

CHAPTER 15:

MOVING THE GOAL POSTS - INCREASING THE PENSION AGE FOR WOMEN

Over half of all countries have the same pensionable age for women as for men: the remainder usually retire women 5 years earlier than men, despite women's longer life expectancy. In Western countries this disparity relates to the traditional pattern of men marrying women 3-5 years younger than themselves. However, in Eastern countries, the practice of early retirement for women is seen as a reward to women for carrying the double burden of two full-time jobs, those of employee and home maker.¹

The new position

15.1 As at June 1994, the number of aged people (over 65) in Australia was 2 109 109, comprised of 1 195 695 females and 913 414 males.² The Economic Planning Advisory Council report *Australia's Ageing Society*, predicts that the number of aged people will rise to more than 5 million by the year 2051, when more than one person in five will be over the age of 65.³

15.2 In Australia, age pensions have been paid to women from the age of 60 years and to men from the age of 65 years since 1909. It is a non-contributory payment, subject to income and assets tests. As of June 1995, 1 578 698 people were receiving the age pension. Of those, 1 034 127 were women and 544 571 were men.⁴

15.3 However, a decision to raise the pension age for women to 65 years was announced in the Government's 1993-94 Budget Statement. The policy was given effect by amendment of the *Social Security Act 1991* by the *Social Security Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 1994*, which received Royal Assent on 12 July 1994.

¹ Sheila Peace cited in Perry J, *The Social Security Review: Income Support for Older Women*. Discussion Paper No 27, 1988, p 11

² Australian Bureau of Statistics Catalogue No. 3103.00, *Australian Demographic Statistics September Quarter '94*

³ Clare R, and Tulpule A, *Australia's Ageing Society*, EPAC Background Paper No 37, Jan 1994, p 18

⁴ Department of Social Security, *DSS Quarterly Survey* yet to be published in *DSS Clients - A Statistical Overview 1995*

15.4 According to the Commonwealth Department of Social Security, the decision to raise the pension age for women was taken in the context of:

- significant increases in women's labour force participation over recent decades and changed community expectations about women's attachment to the labour market;
- women's increased superannuation coverage; and
- demographic projections which point to a significant ageing of the Australian population by the second decade of the next century, with subsequent impact on age pension outlays.⁵

15.5 Over a 20 year phase-in period, from 1 July 1995 until 1 January 2014, women's pension age will increase by six months every two years. By 1 January 2014, men and women will both be eligible for the age pension at age 65 years. Table 15.1 details the phase-in timetable and the number of women expected to be affected. Some examples of how the amended legislative arrangements will impact on women are set out below. For example, a woman born:

- between 1 July 1935 to 31 December 1936 will be eligible to apply for an age pension once she has reached the age of 60 years and 6 months, that is, a woman born on 3 August 1935 reaches pension age on 3 February 1996;
- between 1 January 1946 to 30 June 1947 will be eligible to apply for an age pension once she has reached the age of 64 years, that is, a woman born on 3 February 1946 reaches pension age on 3 February 2010;
- on or after 1 January 1949 will be entitled to apply for the age pension once she has turned 65 years of age, which will be on or after 1 January 2014.

15.6 In 1995/96, around 12 000 women are expected to be affected in the first two year period by the raising of the pension age for women from 60 years to 60 years and six months.⁶ Table 15.2 indicates the expected reduction in annual average number of female age pensioners until 2014-15.

⁵ SW Sub No 92

⁶ Department of Social Security, SW Sub No 92

Table 15.1: Pension age for women

Period within which woman was born	Pension age
Prior to 1 July 1935	60 yrs
1 July 1935 to 31 December 1936	60 yrs and 6 months
1 January 1937 to 30 June 1938	61 yrs
1 July 1938 to 31 December 1939	61 yrs and 6 months
1 January 1940 to 30 June 1941	62 yrs
1 July 1941 to 31 December 1942	62 yrs and 6 months
1 January 1943 to 30 June 1944	63 yrs
1 July 1944 to 31 December 1945	63 yrs and 6 months
1 January 1946 to 30 June 1947	64 years
1 July 1947 to 31 December 1948	64 yrs and 6 months
1 January 1949 onwards	65 yrs

Source: *SW Sub No 92 - Department of Social Security*

Table 15.2: Expected reduction in annual average number of age pensioners ('000)⁷

	Age 60	Age 61	Age 62	Age 63	Age 64	Total
1994-95	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1995-96	12.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.0
1996-97	16.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.2
1997-98	29.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.2
1998-99	34.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	34.0
1999-00	34.4	14.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	48.9
2000-01	35.6	19.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	54.7
2001-02	37.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	72.0
2002-03	37.1	41.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	78.3
2003-04	39.5	41.2	16.9	0.0	0.0	97.6
2004-05	43.0	43.9	22.0	0.0	0.0	108.8
2014-15	56.3	61.6	64.3	65.7	64.9	312.8

Source: *SW Sub No 92 Supp. - Department of Social Security*

15.7 The transition to a common retirement age is expected to save the Commonwealth \$400 million.⁸

⁷ Figures conform with those supplied

⁸ Older Women's Network of Australia, SW Sub No 32

15.8 Evidence presented to the Committee's inquiry suggested a mixed response to the increase in the female pension age. In light of the past experiences of women in providing for their retirement, many viewed the change as either undesirable or too rapid in its implementation whilst others saw that it was in accordance with moves towards equality on other fronts.

