if women are to participate therein on an equal footing, or on a better footing generally than that to which they have hitherto been held to be entitled.

"It is desirable that we should indicate as clearly as possible the effect of the conclusions to which the review of the principles of wage assessment we have made has led us. It is that, so long as the foundational or basic wage for women is assessed according to a standard different from that which is the basis of the foundational or basic wage—a family wage—for men, the Court will not, in the exercise of its function of adjudicating between opposing interests, raise the general level of women's minimum wages in occupations suitable for women, and in which they do not encounter considerable competition from men, according to a comparison of their efficiency and productivity with the efficiency and productivity of men doing substantially similar work. To do so would at once depress the relative standard of living of the family as a group, and of its individual members, as compared with that of the typical single woman wage-earner."*

In December, 1943,† Drake-Brockman *J.*, in dealing with women employees in the Clothing (Dressmaking and Tailoring Sections) and Rubber industries, awarded for the duration of the war and for six months thereafter as a "flat rate" for the industry 75 per cent. of the "needs" basic wage, plus the "prosperity" and "industry" loadings ordinarily applicable. The reason for this action was (in the words of the judgment) as follows: "it was also common ground [between all the parties] that wastage of the employees in the industry during the last three years had been exceptionally heavy and that it was essential that some means should be found to attract women to the industry and thereafter to retain them for some reasonable period of time after they had been trained."

In July, 1944, the National Security (Female Minimum Wage) Regulations extended the discretion of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in fixing female minimum wage rates in "vital" industries in war-time as briefly described on page 73.

The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1947 (*see* Labour Report No. 37, page 50) provided amongst other things that "a Conciliation Commissioner shall not be empowered to make an order or award altering . . . . . (*d*) the minimum rate of remuneration for adult females in an industry." As the result of doubts which arose as to the powers of the Commissioners to "fix" a basic wage, the matter came before the Full Court of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration for clarification at the instance of several trade unions. Judgment was delivered on 27th July, 1948, and it was held that Conciliation Commissioners had jurisdiction to fix the female rates in question under the provisions of the Act, but it was also held that the provision referred only to the basic element in any prescribed female rates. Where, however, such a prescribed rate did not specifically fix

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol 50, p. 191. † 51 *C.A.R.*, pp. 632 and 648.

or disclose the basic wage element, the appropriate Conciliation Commissioner had to fix the rate, and when such rate had been fixed its alteration became a matter for the Court. In view of the fact that there were fifteen Commissioners whose views might differ as to the element of the rates of pay of adult females which could be ascribed to an adult female basic wage analogous to the basic wage for adult males, the Government in December, 1948 passed an Act (No. 77 of 1948) further amending the above-mentioned Act to authorize the Court—and the Court alone—to fix the basic rate by providing that " a Conciliation Commissioner shall not be empowered to make an order or award . . . (*d*) determining or altering the minimum rate of remuneration for adult females in an industry."

A further amending Act (No. 86 of 1949) empowered the Court to determine or alter a " basic wage for adult females " which was defined as " that wage, or that part of a wage, which is just and reasonable for an adult female, without regard to any circumstance pertaining to the work upon which, or the industry in which, she is employed."

At the end of the 1949–50 Basic Wage Inquiry (*see* page 60), the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration by a majority decision fixed a new basic weekly wage for adult females at 75 per cent. of the corresponding male rate operative from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in December, 1950.

In the 1952–53 Basic Wage and Standard Hours Inquiry the employers claimed a reduction in the proportion the female basic wage bore to the male basic wage from 75 to 60 per cent. and based this claim on two grounds. The employers claimed that the existing ratio was unjust and unreasonable having regard to the principles of male basic wage fixation and also that the existing ratio constituted an additional burden on employers at a time when the economy was adversely affected by the level of wage costs. The first contention was based on the fact that the male basic wage was a family wage, whereas the female basic wage was to provide for only one person. The Court in its judgment stated that " no evidence was presented to enable it to assess the reasonable needs either of a family group, typical, average or appropriate or of a typical or average woman wage-earner whose wage should be within the concept of the definition of ' basic wage ' in section 25 "* (of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act).

On the second contention, the judgment stated that " the Court finds it impossible to say that the higher ratio of the women's basic wage to the men's, adopted by the 1950 decision, has resulted to date in either a significant degree of unemployment amongst women or, generally speaking, a comparatively greater wages cost burden having to be carried, at the expense of reasonable profits, by enterprises employing a relatively higher proportion of women workers."* The Court decided that there was no basis for a review of the existing ratio and ordered that the female basic wage should remain at 75 per cent. of the male basic wage.

4. **Australian Territories.**—(i) *Australian Capital Territory.*—Prior to 1922 the lowest rate payable to an unskilled labourer was not defined as a basic wage, as all wages were paid under the authority of the Federal Capital Commission as a lump sum for the particular occupation in which the worker was employed, but in 1922 an Industrial Board commenced to operate under a local Ordinance (*see* page 33). A summary of the decisions made by the Industrial Board during its period of operation was given in earlier issues of the Labour Report (*see* No. 40, page 89).

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 77, p. 504.

By an amending Ordinance, No. 4 of 1949, the Industrial Board was abolished and its functions were transferred to the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, which assigned a Conciliation Commissioner to the Australian Capital Territory. It was provided, however, that all orders and agreements in existence should continue to operate subject to later orders, awards and determinations made by the Court.

An amendment to the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act, operative from 30th June, 1956, transferred the respective functions of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Court to the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and the Commonwealth Industrial Court. The Conciliation Commissioner mentioned above, under the amended legislation, became the Commissioner for the Australian Capital Territory.

In reviewing the Australian Capital Territory awards following its decision of 12th October, 1950, the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration fixed the Canberra basic wage at £8 5s. a week for adult males, operative from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in December, 1950.* This amount was the "needs" basic wage as expressed by the Court's Second Series index number for Canberra for the September quarter, 1950, with the prescribed addition of £1 5s. The new rate represented an increase of 13s. 6d. a week over that previously payable.

Until August, 1953, the basic wage for the Australian Capital Territory was varied each quarter in accordance with movements in the "C" Series retail price index numbers. However, following a decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration to delete automatic adjustment clauses from its awards, etc. (*see* page 62), the basic wage for the Australian Capital Territory remained unchanged from August, 1953 until June, 1956, when an increase of 10s. became payable for adult males. A further increase of 10s. was granted in the adult male basic wage payable as from the first pay-period on or after 15th May, 1957. The basic wage for the Australian Capital Territory, under awards of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, payable as from the first pay-period on or after 15th May, 1957, was £12 18s. for adult males and £9 13s. 6d. for adult females.

(ii) *Northern Territory.*—The determination of the basic wage for this Territory comes within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

There are, in fact, two basic wages operating—(*a*) in respect of areas north of the 20th parallel of south latitude, and generally referred to as the "Darwin" rate, and (*b*) in respect of areas south of that parallel. These are calculated on different bases as set out in the following paragraphs.

(*a*) *The Darwin Basic Wage.*—This wage was first determined by the Court in 1915† when the Deputy President (Powers *J.*) awarded a rate of £3 17s. a week, or 1s. 9d. an hour, for an unskilled labourer, which included a weekly allowance of 4s. for lost time.

The basic wage level again came under consideration when the wage for carpenters and joiners was reviewed by Mr. Justice Powers in 1916–17.‡ The Judge referred to an agreement dated 2nd June, 1916, between the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners and the Northern Agency (formerly Vestey Brothers), which provided for rates based on a budget of the estimated living requirements of a family consisting of a man, wife and two dependent children, amounting to £3 11s. 1d. a week. However, as the amount awarded (2s. 4d. an hour) for carpenters was over £5 a week, the Judge felt that a fair living wage was fully

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 69, p. 486. † 9 *C.A.R.*, p. 1. ‡ 11 *C.A.R.*, p. 51.

assured. His Honor stated that he did not find anything to cause him to alter the judgment given on 15th March, 1915, when he prescribed a wage of 1s. 9d. an hour.

Up till 1924 the practice of the Court had been to fix the basic wage in accordance with the principles laid down in 1916, and in connexion with an application in 1924 concerning the rate for employees of the Commonwealth Railways, when the wage for these workers stood at £5 4s. 6d., the Judge (Powers *J.*) refused to alter the wage. He stated that he had in mind the amount of £4 12s., to which he would have felt justified in adding £1 to compensate for the many disadvantages caused by isolation, especially the loss of or extra expense of the proper education of the children. He considered, therefore, that the wage of £5 4s. 6d. then payable contained a special allowance on such account, and that the question of such special allowances was a matter for employers and employees to settle between themselves.*

In 1927† Judge Beeby also referred to the regimen of 1916, and implied that since then it had formed the foundation of the basic wages fixed by the Court, and that the sufficiency of the regimen, except as to rent and one or two minor omissions, had never been questioned. On this occasion he fixed the basic wage at £5 10s. a week, or 2s. 6d. an hour, including £1 a week district allowance which was suggested by Mr. Justice Powers in his 1924 award as being a reasonable amount.

As there was no adjustment clause in operation in Territory awards, the basic wage of £5 10s. a week remained in operation until 1934 (except for the reduction by the Financial Emergency Act 1931 to £4 16s. 3d.).

In 1934‡ the Full Court for the first time considered the basic wage. The Court brought the regimen of the 1916 agreement up to date, altered the rent figure from 45s. to 65s. a month, and arrived at the amount of £4 10s. 9d. a week. This was £1 4s. 9d. above the Court's "needs" basic wage recently declared for the six capital cities, the Court regarding the difference as representing the extra amount required to purchase the same standard of living as in the six capital cities, with nothing by way of compensation allowance. Automatic adjustment provisions first introduced into the awards by this judgment were effected by inserting an appropriate adjustment scale based on the equation of £4 10s. 9d. to the Food and Groceries retail price index number (Special) 1,184 for Darwin for the month of August, 1934.

In 1938§ the Court granted a "loading" of 3s. a week on the wage because the Commonwealth Government had extended to the Territory its general civil service increase of £8 a year.

In 1939 an additional amount was added to the basic wage as a special loading to offset the increase in the cost of living not reflected by the index numbers. The loading was 16s. 3d. for employees on works and 10s. for railway employees.‖ In February, 1940, before an automatic adjustment increase of 2s. became payable, the Court suspended the adjustment clause pending further inquiry.¶

In 1941** the Full Court again reviewed the basic wage and, after a full investigation of its past history, awarded £5 12s. 9d., made up of (*a*) £4 10s. 9d. awarded in 1934; (*b*) 4s. in respect of accrued adjustments since 1939; (*c*) 5s. additional allowance for rent; and (*d*) two constant (unadjustable) "loadings" of 3s. and 10s. a week. The Court also restored the adjustment clause by equating £4 15s. 9d. of the foregoing amounts (£4 10s. 9d. plus 5s. rent) to the

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 20, p. 737. † 25 *C.A.R.*, p. 898. ‡ 33 *C.A.R.*, p. 944. § 39 *C.A.R.*, p. 501. ‖ 40 *C.A.R.*, p. 323 and 41 *C.A.R.*, p. 269. ¶ 42 *C.A.R.*, p. 164. ** 44 *C.A.R.*, p 253

base index 1,184 of the former adjustment scale (based solely on the Food and Groceries price index number). This, however, never became effective, because it was superseded early in 1942 by the Blakely Orders referred to below. The two " loadings " were not made adjustable. All other " loadings " mentioned above were dropped.

The basis of adjustment was altered by A. Blakeley, *C.C.*, by Orders dated 29th January, 1942,* owing to the urgent necessity to provide, over the period of the war, for adjustments in respect of rent, clothing and other miscellaneous items of domestic expenditure which, with the exception of rent, had already increased considerably in price throughout Australia, and threatened to increase further as the war continued. Adjustment by means of the Food and Groceries Index only was therefore no longer doing justice to the workers of the Territory, since the workers elsewhere in Australia were enjoying the benefit derived from the adjustment of their wages by means of the more comprehensive " C " Series retail price index.

As there was no " C " Series retail price index for the Territory, nor was it possible to compile one on the basis of prices in Darwin, the only alternative was to create a " composite " index with the help of prices for these additional items from some other town of somewhat similar living conditions. The town selected as being most suitable for this purpose was Townsville, and the " composite " index was therefore computed on the basis of food and groceries prices in Darwin, combined with Townsville prices for rent, clothing and other miscellaneous items of domestic expenditure mentioned above, the index being designated " The Darwin Special ' All Items ' Index ".

Taking the December quarter, 1940, as a suitable period upon which adjustments should be based, for which quarter the Special " All Items " index number was 1,036, the Court's basic wage of £4 19s. 9d. (including 4s. for accrued adjustments) declared in its judgment of 7th April, 1941† was related (not " equated ") to the index number division (1031–1043) containing index number 1,036 of the " C " Series adjustment scale formerly used by the Court in its awards (Base: 1923–27 = 1,000 = 81s.), thus giving workers in the Territory the same basis of adjustment as that operating in respect of all workers throughout Australia coming within the jurisdiction of the Court. It should be noted in this connexion that the Court's " needs " equivalent of index number 1,036 was 84s., so that 15s. 9d. of the Darwin wage was left " unadjustable ". The rate payable from 1st February, 1942 (when the new basis first became operative), on the basis of index number 1,099 for the December, quarter, 1941, was therefore £5 17s. 9d., inclusive of 5s. by adjustments under the scale since the December quarter, 1940 (1,036), and the two unadjustable " loadings " of 3s. and 10s. granted by the Court's judgment of 7th April, 1941.

Following the bombing of Darwin on 19th February, 1942, and on subsequent occasions, it was no longer possible to obtain even food and groceries prices in Darwin, and a system was introduced by which food and grocery prices in the Special Index for Darwin were varied in accordance with fluctuations in food and grocery prices in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.‡

On an application by the unions for the addition to the basic wage in the Territory of the amount of 7s. a week added by the Court elsewhere in Australia by its " Interim " Basic Wage Judgment of 13th December, 1946 (*see* page 59), the Full Court, on 13th March, 1947, decided to postpone the matter pending a general review of the basic wage in the Territory, although the Court granted the amount in the case of areas south of the 20th parallel

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 46, p. 411. † 44 *C.A.R.*, p. 253. ‡ 48 *C.A.R.*, p. 20.

of south latitude (*see* below). This further review was opened in Darwin with preliminary evidence taken by J. H. Portus, *C.C.*, on 16th February, 1948, and ultimately dealt with by the Full Court in Adelaide on 20th May, 1948. The Court made an " interim " judgment, pending the hearing and finalization of the basic wage inquiry held in 1949–50 at the instance of the combined unions throughout Australia (*see* page 60), granting the current equivalent of the 7s. referred to above, namely, 8s. In the judgment the Court adopted as from the March quarter, 1948, the new Darwin Special " All Items " Index (containing the restored prices of food and groceries for Darwin proper, plus Townsville prices for rent, clothing and miscellaneous items), namely, 1,283, and transferred the basis of adjustment from the existing automatic adjustment scale (" C " Series) on 1,000 = 81s. a week to the new scale on 1,000 = 87s. a week—in conformity with the " Court " Index (2nd Series). The new basic wage was to come into operation from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing after 20th May, 1948. The resultant total basic wage payable was therefore £7 0s. 9d., made up of £5 12s. (the " needs " equivalent of index number 1,283 mentioned above), the " unadjustable " amount of 15s. 9d. (*see* page 81) and the loadings of 3s. and 10s.

Consequent upon the decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in the 1949–50 Basic Wage Inquiry, an " interim " increase of £1 2s. a week was authorized pending a special inquiry into the fixation of a new basic wage for the Northern Territory.* As a result of the latter inquiry the Court announced, on 19th November, 1951, that it would make an order based upon the consent and agreement of the parties for a basic wage in the Northern Territory of £10 10s. a week. The new rates were operative from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in November, 1951. The Darwin Special " All Items " index (*see* above) was retained as the basis for subsequent quarterly adjustments but with the index number of 1824 equated to 200s. a week. Subsequently, by decisions of the Conciliation Commissioner, a special loading of 10s. a week, operative from the same date as the new basic wage, was added to the wage rates in most awards applicable to that part of the Northern Territory north of the 20th parallel of south latitude. This loading should be taken into account in any analysis or comparison involving the basic wage component of such wage rates.

The basic wage for this area of the Northern Territory has been varied in the same manner as other basic wages determined by the Commonwealth Industrial Tribunal. Since the suspension in September, 1953 of automatic quarterly adjustments based on movements in the " C " Series retail price index numbers, two increases of 10s., payable, in June, 1956 and May, 1957, respectively, have been made to the basic wage for adult males. The basic wage payable to an adult male as from the first pay-period on or after 15th May, 1957 was £13 15s.

(*b*) *Northern Territory (South of the 20th parallel of South Latitude).*—There are two main groups of employees in this area of the Northern Territory, namely, employees of the Commonwealth Railways and employees of the Department of Works (formerly the Works and Services Branch of the Department of the Interior).

Prior to 1937, all employees of Commonwealth Railways, except clerks, were covered by awards of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, but since that year rates of pay for certain occupations have been prescribed by determinations of the Commonwealth Public Service Arbitrator.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 69, p. 836.

It has been the practice of the Court and the Public Service Arbitrator to fix a common base rate for Commonwealth Railways employees (the main centre being Port Augusta) and to provide, by means of "district allowances", additional rates to employees in isolated areas.

Prior to 3rd February, 1935, Commonwealth employees (other than Commonwealth Railways employees) engaged in the Northern Territory south of the 20th parallel of south latitude were paid the Darwin basic wage. The Full Court, in a judgment issued on 13th November, 1934,* fixed a rate of 80s. a week for Works and Services employees, which included an amount of 7s. a week to cover the cost of freight on goods purchased from the Railway Stores at Port Augusta. This rate compared with £4 10s. 9d. being paid in areas north of the 20th parallel, and with £3 5s. in Adelaide.

Provision was also made for the adjustment of this wage to be made in the manner provided by the Court for railway employees at Alice Springs, namely, on the basis of the Court's "C" Series adjustment scale in accordance with the variations of the "Special" index number for Port Augusta (inclusive of Railway Stores prices for groceries and dairy produce). Although no base index number was mentioned, it can be taken that the base index number division of the scale (809–820 = 66s.) was the starting point of the variations and was related to a total basic wage of £4, as this division contained "C" Series index number 819 (Special) for the September quarter, 1934—from which it will also be observed that only 66s. of the total wage was actually adjustable.

The 3s. a week "loading" granted by the Court in 1938 (*see* page 80) applied to employees located south of the 20th parallel of south latitude as well as to those engaged north thereof.

At a hearing on 12th and 13th March, 1947, the Full Court granted to workers in this area the amount of 7s. a week consequent upon its "Interim" Basic Wage Judgment of 13th December, 1946, as an addition to the "adjustable" part of the basic wage applicable. The questions raised as to a general review of the basic wage in the Territory as a whole were postponed pending the hearing and finalization of the basic wage inquiry held in 1949–50 at the instance of the combined unions of Australia (*see* page 60).

By an Order of 11th October, 1949, the Full Court amended the existing award to provide for the adjustment to date and thereafter (by means of the "C" Series Automatic Adjustment Scale) of the 7s. a week "excess" over the contemporaneous "needs" rate granted by the Full Court on 13th November, 1934 (*see* above). The relevant "Special" "C" Series index number for the latter period (as indicated above) was 819, equivalent to a "needs" wage of £3 6s. a week, and the above adjustment was effected by an additional column to the scale, calculated on the basis of raising the weekly "needs" equivalents by the ratio of 73s. to 66s., or by multiplying the successive weekly "needs" rates by the factor 1.10606. Thus, the base rate of the scale 1000 = 87s. became 96s.

The Order came into operation from the first Sunday in December, 1949, with the index number for the September quarter, 1949 as the starting point. The "needs" rate for this was £6 1s., which by the above formula became £6 14s., and to this were added the loadings previously payable of 7s. for "Freight Costs" and 3s. for "Prosperity" loading, making a total basic wage of £7 4s., representing an increase of 6s. a week over the basic wage calculated on the former basis.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 33, p. 947.

Consequent upon the decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in the 1949-50 Basic Wage Inquiry (*see* page 60), an "interim" increase of £1 2s. a week was authorized, pending a special inquiry into the fixation of a new basic wage for the Northern Territory. As a result of the latter inquiry the Court announced, on 19th November, 1951, that it would make an order based upon the consent and agreement of the parties for a basic wage in the Northern Territory of £10 10s. a week. The new rates were operative from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in November, 1951. The Port Augusta Special "All Items" Index (*see* p. 83) was retained as the basis for subsequent quarterly adjustments but with the index number of 1757 equated to 194s. a week. Subsequently, by decisions of the Conciliation Commissioner, a special loading of 7s. a week, operative from the same date as the new basic wage, was added to the wage rates in most awards applicable to that part of the Northern Territory south of the 20th parallel of south latitude. This loading should be taken into account in any analysis or comparison involving the basic wage component of such wage rates.