15.9 The comments of Mrs Evatt, of the Foreign Service Families Association, presented at the public hearing in Canberra, strongly suggested that the position one took on this issue was influenced by one's expectations about his or her working life. She informed the Committee that she 'did not think it is at all realistic to expect that old age should be 65 for women ... [women] have not had an equal pattern of employment' and that she could not envisage seeing women in the workforce until 65. However, she continued that:

if my daughters, who are 20 and 18, were sitting here, and you asked them this question [about raising the pension age for women], I think they would probably answer you differently ... the next generation - my daughters - may well say 'Well, why can't I work until I am 65?' For me it does not seem a realistic thing, but it will be different for them and for all of this next generation.⁹

15.10 The arguments in support of the increase in the pension age for women include:

- it increases equality between the sexes;
- it enhances the potential for women to accrue additional savings and superannuation benefits from extended working lives; and that
- women's greater longevity justifies an increase in women's pension age.

Will the change increase equity between the sexes?

15.11 A number of witnesses, such as the AMP and LIFA, argued that raising the pension age for women was appropriate on the grounds of achieving equity between the sexes.¹⁰ This would be consistent with moves in other areas to eliminate discrimination.

15.12 This view was supported in a qualified manner by the Minister for Women's Affairs in Victoria. It was argued that:

⁹ Evidence, pp 479,480

¹⁰ Evidence, pp 248, 246-7

a uniform pension for men and women is in line with equal opportunity principles and therefore desirable. **However**, there are certain cohorts of women who have either lacked the opportunity to acquire work experience and marketable skills or have chosen not to do so because they see their primary role as home makers and care givers. ... A raised pension age for women needs to be carefully phased in, and an acknowledgment made that some groups of women, particularly those who have for most of their lives been working as unpaid carers, will continue to need a benefit of some kind.¹¹

15.13 The Minister acknowledged that the prevention of discrimination on the grounds of age was a necessary corollary to increasing the retirement age of women.¹² This position was strongly supported by the New South Wales Cabinet Office which stated that any raising of the pension age for women should be linked to improvements in work opportunities and outcomes for older women. They also suggested that the New South Wales policy of promoting the integration and protection of older workers should be recognised and applied on a national basis.¹³

15.14 The raising of the pension age for women on the grounds of equity was strongly disputed by a number of others who argued that the inequalities that women suffered in employment, savings and superannuation opportunities prior to retirement meant that equalising the pension age was far from creating a situation of equity.¹⁴ Instead, treating the different life experiences of men and women in a like fashion, and hence increasing the pension age of women to that of men, was to entrench the disadvantages women had faced during their working lives.

15.15 Most forcefully, Ms Smit and Ms Adamson of the Women's Action Alliance submitted that to increase women's pension age would 'breed inequality', as the increased pension age does not acknowledge the role of many women as carers.¹⁵ Mr Ottley of the Combined Pensioners Association argued that it was these caring responsibilities that had been the justification for the

¹¹ SW Sub No 66 (emphasis added)

¹² SW Sub No 66

¹³ SW Sub No 41

¹⁴ For example, Hodgins R, SW Sub No 63

¹⁵ Evidence, p 49

difference in pension age between men and women since the introduction of a Commonwealth age pension.¹⁶

15.16 Ms Margo Canavan presented herself as a case in point. While she accepted that 'the government has done a tremendous amount to remove inequality and discrimination from many avenues of life', she remained disadvantaged. Most males of her generation had spent at least 20 years continuously in the workforce and have advanced further in their careers and earnings. Despite joining the workforce in 1965, breaks in her work pattern caused by illness and the marriage bar meant that Ms Canavan would retire with 'super worth very little'.¹⁷

15.17 It was therefore argued that a lower retirement age for women compensated them for very real disadvantages faced during their working life, including the double burden of job and household tasks and generally lower pay and qualifications. To increase it would not enhance equity between the sexes.