The basic wage for this area of the Northern Territory has been varied in the same manner as other basic wages determined by the Commonwealth Industrial Tribunal. Since the suspension in September, 1953 of automatic quarterly adjustments based on movements in the "C" Series retail price index numbers, two increases of 10s.—one payable in June, 1956 and the other in May, 1957—have been made to the basic wage for adult males. The basic wage payable to an adult male as from the first pay-period on or after 15th May, 1957 was £13 2s.

5. **State Basic Wages.**—(i) *New South Wales.*—The first determination under the New South Wales Industrial Arbitration Act of a standard "living" wage for adult male employees was made on 16th February, 1914, when the Court of Industrial Arbitration fixed the "living" wage at £2 8s. a week for adult male employees in the metropolitan area. A Board of Trade established in 1918, with power to determine the living wage for adult male and female employees in the State, made numerous declarations during the period 1918 to 1925, but ceased to function after the Industrial Arbitration (Amendment) Act, 1926 transferred its powers, as from 15th April, 1926, to the Industrial Commission of New South Wales. The Industrial Arbitration (Amendment) Act, 1927 altered the constitution of the Industrial Commission from a single Commissioner to one consisting of three members. Act No. 14 of 1936, however, provided for the appointment of four members and Act No. 36 of 1938 for the appointment of not less than five and not more than six members. The Commission was directed, *inter alia*, "not more frequently than once in every six months to determine a standard of living and to declare . . . . the living wage based upon such standard for adult male and female employees in the State." The Industrial Arbitration (Amendment) Act, 1932 directed the Commission within twenty-eight days from the end of the months of March and September to adjust the living wages so declared to accord with the increased or decreased cost of maintaining the determined standard. The first declaration of the Commission was made on 15th December, 1926, when the rate for adult males was fixed at £4 4s. a week, the same rate as that previously declared by the Board of Trade. The adult male rate was determined on the family unit of a man, wife and two children from 1914 to 1925; a man and wife only in 1927, with family allowances for dependent children; and a man, wife, and one child in 1929, with family allowances for other dependent

children. However, with the adoption in 1937 of the Commonwealth basic wage (*see* below), the identification of a specified family unit with the basic wage disappeared.

Employees in rural industries are not covered by the rates shown in the following table; a living wage for rural workers of £3 6s. a week was in force for twelve months from October, 1921 and a rate of £4 4s. operated from June, 1927 to December, 1929, when the power of industrial tribunals to fix a living wage for rural workers was withdrawn. This power was restored by an amendment to the Industrial Arbitration Act made in June, 1951.

The variations in the living wage determined by the industrial tribunals of New South Wales are shown below:—

BASIC WAGE DECLARATIONS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

(*State Jurisdiction.*)

Male.		Female.	
Date of Declaration.	Basic Wage per Week.	Date of Declaration.	Basic Wage per Week.
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
16th February, 1914 ..	2 8 0	..	..
17th December, 1915 ..	2 12 6	..	..
18th August, 1916 ..	2 15 6	..	..
5th September, 1918 ..	3 0 0	17th December, 1918 ..	1 10 0
8th October, 1919 ..	3 17 0	23rd December, 1919 ..	1 19 0
8th October, 1920 ..	4 5 0	23rd December, 1920 ..	2 3 0
8th October, 1921 ..	4 2 0	22nd December, 1921 ..	2 1 0
12th May, 1922	3 18 0	9th October, 1922 ..	1 19 6
10th April, 1923	3 19 0		2 0 0
7th September, 1923 ..	4 2 0		2 1 6
24th August, 1925 ..	4 4 0		2 2 6
27th June, 1927	4 5 0		2 6 0
20th December, 1929 ..	4 2 6		2 4 6
26th August, 1932 ..	3 10 0		1 18 0
11th April, 1933	3 8 6	(*a*)	1 17 0
20th October, 1933 ..	3 6 6		1 16 0
26th April, 1934	3 7 6		1 16 6
18th April, 1935	3 8 6		1 17 0
24th April, 1936	3 9 0		(*b*)1 17 6
27th October, 1936 ..	3 10 0		1 18 0
27th April, 1937	3 11 6(*c*)		1 18 6

(*a*) From 1923 dates of declaration were the same as those for male rates. (*b*) Rate declared, £1 15s. 6d., but law amended to provide a rate for females at 54 per cent. of that for males. (*c*) From October, 1937 until November, 1955, when automatic quarterly adjustment was reintroduced in New South Wales, the rates followed those declared for that State by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration.

Following on the judgment of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration of 23rd June, 1937 (*see* page 58), the Government of New South Wales decided to bring the State basic wage into line with the Commonwealth rates ruling in the State, and secured an amendment of the Industrial Arbitration Act (No. 9 of 1937) to give effect thereto. The Act came into operation from the commencement of the first pay-period in October, 1937. The general principles laid down by the Commonwealth Court were followed as closely as practicable and provision was made for the automatic adjustment of wages in conformity with variations of retail prices as shown by the Commonwealth Court's "All Items" retail price index numbers, shortly known as the

" Court " series of index numbers. The Commonwealth Court's principle of treating the " Prosperity " loadings as a separate and non-adjustable part of the total basic wage was adopted. The rates for country towns were, with certain exceptions, fixed at 3s. a week below the metropolitan rate; and Crown employees, as defined, received a " Prosperity " loading of 5s. a week, as against the 6s. laid down for employees in outside industry. The basic rate for adult females was fixed at 54 per cent. of the adult male rate, to the nearest sixpence. The provisions of the main Acts for the periodic declaration of the living wage by the Industrial Commission were repealed, but the amending Act placed on the Commission the responsibility of altering all awards and agreements in conformity with the intentions of the new Act; of defining boundaries within which the various rates are to operate;* and of specifying the appropriate " Court " Series retail price index numbers to which they are to be related.

An amendment to the Industrial Arbitration Act, assented to on 23rd November, 1950, empowered the Industrial Commission to vary the terms of awards and industrial agreements affecting male rates of pay, to the extent to which the Commission thought fit, to give effect to the alteration in the basic wage for adult males made by the judgment of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration of 12th October, 1950. In the case of female rates of pay the Commission was empowered to review the terms of awards and industrial agreements and to vary such terms as in the circumstances the Commission decided proper, but no variation was to fix rates of pay for female employees lower than the Commonwealth basic wage for adult females.

To facilitate the work of the Commission, awards were divided into separate classes, and orders were issued regarding the variations to be made to those in each class. The rates for adult males were increased by the same amounts as the corresponding Commonwealth rates, with special provision to cover the cases of apprentices, casual workers and employees on piecework. In deciding the variation for female employees the Commission prescribed an increase in the total wage rate (i.e., basic wage plus marginal rate) of £1 4s. 6d. a week, subject to the statutory provision (incorporated in the amendment of 23rd November) that the minimum total rate was to be not less than the basic wage for adult females prescribed in Commonwealth awards, that is, at least 75 per cent. of the corresponding male basic wage rate.

In the judgment delivered on 9th March, 1951, giving reasons for its decision on female rates, the Commission decided that the basic wage for adult females prescribed by the Commonwealth Court in reality included a portion " due to secondary considerations," and could not be considered a " reasonable and proper basic wage for the assessment of rates of female employees under the Industrial Arbitration Act ".

In discussing the composition of the amount of £6 3s. 6d. which the Commonwealth Court, in its judgment of October, 1950, had prescribed as the basic wage for adult females in New South Wales, the Commission stated:—

> " After giving the matter fullest consideration, we think in the circumstances it is reasonable to allocate £1 of the said sum of £6 3s. 6d. to secondary considerations and to regard the amount of £1 4s. 6d. as an addition proper to be made to the pre-existing basic wage in New South Wales of £3 19s. The total, £5 3s. 6d., becomes therefore the true female basic wage for Sydney under the State Act ".†

* *New South Wales Industrial Gazette*, Vol. 52, pp. 783–4. † *New South Wales Arbitration Reports*, 1951, p. 16.

As a consequence of the overriding statutory requirement that no rate for adult females in State awards shall fall below the Commonwealth basic wage for adult females, the amount of the quarterly adjustments to the female basic wage for changes in the "Court" Series index numbers was the same in Commonwealth and State awards.

By an amendment to the Industrial Arbitration Act in June, 1951, the differentiation in the basic wage rates in different districts and for employees under Crown awards was eliminated as a general rule, making the basic wage throughout most of the State equal to that paid in Sydney, the main exception being the Broken Hill district, where a different basic rate still prevails.

The decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in September, 1953 to discontinue the system of automatic adjustment of the basic wage consequent on changes in the "Court" Series retail price index numbers was considered by the New South Wales Industrial Commission. On 23rd October, 1953 the Commission certified that there had been an alteration in the principles upon which the Commonwealth basic wage was computed and ordered the deletion of the automatic adjustment clauses from awards and agreements within its jurisdiction.* In October, 1955, however, the New South Wales Government passed the Industrial Arbitration (Basic Wage) Amendment Act, which required the Registrar of the Industrial Commission to restore, to all awards and agreements within its jurisdiction, quarterly adjustments of the basic wage consequent on variations in retail price index numbers. Subsequently the basic wage was adjusted as from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in November, 1955, when the rates for the State, excluding Broken Hill, became £12 13s. for adult males and £9 9s. 6d. for adult females.

The new rate of £12 13s. a week for adult males was an increase of 10s. on the rate previously payable from August, 1953 and represented the full increase in the "C" Series retail price index numbers between the June quarter, 1953 and the September quarter, 1955.

The movement in the "C" Series retail price index numbers in respect of the September quarter, 1956 was materially affected by the abnormal price movements in potatoes and onions brought about by a diminution in supplies of these items in most States of Australia.

In order to assist public understanding of the trends in retail prices within the definition of the respective indexes, the Commonwealth Statistician, in his statistical bulletin *The "C" Series Retail Price Index, September Quarter, 1956* showed two sets of index numbers, namely, "Aggregate All Groups" and "All Groups *excluding* price movements of potatoes and onions".

The Industrial Registrar of the Industrial Commission of New South Wales, in accordance with section 61M(2) of the Industrial Arbitration Act, varied awards, etc., under the jurisdiction of that tribunal to incorporate an adjustment of 11s. a week in the basic wage as from the first pay-period in November, 1956. This basic wage adjustment was based on the "C" Series retail price index number "Aggregate All Groups" in respect of Sydney for the September quarter, 1956.

The Metal Trades Employers' Association and others appealed to the Industrial Commission of New South Wales against the decision of the Registrar and contended that the basic wage adjustment operative from the

* *New South Wales Industrial Gazette*, Vol. 111, p. 128.

first pay-period in November, 1956 should be determined by using the Commonwealth Statistician's retail price index number "All Groups *excluding* price movements of potatoes and onions" for the September quarter, 1956.

The Industrial Commission, in its judgment of 5th November, 1956, dismissed the appeal and supported the decision of the Registrar to make quarterly adjustments to the basic wage by the application of the "C" Series Index on its customary basis.

Automatic adjustments based on the "C" Series retail price index numbers for Sydney have been made for each subsequent quarter. The rates payable in Sydney as from the first pay-period in November, 1957 were £13 10s. a week for adult males and £10 2s. 6d. for adult females.

(ii) *Victoria.*—There is no provision in Victorian industrial legislation for the declaration of a State basic wage. Wages Boards constituted from representatives of employers and employees and an independent chairman, for each industry group or calling, determine the minimum rate of wage to be paid in that industry or calling. In general, these Boards have adopted a basic wage in determining the rate of wage to be paid.

By an amendment to the Factories and Shops Act in 1934, Wages Boards were given discretionary power to include in their determinations appropriate provisions of relevant Commonwealth awards. A further amendment to this Act in 1937 made it compulsory for Wages Boards to adopt such provisions of Commonwealth awards. This amending Act also gave Wages Boards power to adjust wage rates "with the variation from time to time of the cost of living as indicated by such retail price index numbers published by the Commonwealth Statistician as the Wages Board considers appropriate". The Wages Boards thus adopted the basic wages declared by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration and followed that Court's system of adjusting the basic wage in accordance with variations in retail price index numbers.

After the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration discontinued the system of automatic adjustment of the Commonwealth basic wage (*see* page 62), a number of Wages Boards met in September, 1953 and deleted references to these adjustments. However, an amendment to the Factories and Shops Act in November, 1953 required Wages Boards to provide for the automatic adjustment of wage rates in accordance with variations in retail price index numbers.

From 1st July, 1954 the Factories and Shops Acts 1928–1953 were replaced by the Labour and Industry Act 1953, which was, in general, a consolidation of the previous Acts and retained the requirement providing for the automatic adjustment of wages in accordance with variations in retail price index numbers.

An amendment to the Labour and Industry Act proclaimed on 17th October, 1956 deleted the automatic adjustment provision and directed Wages Boards in determining wage rates to take into consideration relevant awards of, or agreements certified by, the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The last automatic quarterly adjustment of the basic wage made, based on the variation in retail price index numbers for the June quarter, 1956, became payable from the beginning of the first pay-period in August, 1956. The rates, which were still payable in December, 1957, were £13 3s. a week for adult males and £9 17s. for adult females.

(iii) *Queensland.*—The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1929 repealed the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916 and amendments thereof, and the Basic Wage Act of 1925. The Board of Trade and Arbitration was abolished, and a Court, called the Industrial Court, was established. The Act provides that it shall be the duty of the Court to make declarations as to—(*a*) the " basic " wage, and (*b*) the maximum weekly hours to be worked in industry (called the " standard " hours). For the purposes of making any such declarations the Court shall be constituted by the Judge and two members, one of whom shall be also a member of the Queensland Prices Board.

The main provisions to be observed by the Court when determining the " basic " wage are—(*a*) the minimum wage of an adult male employee shall be not less than is sufficient to maintain a well-conducted employee of average health, strength and competence, and his wife and a family of three children in a fair and average standard of comfort, having regard to the conditions of living prevailing among employees in the calling in respect of which such minimum wage is fixed, and provided that the earnings of the children or wife of such employee shall not be taken into account; (*b*) the minimum wage of an adult female employee shall be not less than is sufficient to enable her to support herself in a fair and average standard of comfort, having regard to the nature of her duties and to the conditions of living prevailing among female employees in the calling in respect of which such minimum wage is fixed. The Court shall, in the matter of making declarations in regard to the basic wage or standard hours, take into consideration the probable economic effect of such declaration in relation to the community in general, and the probable economic effect thereof upon industry or any industry or industries concerned.

The first formal declaration of a basic wage by the Queensland Court of Industrial Arbitration was gazetted on 24th February, 1921, when the basic wage was declared at £4 5s. a week for adult males and £2 3s. for adult females. Prior to this declaration the rate of £3 17s. a week for adult males had been generally recognized by the Court in its awards as the " basic " or " living " wage. The declarations of the Industrial Court are published in the *Queensland Industrial Gazette* and the rates declared at various dates are as follows:—

BASIC WAGE DECLARATIONS IN QUEENSLAND.

(*State Jurisdiction.*)

Date of Operation.	Adult Basic Wage.						Date of Operation.	Adult Basic Wage.					
	Male.			Female.				Male.			Female.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1st March, 1921 ..	4	5	0	2	3	0	1st April, 1938 ..	4	1	0	2	3	0
1st March, 1922 ..	4	0	0	2	1	0	7th August, 1939 ..	4	4	0	2	5	0
28th September, 1925(*a*)	4	5	0	2	3	0	31st March, 1941 ..	4	9	0	2	8	0
1st August, 1930 ..	4	0	0	2	1	0	4th May, 1942(*b*) ..	4	11	0	2	9	6
1st December, 1930 ..	3	17	0	1	19	6	23rd December, 1946(*c*)	5	5	0	3	0	6
1st July, 1931 ..	3	14	0	1	19	0	7th December, 1950(*c*)	7	14	0	5	2	6
1st April, 1937	3	18	0	2	1	0	1st February, 1954(*d*)	11	5	0	7	11	0

(*a*) Fixed by Basic Wage Act. (*b*) Quarterly adjustments provided by judgment of 21st April, 1942—*see* p. 90. (*c*) Consequent upon basic wage increases granted by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. (*d*) Rates declared in 1954 Basic Wage Inquiry (*see* p. 90).

On 15th April, 1942 the Court declared the rates operative from 31st March, 1941 as adequately meeting the requirements of section 9 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1932, having regard to the level of the "C" Series retail price index for Brisbane for the December quarter, 1941, and decided to make a quarterly declaration of the basic wage on the basis of the variations in the "cost of living" as disclosed by the "C" Series index for Brisbane, commencing with the figures for the March quarter, 1942. This declaration was duly made by the Court on 21st April, 1942 at the rates of £4 11s. for adult males and £2 9s. 6d. for adult females. Following this judgment regular quarterly adjustments were made to the basic wage until January, 1953 (*see* below).

The Queensland Industrial Court granted increases of 7s. and 5s. to the basic wages for adult males and adult females respectively, payable from 23rd December, 1946, following the "interim" basic wage judgment of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration announced earlier in December, 1946 (*see* page 59).

Following the decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration to increase the male and female basic wages from December, 1950 (*see* page 60), the Queensland Industrial Court conducted an inquiry as to what change should be made to the State basic wage for Queensland. The Industrial Court granted an increase of 15s. a week to both adult males and adult females, thus increasing the metropolitan rates to £7 14s. a week and £5 2s. 6d. a week respectively. The increase became operative from 7th December, 1950. The basic wage payable to adult females was approximately 66 per cent. of the male rate.*

In January, 1953 the Queensland Industrial Court departed from the practice (established in 1942) of varying the basic wage in accordance with quarterly variations in the "C" Series retail price index numbers for Brisbane. If the practice had been continued, a reduction of 1s. would have been made in the basic wage for adult males from January, 1953. The Court was not satisfied, however, that the movement in the "C" Series index for Brisbane for the December quarter, 1952 was a true representation or reflex of the economic position for Queensland as a whole and so declined to make any alteration to the then existing basic wage.†

Quarterly adjustments were made for the next four quarters and the basic wage became £11 5s. for adult males from 1st February, 1954.

Commencing in March, 1954 a Basic Wage Inquiry was conducted by the Court and in its judgment of 11th June, 1954 the Court stated that there would be no change in the basic wage rates declared for February, 1954.‡

At subsequent hearings consequent on the movement in the "C" Series retail price index numbers for Brisbane in respect of the quarters ended 30th June, 30th September and 31st December, 1954 and 31st March, 1955 the Court again decided not to vary the existing basic wage rates. However, after considering the "C" Series index number for the quarter ended 30th June, 1955 and its relation to the index number for the March quarter, 1955 the Court announced that as these figures showed a continued upward trend of cost of living in 1955 the basic wage for adult males should be increased from £11 5s.

* *Queensland Industrial Gazette*, Vol. 35, p. 1253. † *Qld. I.G.*, Vol. 38, p. 137. ‡ *Qld. I.G.*, Vol. 39, p. 355.

to £11 7s. from 1st August, 1955. In this judgment the Court emphasised that it holds itself free whether or not to adjust the basic wage upwards or downwards in accordance with movement in the "C" Series retail price index number.

Subsequently, the basic wage rates were again increased by the Court, following the movement in the "C" Series retail price index number for the quarter ended 30th September, 1955 and the rates payable from 24th October, 1955 became £11 9s. for adult males and £7 14s. for adult females in the Southern Division (Eastern District).

After considering the movement in the "C" Series retail price index numbers for Brisbane, the Queensland Industrial Court in February, 1956 declined to vary the basic wage, and in April and July, 1956 granted separate increases of 4s. payable from 23rd April and 23rd July.

In announcing an increase of 4s. in the adult male basic wage for Brisbane payable from 29th October, 1956, the Court stated that due weight had been always given to variations in the "C" Series retail price index numbers in determining the basic wage. However, the Court felt that the considerable increases in the "C" Series index numbers for the September quarter, 1956, due substantially to the abnormal increases in the prices of potatoes and onions, made the index unreal as to the movement in retail prices generally. Under the circumstances, the Court decided not to increase the basic wage by the amount which would have applied if the wage had been automatically adjusted on the basis of the "C" Series retail price index numbers including potatoes and onions.

Consequent on the issue of the "C" Series retail price index numbers for the December quarter, 1956, the Court announced there would be no change in the basic wage as the movement in the "C" Series index numbers for Brisbane was such that if the system of automatic adjustments had applied the basic wage would have been equal to the wage declared by the Court in the previous quarter. This fact prompted the following comment by the Court in the basic wage declaration of January, 1957: "The existing basic wage of £12 1s. for adult males truly reflects the increase in the 'C' Series index as shown between the June quarter and the end of the December quarter".

The Queensland Industrial Court, after examining the movement in the "C" Series retail price index numbers for the March, June and September quarters of 1957, increased the basic wage in April and July but made no change in October. The rates payable at the end of 1957 were those declared on 29th July, and were, in respect of Brisbane, £12 1s. for adult males and £8 2s. 6d. for adult females.

The rates shown above are applicable throughout the Southern Division (Eastern District—including Brisbane); allowances are added for other areas as follows:—Southern Division (Western District), 7s. 4d.; Mackay Division, 5s. 6d.; Northern Division (Eastern District), 10s.; and Northern Division (Western District), 17s. 4d. Half of these allowances are granted to females.*

(iv) *South Australia*—The Industrial Code, 1920–1955 provides that the Board of Industry shall, after public inquiry as to the increase or decrease in the average cost of living, declare the "living wage" to be paid to adult male employees and to adult female employees. The Board has power also to fix different rates to be paid in different defined areas.

It is provided that the Board of Industry shall hold an inquiry for the purpose of declaring the living wage whenever a substantial change in the cost of living or any other circumstances has, in the opinion of the Board,

* *Queensland Industrial Gazette*, Vol. 6, p. 826.

rendered it just and expedient to review the question of the living wage; but a new determination cannot be made by the Board until the expiration of at least six months from the date of its previous determination.

The Board of Industry consists of five members, one nominated by the Minister for Industry, two nominated by the South Australian Employers' Federation as representatives of employers, and two nominated by the United Trades and Labour Council of South Australia as representatives of employees. The member nominated by the Minister is President and presides at all meetings of the Board.

According to the Industrial Code, 1920–1955, living wage means "a sum sufficient for the normal and reasonable needs of the average employee living in the locality where the work under consideration is done or is to be done."

The family unit is not specifically defined in the Code, but the South Australian Industrial Court in 1920 decided that the "average employee" in respect of whom the living wage is to be declared is a man with a wife and three children.

The first declaration by the Board of Industry was made on 15th July, 1921, when the living wage for adult male employees in the metropolitan area was determined at £3 19s. 6d. a week. The living wage for adult female employees in the same area was declared on 11th August, 1921 at £1 15s. a week.

The living wage declarations by the Board of Industry are set out below. The rates apply to the whole State.

LIVING WAGE DECLARATIONS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

(*State Jurisdiction.*)

Male.		Female.	
Date of Operation.	Living Wage per Week.	Date of Operation.	Living Wage per Week.
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
4th August, 1921	3 19 6	1st September, 1921 ..	1 15 0
27th April, 1922	3 17 6	..	..
8th November, 1923 ..	3 18 6	..	..
15th May, 1924	4 2 0	13th November, 1924 .	1 18 0
13th August, 1925 ..	4 5 6	3rd September, 1925 ...	1 19 6
30th October, 1930 ..	3 15 0	15th January, 1931 ..	1 15 0
10th September, 1931 ..	3 3 0	24th December, 1931 ..	1 11 6
7th November, 1935 ..	3 6 0	16th January, 1936 ..	1 13 0
7th January, 1937 ..	3 9 6	29th April, 1937 ..	1 14 9
25th November, 1937 ..	3 14 0		1 16 6
5th January, 1939 ..	3 18 0		1 18 0
28th November, 1940 ..	4 4 0		2 1 0
27th November, 1941 ..	4 7 0		2 3 6
15th October, 1942 ..	4 14 0	(*a*)	2 6 2
26th September, 1946 ..	4 18 6		2 15 0
7th January, 1947(*b*) ..	5 2 0		2 17 0
8th July, 1948	5 17 0		3 6 6
19th May, 1949	6 5 0		3 8 6

(*a*) From 1937 dates of operation were the same as those for male rates. (*b*) Commonwealth rate for metropolitan area adopted.

Following the declaration of an "interim" increase in its "needs" basic wage by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration on 13th December, 1946 (*see* page 59) the South Australian Government made provision through the Economic Stability Act, 1946 for the declaration by the Governor of a living wage based on the Commonwealth basic wage for Adelaide. This action was taken because the Board of Industry had made a determination on 5th September, 1946 and under the Industrial Code was not able to make a further determination for six months. On 24th December, 1946 the Governor issued a proclamation, declaring a rate of £5 2s. a week, including the 4s. "Prosperity" loading, to operate from 7th January, 1947. The Economic Stability Act also provided for similar proclamations in respect of adjustments to the living wage; however, the powers of the Board of Industry to declare a living wage which would supersede any wage declared by proclamation were retained.

On 24th May, 1947 the Board of Industry recommended, after an inquiry that a cost of living loading of 5s. a week, over and above the metropolitan living wage, should apply to adult males located at Whyalla. This amount was subsequently adopted and continues to operate.

The Industrial Code Amendment Act, 1949 made provision for the quarterly adjustment of the living wage in accordance with the variations in the Commonwealth basic wage for Adelaide. In effect this made the State living wage and the Commonwealth basic wage equal from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in February, 1950. The prescribed adjustment to the female living wage was seven-twelfths of that made to the Commonwealth male basic wage. The Board of Industry retained power to amend the living wage but any new living wage was to be adjusted quarterly as above.

Following the decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in the 1949–50 Basic Wage Inquiry (*see* page 60), the South Australian Industrial Code was amended to provide for declarations of the living wage by proclamation, to prevent unjustifiable differences between the Commonwealth and State basic wages. By proclamation dated 30th November, 1950, the South Australian living wage in the metropolitan area was increased from £6 17s. to £7 18s. for adult males and from £3 14s. 11d. to £5 18s. 6d. for adult females, operative from 4th December, 1950. These new rates were identical with the December rates fixed by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration for the metropolitan area of South Australia.

The female rate, which had previously been approximately 54 per cent. of the male basic wage, was, by the proclamation, increased to 75 per cent. of the corresponding male rate.

The living wage for Adelaide was adjusted each quarter, as required under the State Industrial Code, in accordance with variations in the Commonwealth basic wage for Adelaide. This procedure continued until the August, 1953 adjustment, at which date the basic wages payable were £11 11s. a week for adult males and £8 13s. for adult females.

The basic wages of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration for Adelaide remained unchanged from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in August, 1953 until the first pay-period in June, 1956, when an increase of 10s. a week was granted to adult males and an increase of 7s. 6d.

to adult females. A further increase in the Commonwealth basic wage of 10s. for adult males and 7s. 6d. for adult females was granted by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission as from the first pay-period on or after 15th May, 1957. Similiar increases in the South Australian living wage were proclaimed by the Governor of South Australia on 31st May, 1956 and 9th May, 1957, on the recommendation of the President of the Board of Industry, to operate from 4th June, 1956 and 20th May, 1957, respectively. From 20th May, 1957, the living wage in the metropolitan area of South Australia was £12 11s. for adult males and £9 8s. for adult females.

(v) *Western Australia.*—The Court of Arbitration, appointed under the provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912–1952, determines and declares the "basic wage" in this State. The Court consists of three members appointed by the Governor, one on the recommendation of the industrial unions of employers and one on the recommendation of the industrial unions of employees, while the third member is a Judge of the Supreme Court. The last-mentioned member is the President of the Court.

The Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912–1952 provides that the Court of Arbitration may determine and declare a basic wage at any time on its own motion, and must do so when requested by a majority of industrial unions or by the Western Australian Employers' Federation, with the limitation that no new determination shall be made within twelve months of the preceding inquiry.

The term "basic wage" is defined in the Act as "a wage which the Court considers to be just and reasonable for the average worker to whom it applies". In determining what is just and reasonable the Court must take into account not only the needs of an average worker but also the economic capacity of industry and any other matters the Court deems relevant.

The family unit is not specifically defined in the Act, but it has been the practice of the Court to take as a basis of its calculations a man, his wife and two dependent children.

The Act provides that the Court of Arbitration may make adjustments to the basic wage each quarter if the official statement supplied to the Court by the State Government Statistician relating to the cost of living shows that a variation of 1s. or more a week has occurred, compared with the preceding quarter. These adjustments apply from the dates of declaration by the Court. The Act does not define the term "cost of living", but it has been held to mean "the basic wage as declared from time to time by the Court and as existing at the time that we [the Court] have taken into consideration the Statistician's figures." (Mr. Justice Dwyer, in the Court of Arbitration, Western Australia, in the matter of the Quarterly Adjustment of the Basic Wage, 18th August, 1931.*)

The annual and special declarations of the Court of Arbitration under the provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act are shown for the various areas of the State in the following table. It must be noted that prior to 1950 the legislation differed from that outlined above. Particulars of the previous legislation will be found in earlier issues of the Labour Report.

* *Western Australian Industrial Gazette*, Vol. 9., p. 166.

BASIC WAGE DECLARATIONS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

(State Jurisdiction.)

Date of Operation.	Metropolitan Area.				South-West Land Division.				Goldfields Areas and Other Parts of State.			
	Male.		Female.		Male.		Female.		Male.		Female.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.	
1st July, 1926 ..	4 5 0		2 5 11		4 5 0		2 5 11		4 5 0		2 5 11	
,, ,, 1929 ..	4 7 0		2 7 0		4 7 0		2 7 0		*a*4 7 0		*a*2 7 0	
,, ,, 1930 ..	4 6 0		2 6 5		4 5 0		2 5 11		4 5 0		2 5 11	
,, ,, 1931 ..	3 18 0		2 2 2		3 17 0		2 1 8		3 17 0		2 1 8	
,, ,, 1932 ..	3 12 0		1 18 11		3 13 6		1 19 8		3 18 0		2 2 2	
,, ,, 1933 ..	3 8 0		1 16 9		3 9 6		1 17 6		3 17 6		2 1 10	
,, ,, 1934 ..	3 9 6		1 17 6		3 10 0		1 17 10		3 19 6		2 2 11	
,, ,, 1935 ..	3 10 6		1 18 1		3 11 2		1 18 5		4 4 4		2 5 6	
,, ,, 1936 ..	3 10 6		1 18 1		3 11 9		1 18 9		4 6 0		2 6 5	
,, ,, 1937 ..	3 13 9		1 19 10		3 14 8		2 0 4		4 7 0		2 7 0	
,, ,, 1938 ..	4 0 0		2 3 2		4 1 0		2 3 9		4 13 3		2 10 4	
,, ,, 1939 ..	*b*4 2 2		*b*2 4 4		4 3 1		2 4 10		*b*4 16 4		*b*2 12 0	
,, ,, 1940 ..	4 2 8		2 4 8		4 3 3		2 4 11		4 16 3		2 12 0	
,, ,, 1941(*c*) ..	4 8 0		2 7 6		4 9 3		2 8 2		5 3 6		2 15 11	
,, ,, 1943 ..	4 19 1		2 13 6		4 18 1		2 13 0		5 5 9		2 17 1	
,, ,, 1944 ..	4 19 11		2 13 11		4 19 8		2 13 10		5 7 1		2 17 10	
,, ,, 1945 ..	5 0 1		2 14 1		4 19 7		2 13 9		5 7 5		2 18 0	
,, ,, 1946 ..	5 1 1		2 14 7		5 0 6		2 14 3		5 9 0		2 18 10	
26th Feb., 1947(*d*) ..	5 7 1		2 17 10		5 6 6		2 17 6		5 15 4		3 2 3	
1st July, 1947 ..	5 7 10		2 18 3		5 7 3		2 17 11		5 16 0		3 2 8	
,, ,, 1948 ..	5 15 9		3 2 6		5 15 2		3 2 2		6 4 9		3 7 4	
,, ,, 1949 ..	6 7 1		3 8 8		6 6 9		3 8 5		6 15 1		3 12 11	
,, ,, 1950 ..	7 0 0		3 15 7		6 19 9		3 15 6		7 7 3		3 19 6	
18th Dec., 1950(*d*) ..	8 6 6		4 14 1		8 6 7		4 14 2		8 14 8		4 18 6	
1st ,, 1951(*e*) ..	..		6 13 8		..		6 13 0		..		6 17 1	

(*a*) Excludes Goldfields areas, where rates were the same as those operating from 1st July, 1926. (*b*) Applicable from 24th April, 1939. (*c*) Applicable from 28th April, 1941. (*d*) Special declarations following basic wage increases granted by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. (*e*) Inquiry into female rates only.

The first declaration of the "basic wage" by the Court of Arbitration since the authority to fix one was vested in the Court by the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1925 was made on 11th June, 1926, when the rate for adult male employees was determined at £4 5s. a week, and for adult female employees at £2 5s. 11d. a week. Since that date the principal inquiries have been those of 1938, 1947, 1950 and 1951.

The declaration of 13th June, 1938 (operative from 1st July) was based on the findings of the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage, 1920 (*see* page 56). For this purpose the Court reduced the amount recommended by the Commission for a five-unit family to the equivalent for a four-unit family and brought the resulting amounts up to their purchasing equivalents at the March quarter, 1938, by means of the separate "group" retail price index numbers in respect of the sections for food, clothing and miscellaneous expenditure, and for rent added an amount which was considered fair under ruling conditions.*

The increased basic wage of 26th February, 1947, was granted after an inquiry† by the Western Australian Court of Arbitration consequent upon the "Interim" Basic Wage Judgment of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in December, 1946 (*see* page 59).

* *Western Australian Industrial Gazette*, Vol. 18, p. 151. † *W.A. I.G.*, Vol. 27, p. 39.

Following the judgment of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in the 1949–50 Basic Wage Inquiry (*see* page 60), the Western Australian Court of Arbitration resumed an inquiry which had been adjourned, to ascertain what change should be made in the State basic wage rates. In its judgment of 7th December, 1950* the Court decided that the basic wage should be increased by £1 a week for adult males and by 15s. a week for adult females. The rates in the metropolitan area then became £8 6s. 6d. for adult males and £4 14s. 1d. for adult females, operative from 18th December, 1950. In relation to the female rate the unions' claim had been for a basic wage equal to 75 per cent. of the male rate instead of the existing 54 per cent. Although this claim was not granted it was intimated that the increase of 15s. should not necessarily be regarded as the Court's final word on the subject.

As the result of a subsequent inquiry† the basic wage for adult females was increased from 1st December, 1951 to 65 per cent. of the corresponding male rate. This was subject to the condition that the increase in the basic wage should be offset by the reduction in or deletion of existing margins between the basic wage and the total wage as specified by the appropriate award or determination.

The Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration announced on 12th September, 1953 the discontinuance of quarterly adjustments. Following this decision the Western Australian Court of Arbitration exercised its discretionary power and, after reviewing the quarterly statements prepared by the Government Statistician for each quarter from the September quarter, 1953 to the March quarter, 1955, declined to make, where applicable, any adjustment to the basic wage. However, after reviewing the statement submitted by the Government Statistician for the quarter ended 30th June, 1955, the Court decided to increase the basic wage for Perth by 5s. 11d. a week for adult males and to make corresponding increases for the other areas in the State. On 2nd November, 1955, the Court announced that there would be no alteration of the existing basic wage, on the grounds that the statement submitted by the Government Statistician for the quarter ended 30th September, 1955 did not reveal the necessary statutory margin of difference from the previous quarter's figures.

Subsequently, adjustments were made to the basic wage in each quarter of 1956 and 1957. As from 28th October, 1957, the metropolitan basic wage for adult males was £13 12s. 9d. a week and for adult females £8 17s. 3d. a week.

(vi) *Tasmania.*—A State basic wage is not declared in Tasmania. Wages Boards constituted for a number of industries, from representatives of employers and employees and an independent chairman, determine the minimum rate of wage payable in each industry. Until February, 1956 these Boards generally adopted the basic wages of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in determining the rate of wage to be paid.

The Wages Boards Act 1920–1951 gives Wages Boards power to adjust wage rates in accordance with variations in the cost of living as indicated by retail price index numbers published by the Commonwealth Statistician and until November, 1953, Wages Board determinations provided for automatic adjustments of the basic wage.

* *Western Australian Industrial Gazette*, Vol. 30, p. 336. † *W.A.I.G.*, Vol. 36, p. 497.

Following the decision of the Commonwealth Court in September, 1953, to discontinue the system of automatic quarterly adjustments of the basic wage, the Minister called a compulsory conference of Wages Boards on 30th October, 1953 so that the Chairman of Wages Boards could inform his mind on the situation. After hearing the views of employer and employee representatives the Chairman stated: "I consider that the basic wage should remain stationary for a reasonable trial period . . . . . but if a serious attempt is not made to stabilize prices and in some cases to reduce them, applications can be made for meetings of Wages Boards to reconsider the position."

Before Wages Boards met to consider this matter, the wage rates for all determinations were automatically adjusted upwards from the beginning of the first pay-period in November. However, after meeting, all Wages Boards decided as from 9th December, 1953 to delete the automatic adjustment clause from determinations and cancel the adjustments made in November.

During 1955, representations were made for the restoration of automatic quarterly adjustments and, on 1st November, 1955, at the conclusion of a compulsory conference of employer and employee representatives, the Chairman of Wages Boards announced that, in his opinion, automatic quarterly adjustments should be restored in Wages Boards determinations. He suggested, however, that the adjustments should be delayed until February, 1956, so that a serious attempt could be made during November, December and January to reduce prices.

In accordance with this decision, Wages Boards met and re-inserted in determinations the provision for automatic quarterly adjustments. The wage rate payable under Wages Boards determinations from the first pay-period in February, 1956 became that which would have been payable if quarterly adjustments had continued in the period under review.

The decision of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in the 1956 basic wage case delivered in May, 1956, (*see* page 64) caused representations to be made for a review of the problem of automatic quarterly adjustments. Following requests by the Employers' Federation that Wages Boards accept the Commonwealth basic wage and delete automatic adjustment provisions from Wages Boards determinations, a compulsory conference of employer and employee representatives was held on 22nd and 25th June, 1956. On 3rd July, 1956 the Chairman issued a statement that he favoured the suspension of automatic adjustments in order to achieve some measure of stability. He added, however, that if prices continued to rise it would be necessary to review the position.

The majority of Wages Boards suspended quarterly basic wage adjustments after the August, 1956 adjustment, and to December, 1957, wage rates remained unchanged. The basic wage for Hobart generally incorporated in determinations at that date was £13 12s. for adult males and £10 4s. for adult females.

(vii) *Rates Prescribed.*—The " basic wage " rates of State industrial tribunals operative in November, 1956 and 1957 are summarized in the following table:—

STATE BASIC WAGES : WEEKLY RATES.

State.	November, 1956			November, 1957.		
	Date of Operation. (a)	Males.	Females	Date of Operation. (a)	Males.	Females.
		s. d.	s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
New South Wales—						
Metropolitan and Country, excluding Broken Hill	Nov., 1956	274 0	205 6	Nov., 1957	270 0	202 6
Broken Hill	Nov., 1956	272 0	204 0	Nov., 1957	269 0	202 0
Victoria(b)	Aug., 1956	263 0	197 0	Aug., 1956	263 0	197 0
Queensland—						
Southern Division (Eastern District), including Brisbane ..	29.10.56	241 0	162 6	29 7.57	241 0	162 6
Southern Division (Western District)	29.10.56	248 4	166 2	29.7 57	248 4	166 2
Mackay Division	29.10.56	246 6	165 3	29.7.57	246 6	165 3
Northern Division (Eastern District)	29.10.56	251 0	167 6	29.7.57	251 0	167 6
Northern Division (Western District)	29 10.56	258 4	171 2	29.7.57	258 4	171 2
South Australia(c) . ..	June, 1956	241 0	180 6	20.5.57	251 0	188 0
Western Australia—						
Metropolitan Area	29 10 56	265 2	172 4	28.10.57	272 9	177 3
South-West Land Division ..	29.10.56	262 11	170 11	28.10.57	271 5	176 5
Goldfields and other areas ..	29.10 56	262 8	170 9	28.10 57	266 7	173 3
Tasmania(b)	Aug., 1956	272 0	204 0	Aug., 1956	272 0	204 0

(a) Where dates are not quoted wage rates operate from the beginning of the first pay-period commencing in the month shown. (b) No basic wage declared. Rates shown are those adopted by most Wages Boards. (c) The living wage declared for the metropolitan area is also adopted for country areas, except at Whyalla, where a loading of 5s. a week is generally payable.

§ 5. Wage Margins.

On 5th November, 1954 the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration delivered a judgment* which in effect became a general determination of the basis upon which all relevant wage and salary margins should be assessed. This became known as the Metal Trades Case, 1954.

General principles of marginal rate fixation had previously been enunciated by the Court in the Engineers' Case of 1924, the Merchant Service Guild Case of 1942 and the Printing Trades Case of 1947, and the Court adopted these in so far as they were applicable to current circumstances.

" Margins " were defined as—

> " Minimum amounts awarded above the basic wage to particular classifications of employees for the features attaching to their work which justify payments above the basic wage, whether those features are the skill or experience required for the performance of that work, its particularly laborious nature, or the disabilities attached to its performance."

A brief account of the Metal Trades Case is as follows:—

The Amalgamated Engineering Union, the Electrical Trades Union and other employee organizations parties to the Metal Trades award, 1952, filed applications during 1953 for increased margins for all workers covered by this award.

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 80, p. 3.

The applications came on for hearing before J. M. Galvin, *C.C.*, who decided that they raised matters of such importance that, in the public interest, they should be dealt with by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. On 16th September and 6th October, 1953 the Conciliation Commissioner, pursuant to section 14A of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, referred these applications to the Court.

The actual claims of the trade unions were that the marginal rate of 52s. a week payable to a fitter in the metal trades should be increased to 80s. a week (86s. for certain electrical trades) with proportionate increases for other award occupations. The margins then current, with a few exceptions, had been in existence since 1947. The employees' claims were in the nature of a test case to determine the attitude of the Court to applications for increased margins.

The Metal Trades Employers' Association and other respondents to the Metal Trades award had counter-claimed that existing margins for skilled tradesmen should remain unaltered, while those paid to partly skilled or unskilled workers should be reduced.

The Court decided to take the Commissioner's two references together and the matter came on for hearing before the Full Arbitration Court (Kelly *C. J.*, Kirby, Dunphy and Morgan *JJ.*) in Melbourne on 13th October, 1953.

In a judgment delivered on 25th February, 1954 the Court held that a prima facie case had been made for a re-assessment of margins but that the economic situation at that time, particularly in regard to the level of costs, did not permit of such a comprehensive review. The Court decided that to avoid the creation of new disputes, to save expense and to obviate procedural difficulties, it would not reject the claims but adjourn them until 9th November, 1954.

On 25th and 26th August, 1954, summonses were filed by the employees' organizations for orders that proceedings in this case be brought forward and the hearing was resumed on 5th October, 1954.

In a judgment delivered on 5th November, 1954 the Court made an order re-assessing the marginal structure in the Metal Trades award by, in general, raising the current amount of the margin to two and a half times the amount of the margin that had been current in 1937. However, in cases in which the result of that calculation produced an amount less than the existing margin the existing margin was to remain unaltered. In effect, this decision increased the margin of a fitter from 52s. a week to 75s. a week, increased similarly margins of other skilled occupations, and made no increase in margins of what may generally be described as the unskilled or only slightly skilled occupations under the Metal Trades award.

At the end of its judgment the Court stated that, while its decision in this case related immediately to one particular industry, it was expected to afford general guidance to all authorities operating under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act or under other legislation which provided for tribunals having power to make references, or being subject to appeal, to the Court, where the wage or salary may properly be regarded as containing a margin. The Court added observations for the guidance of these and of other tribunals "which may regard decisions of this Court as of persuasive authority."

In view of the widespread effects of this judgment some extensive extracts from it are given below:—

> "Margins are minimum amounts awarded above the basic wage to particular classifications of employees for the features attaching to their work which justify payments above the basic wage, whether those features

are the skill or experience required for the performance of that work, its particularly laborious nature, or the disabilities attached to its performance. Furthermore, the assessment of each margin should be made in relation to each other margin, so that the margin awarded to one employee should bear, as far as possible, its proper monetary comparison with that of every other employee awarded a margin, having in mind the various matters which in each case should be weighed in assessing the margin. These observations may appear to be somewhat trite, but we state them because we think that they are often forgotten or overlooked."*

"The first task of the Court in the problem of determining what should be the present assessment or re-assessment of margins in this industry has been to decide what can be regarded—generally speaking—as a sound basis on which to build. Our conclusion on this question is that the proper point for a general approach to this question is the variation order made by Beeby *J.* on the 23rd February, 1937 . . ."†

"Since 1937 there have been four major decisions which have increased the margins in this industry; certainly three of these have resulted in distortions of greater or lesser degree of the scheme of margins assessed by Beeby *J.* in 1937. The distortions to which we refer have resulted in each case in the improvement of the relative marginal position of the unskilled or relatively unskilled employee in comparison with that of the skilled. In two of these cases the major adjustments of margins which were made were the result in part of the agreement of some employers."†

"The cumulative effect of the distortions resulting from the addition of the loadings in 1941, and of the two variation orders made by Mr. Commissioner Mooney in 1947, can conveniently be seen in the following table which sets out certain selected classifications, some of which have been regarded as "key" classifications in the industry:—

Title of classification.	Margin under 1937 orders.	Margin including "loading" under 1941 order.	Margin including "loading" under first Mooney order of 1947.	Margin including "loading" under second Mooney order of 1947.
Duster	50s.	56s.	65s.	82s. 6d.
Fitter	30s.	36s.	45s.	52s.
Annealer	25s.	29s.	36s.	42s. 6d.
Machinist 2nd class ..	20s.	24s.	31s.	37s.
Machinist 3rd class ..	14s.	17s.	22s.	28s.
Process worker ..	8s.	11s.	16s.	22s.
Racksman	4s.	7s.	12s.	18s.
All other labourers ..	Nil	3s.	3s.	3s.

An examination of this table shows in a somewhat startling way the deterioration of the relative position of the skilled employee's margin in relation to the margins of the semi-skilled or unskilled."‡

"In our earlier reasons we said:—

'The Court has in the past rejected the principle that marginal rates should be adjusted, either automatically or from time to time, in accordance with variations in the purchasing power of money. It again rejects this principle.'

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 80, p. 24. † Ibid., p. 25. ‡ Ibid., p. 29.

" Mr. Eggleston (Counsel for the unions) in discussing that observation during the adjourned hearing remarked that the claim was not now made that the margins should be automatically adjusted on change in the value of money. But the claim now made is that at this 'time' such an adjustment should be made, provided that in the view of the Court the economic state of the country can sustain the burden of the adjustment. On the question of the adjustment of margins according to variation in the value of money we do not propose to add anything to what we said earlier, and we again reject the claim that wage justice requires that, even *prima facie*, a margin properly assessed earlier should be adjusted when it comes up for re-assessment by relation to a change in the purchasing power of money.

" In our earlier reasons we said:—

> 'The court adopts the general principles of marginal fixation enunciated in the *Engineers Case* of 1924, the *Merchant Service Guild Case* of 1942, and the *Printing Trades Case* of 1947.'

" In the *Printing Trades Case* of 1947, Kelly *J.* (as he then was), after reviewing earlier decisions of this Court relating to the assessment of margins, including the *Engineers Case* of 1924 and the *Merchant Service Guild Case* of 1942, said:—

> 'I conclude, therefore, that the following rules should guide me in the review of wage rates sought by the present application:—
>
> 1. That it must be put upon the applicant Union to satisfy the Court that material change in circumstances, occurring since the making of the award, has rendered the rates then prescribed as minima no longer just as such.
> 2. That the standard of justice must be the true value to-day of the work for which the rates are to be made payable as minima.
> 3. That the true value is not to be ascertained by reference to high wages being paid on account of accidental and temporary conditions connected with a shortage of labour.
> 4. That the true value is not to be ascertained by reference to variation in the purchasing power of money since the award was made.
> 5. That the assessment of the true value must have regard to comparisons of minimum rates payable for work in comparable industries or of comparable occupations.'

" Paragraph 4 of that quotation should be read with a sentence later in the same reasons in which Kelly *J.*, in giving his reasons for assessing the margin of the hand-compositor at a new and higher rate, remarked:—

> 'Whilst not allowing myself to inform my decision by reference to any proportionate fall in the purchasing power of money since either the 1942 or previous awards were made, I have not forgotten that nominal values of all things, including the nominal value of work, must tend to increase with an increase in the nominal prices of essential commodities.'

"We think that it may be convenient to discuss first the position of the fitter, whom we may take as exemplifying the position of the really skilled employee under this award. (We do not wish it to be thought, however, that in discussing the position of the fitter first we have in any sense looked upon him in isolation from the other classifications in the award. The problem must be considered as a whole and it is desirable for us to mention before we come to the margin of the fitter that we are clearly of the opinion that looked at from any point of view—whether from the value of money or otherwise—no case has been made out for any increase in the margins prescribed for what may generally be described as the unskilled or only slightly skilled employees.) We have said that the fitter's margin in 1937 was assessed at 30s.; it has now reached 52s. Our task is to decide what is 'the true value today of the work' which the fitter does. The fact, of which there is some evidence, that a large body of other employees not in this industry have been awarded increases in margins since 1947 may have seemed to supply some *prima facie* ground for the increase of the fitter's margin, awarded in 1947 by the Full Court, which has not since been increased; but the evidence on that score is of such a nature that it would provide but an uncertain foundation upon which to decide that the fitter's margin should be increased by comparison; still less does it point to any particular amount as an appropriate increase. We may mention as one difficulty that we do not know the extent to which the increases in margins in other industries since 1947 were themselves reflections of the increase in the fitter's margin in that year. Indeed, as to the fitter's margin it is generally difficult to re-assess it by relation to the margins of other skilled employees, since the fitter's margin has itself been so often accepted as a key margin for the skilled employee. We mentioned in our earlier reasons that evidence had been tendered as to 'over-award' payments in fact being made in this industry. No further evidence was tendered on this subject and we do not feel able to add anything further to our earlier observations upon it. But our view is that the real mischief which our assessment of the margins in this case is required to cure is that which we believe to exist in the relative position of the margin for the skilled employee in relation to the margin for the unskilled, a state of affairs which we believe is not confined to this industry. In attempting to rectify the relative position of the skilled employee, we cannot overlook the fact that any increase in his margin is likely to have some reflection in the marginal rates of other skilled employees not in this industry. It is particularly because of this fact that in making any increase for the skilled employee we have anxiously considered the state of the economy. Our examination of the economy and our conclusions thereon will be found set out later in these reasons. In attempting to find the true value of the margin for the fitter today, we have not forgotten that the nominal value of his skill must tend to increase with the increase in the nominal prices of essential commodities, a feature which was present in the mind of Kelly *J.* in the *Printing Trades Case*, as we have indicated. We have concluded that, viewed in the light of present monetary values and in the whole setting of marginal rates, the fitter's margin should now be assessed at 75s. That amount is two and a half times the fitter's 1937 margin. It has not been calculated by adjusting the 30s. margin to any change in the value of money since 1937. But for the benefit of those interested in such comparisons we may mention that the Commonwealth Statistician's "C" series index number for the six capital cities for the December quarter 1936, that

available at the time when Beeby *J.* made his variation order on the 23rd February, 1937, was 862; the comparable number for the September quarter 1954 was 2321; the last-mentioned number is a little more than two and two-thirds times the first. It may be seen therefore, that an award of 75s. per week as the margin for the fitter gives him now only a little below the same purchasing value as his 1937 margin gave if measured by the "C" series index. On this aspect of the matter we may quote the following passage from our earlier reasons in these matters:—

> 'It is apposite to mention here the many benefits which all or many employees covered by the awards of this Court have received at the instance of the unions since the termination of hostilities in the second world war. These have included the increase in the real value of the basic wage, the extension of paid annual leave, the reduction of the standard ordinary working week from forty-four hours to forty, the increase in so-called "penalty" rates for work performed at the week-end and, speaking generally, the large increases in margins for work which is unskilled or which requires little skill or experience. All of these things not inconsiderably supplemented by over-award payments gained in most cases by the intervention of the unions have, in our opinion, substantially increased wage costs and have thereby contributed to the fall in the value of money on which the claim of the unions for the increase in margins very largely rests in these proceedings.'

"We then proceeded to state that the 'really skilled employee has shared most of these improvements.' In the light of all these circumstances it cannot be regarded as unjust that the really skilled employee's new margin should happen to fall somewhat short in purchasing-power of the margin which was assessed for him in 1937, which we have regarded as a proper 'datum point'."*

"If the margins of the eight classifications set out in the table which earlier appears in these reasons are each multiplied by two and a half, the result is as follows (we include for purposes of comparison the present margin):—

——	1937 margin.	Present margin.	1937 margin multiplied by two and a half.
Duster	50s.	82s. 6d.	125s.
Fitter	30s.	52s.	75s.
Annealer . ..	25s.	42s. 6d.	62s. 6d.
Machinist 2nd class ..	20s.	37s.	50s.
Machinist 3rd class ..	14s.	28s.	35s.
Process worker	8s.	22s.	20s.
Racksman	4s.	18s.	10s.
All other labourers ..	Nil	3s. during first three months in metal trades industry, thereafter 9s.	Nil

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 80, pp. 31–33.

"It will be seen that as regards the three lowest paid classifications set out in the above table, the multiplication of the 1937 margin by two and a half would produce a result which if awarded would result in a reduction of the present margins. This would seem at first sight logical for complete consistency, but after consideration we have come to the conclusion that we should not reduce any margins simply because they do not accord with the scheme of re-assessment of the higher margins by relation to those prescribed in 1937. It is difficult, perhaps in some cases impossible, to ignore past history in dispensing industrial justice. We do not think that we should ignore, or that we should now attempt wholly to correct, the tendency which has been widespread during and since the recent war to award relatively higher margins to employees with less claims to marginal payments than to those in the upper marginal brackets. Moreover, our assessment of the new margin for the fitter as 75s. per week is, as we have indicated, to a large extent affected by the result of that and other trends.

"As a general rule, therefore, our new assessment of the margins in this industry is to increase the 1937 margins by two and a half. But in cases in which the result of that calculation produces an amount less than the existing margin, the existing margin remains unaltered.

"To this general approach there are, however, some exceptions."*

The Court instanced new classifications inserted since 1937 and margins re-assessed since 1937.

The judgment then proceeded to examine the statistical evidence adduced in relation to the "indicators" of the condition of the economy and concluded:—

"We can do no more than to reach our conclusions in accordance with the general picture as we see it, after pondering to the best of our ability, in the absence of any conclusive evidence being available of the bounds of economic capacity, those aspects of economic capacity of which we have some evidence.

"In fine, we are satisfied that, subject to economic considerations, the adjustments in favour of the more skilled employees' minimum rates, now to be made, ought to be made in accordance with principles of wage-justice. Then, having examined the material at hand, we have come to the conclusion that the economy can support what we have proposed.

"The variations to be made are, of course, of the minimum rates prescribed by the award. Where wages are in fact being paid at higher amounts than the minimum rates which we now prescribe, the order will be understood to be not applicable, that is to say, not effective to increase such over-award payments.

"In the statement published in February the Court endeavoured to make it clear that its judgment was 'not to be read as being determinative, except within the bounds of necessary inference, of matters in the lists of the Court relating to claims and counter-claims concerning the minimum rates of payment which should be fixed for other classes or types of employment than those to which the present references relate.' 'Insofar, however, as it deals with the claim for a general adjustment of marginal rates in accordance alone with variation of the purchasing power of money,' so proceeded the statement, 'what is said here must be understood as being necessarily applicable to all similar claims or submissions.'

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 80, pp. 33–34.

Nevertheless, it is proper, we think, again to emphasise that the decision we are now making deals only with the particular industry with which the references made by the Conciliation Commissioner are concerned. At the same time, we desire to state that what the Court now decides is expected by it to afford general guidance to all authorities operating under the *Conciliation and Arbitration Act*, or under other legislation which provides for a wage or salary-fixing tribunal having power to make references, or being subject to an appeal, to this Court, where the wage or salary may properly be regarded as containing a margin. It is desirable that we should attempt to say a little for the guidance of those authorities and perhaps also of other industrial tribunals which may regard decisions of this Court as of persuasive authority. The matter is of particular importance since we are aware not only that our decision in this case establishes a new and higher standard of margins for skilled employees covered by the Metal Trades award, but also that successive awards in this industry have in the past been regarded as guides for margins in a number of other awards. It is unwise for us to attempt to be too specific, in particular since, as we said in our reasons delivered in these references in February last, 'every claim for an increase in award rates of a marginal nature should be considered in the light of the history of the margin concerned.'

"It must be emphasised that our main purpose in prescribing new and higher margins for the skilled employees in this award has been to restore to some extent their marginal status in relation to the unskilled, and it is obvious that to give the same proportionate increase of existing margins to the unskilled as to the skilled would, generally speaking, destroy that purpose. In cases of awards in which the general marginal pattern has in the past followed that of the Metal Trades award, it would seem that no particular difficulty should be found; in those cases it may be regarded as proper to prescribe a new marginal structure which will accord, *mutatis mutandis*, with the Court's new marginal structure in the Metal Trades award. But in other cases, speaking very generally, the matter may be approached in the following manner. Margins prescribed in 1937, or shortly thereafter, since in some cases the reflection of the increase in 1937 in the Metal Trades award margins may have occurred later, could be multiplied by two and a half; if the result of the calculation is more than the present margin there would seem *prima facie* ground for its increase to that result; if not, *prima facie* there would seem to be no ground. But we emphasise that there may be exceptions to this general approach, particularly in cases of new classifications, or in cases where some change in the nature of the work done, or of the disabilities suffered by a particular class of employees has required a new assessment of margins since 1937 or thereabouts. The margins for such employees must be fitted into their appropriate places in the new scale."*

§ 6. Child Endowment in Australia.

The Commonwealth Government, in June, 1927, called a conference at Melbourne of the Premiers of the several States to consider the question of child endowment from a national standpoint. The Prime Minister submitted

* *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, Vol. 80, pp. 53-54.

various estimates of the cost of endowing dependent children under fourteen years of age in Australia at 5s. a week. After discussion, it was decided to refer the matter to a Royal Commission to be appointed by the Commonwealth Government.

The Commission submitted its report on 15th December, 1928. It was not unanimous in its findings, and the opinions and recommendations of the members were embodied in two separate reports, which dealt exhaustively with the constitutional aspects, existing systems, industrial legislation, the basic wage, standard of living, regulation of wages, working conditions and cognate matters.

The findings and recommendations in the *majority* and *minority* reports were given in Labour Report No. 19.

At the conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers held at Canberra in May, 1929, the Prime Minister stated that the Commonwealth Government was not prepared to adopt a scheme financed entirely from the proceeds of taxation, as had been recommended in the minority report. The Commonwealth Government agreed with the majority of the Commission that child endowment could not be separated from the control of the basic wage—a power which the Commonwealth did not possess and which the States were not prepared to relinquish. The Government, therefore, did not propose to establish any system of child endowment.

It was generally agreed that any scheme which would increase the charges upon industry would be unwise at that particular time. The matter of child endowment was accordingly left to be dealt with as the State Governments should think proper.

Early in 1941, the Commonwealth Government announced its intention to introduce a scheme of child endowment throughout Australia. The necessary legislation* was passed and the scheme came into operation from 1st July, 1941. Appropriate steps were then taken for the termination of existing schemes operating in New South Wales and the Commonwealth Public Service. The New South Wales system of child endowment was in operation from July, 1927 to July, 1941, and the Commonwealth Public Service system operated from November, 1920 until July, 1941. Details of these schemes appeared in earlier issues of the Labour Report (*see* No. 36, page 103). From 1st July, 1941, when the Commonwealth Child Endowment scheme was introduced, the rate of endowment for children under 16 years of age was 5s. a week for each child in excess of one in a family and for each child in an approved institution, the rate being increased to 7s. 6d. a week from 26th June, 1945, and to 10s. a week from 9th November, 1948. Endowment in respect of the first child under 16 years in a family was first provided for by an amendment of the legislation in June, 1950. As amended to December, 1957 the main features of the scheme are as follows:—

Any person who is a resident of Australia and has the custody, care and control of one or more children under the age of 16 years, or an approved institution of which children are inmates, shall be qualified to receive an endowment in respect of each child.

From 20th June, 1950, the rates of endowment have been—

(*a*) where the endowee has one child only, 5s. a week;

* Act No. 8, 1941 (Child Endowment Act) as amended by No. 5, 1942 and Nos. 10 and 41, 1945 (now Part VI. of the Social Services Act 1947-1957).

(*b*) where the endowee has two or more children—in respect of the elder or eldest child, 5s. a week and in respect of each other child, 10s. a week;

(*c*) where the endowee is an approved institution, 10s. a week for each child inmate.

There are provisions to cover cases of families divided by reason of divorce, separation, death of a parent or other circumstances. In such cases payment may be made to the father, mother or other person.

A child born during the mother's temporary absence from Australia is deemed to have been born here.

There is a twelve months residential requirement for claimants and children who were not born in Australia, but this is waived if the claimant and the child are likely to remain permanently in Australia.

There is no means test.

Endowment will be paid for the children of members of the naval, military or air forces of the United Kingdom who are serving with the Australian Forces from the time of arrival of the children in Australia.

A summary of the operations of this scheme during each of the years 1952–53 to 1956–57 is given below:—

CHILD ENDOWMENT: AUSTRALIA.

Year.	Endowed Families at 30th June.		Approved Institutions at 30th June.		Total Number of Endowed Children at 30th June.
	Number of Claims in Force.	Number of Endowed Children.	Number of Institutions.	Number of Endowed Children.	
1952–53.. ..	1,246,986	2,599,026	376	24,951	2,623,977
1953–54.. ..	1,280,439	2,689,577	387	27,397	2,716,974
1954–55.. ..	1,304,227	2,764,167	392	24,394	2,788,561
1955–56.. ..	1,339,807	2,854,524	392	21,140	2,875,664
1956–57.. ..	1,378,169	2,957,046	397	21,145	2,978,191

Year.	Amount Paid to Endowees and Approved Institutions.	Annual Liability for Endowment at 30th June.	Average Annual Rate of Endowment per Endowed Family at 30th June.	Average Number of Endowed Children per Endowed Family at 30th June.	Number of Endowed Children in each 10,000 of Population.
	£	£	£		
1952–53.. ..	53,243,722	52,012,584	41.190	2.084	2,977
1953–54.. ..	50,760,799	53,995,617	41.613	2.101	3,023
1954–55.. ..	52,529,902	55,547,635	42.104	2.119	3,031
1955–56.. ..	60,380,686	57,349,773	42.394	2.131	3,050
1956–57.. ..	57,586,732	58,966,999	42.388	2.146	3,088