15.18 The Catholic Women's League Australia (CWL) noted that the unequal accrual of superannuation between men and women meant many men were able to retire at age 60 or even 55 without recourse to an age pension, while for the majority of women, this option was not available. This therefore raised the question of whether treating men and women equally resulted in actual equality and challenged the role that equity played in the decision to phase-in a higher pension age for women.¹⁸

15.19 The Older Women's Network, noting that the Government expects to save \$400 million through the change, questioned whether there is an economic motive for the change. At the public hearing in Canberra, Senator Chamarette argued that there is a pretence that equality of retirement age is for equity reasons, when it is better characterised as an economic problem.¹⁹

15.20 The CWL was supported by Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific in the view that, if the main reason for the change was to achieve equity, then it might be more appropriate to decrease the retirement age for men.²⁰ Both the Women's Action Alliance and the CWL argued that this was

¹⁶ Evidence, p 266

¹⁷ SW Sub No 3

¹⁸ SW Sub No 6

¹⁹ Evidence, p 460

²⁰ SW Sub Nos 6, 23

particularly appropriate in light of high unemployment.²¹ The latter suggested that the Commonwealth should lead the way.²²

Does the increase provide an opportunity for women to accrue additional savings and superannuation benefits?

15.21 AMP presented the view that raising the pension qualifying age would increase the workforce participation rates of females, because 60 years would no longer be considered as the 'normal' retirement age.²³ The Department of Social Security supported this position, arguing that raising the pension age sent a clear message to employers and the community at large that the Government did not endorse early retirement for men or women.²⁴

15.22 This change, Ms Sylva of LIFA argued, would provide women with the opportunity to work longer if they so wished.²⁵ This was supported by Mr Cole of LIFA who stated that there had been a significant increase in the labour force participation rate of women over 50 years of age²⁶ and Ms Martin of the Institute of Actuaries who cited anecdotal evidence that a higher pension age removed an incentive for retiring earlier than an individual might otherwise do.²⁷

15.23 Ms Pagnon of the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants and Dr Tapen Sinha of the Bond University School of Finance argued, in turn, that the additional time available to accrue occupational superannuation would assist working women to achieve higher benefits.²⁸

15.24 However, both the ability to obtain employment and/or to accrue additional resources was disputed. Ms Johnson of the NSW Branch of the Older Women's Network pointed out that while the assumption is that working between 60 and 65 allows increased savings, her personal experience did not bear this out.²⁹

²¹ SW Sub Nos 15, 6

²² SW Sub No 6

²³ SW Sub No 55

²⁴ SW Sub No 92

²⁵ Evidence, pp 246-7

²⁶ Evidence, p 259

²⁷ Evidence, p 161

²⁸ SW Sub No 30, Evidence, p 344

²⁹ Evidence, pp 179-80

15.25 The Older Women's Network also questioned the capacity of women in the 60-65 age range to remain in or obtain employment and argued that there was an 'obvious and continuing disadvantage older women face in the labour market'.³⁰

15.26 According to the Network, over a 27 year period there has been a 12 per cent increase in labour force participation for women aged between 55 and 59 years and is projected to rise from 36.8 per cent in 1992 to 42.3 per cent in the year 2005. It was noted that this was well below the current participation rate of males aged 55 to 59 which is 74.7 per cent. Participation rates for women 60 and over had declined slightly.³¹

15.27 The Network argued that the DSS projection that 78 per cent of those women otherwise eligible for the age pension would continue working in either a full-time or part-time capacity was an over-estimation and that, while labour force participation was increasing, it was hardly at a rate that warranted a staged adjustment to pension age eligibility.³²

15.28 The submission of the Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association of NSW echoes similar concerns, claiming the increased pension age totally ignores the realities of the labour market. The Association claims it is extremely hard for women over 40 to obtain appropriate employment, let alone when they are over 60 years of age.³³ Unqualified, separated and divorced women and widowers were likely to be most disadvantaged by the need to return to the workforce.³⁴

15.29 This view was supported by the Country Women's Association of Australia and Ms Canavan, who asserted that older women pay the penalty of being unfairly assessed as 'past their prime' and so are far less likely to obtain employment than men.³⁵ This may also be the case for older men.

15.30 The position of carers was particularly noted by Ms Kathryn Brown of the Queensland Council of Carers who informed the Committee that 're-entry into the labour market [for carers] is simply not a reality'.³⁶

³⁰ SW Sub No 32(b)

³¹ *ibid*

³² SW Sub No 32

³³ SW Sub No 36

³⁴ Cox E, Evidence, p 307

³⁵ SW Sub Nos 49, 6

³⁶ Evidence, p 315

15.31 Mrs Simpson of the Combined Pensioner Association also questioned comments such as those presented by LIFA about the increase in the workforce by women in the older age groups. She stated that the Australian Bureau of Statistics labour market figures consider someone who has worked for more than an hour or two each week as being employed.³⁷

15.32 The Committee notes that there are trends within the community which are inconsistent with official attempts to encourage women to remain in the workforce. Economic restructuring and recession have led to increased levels of unemployment amongst older workers, many who would be best described as discouraged workers rather than as early retirees.³⁸

15.33 In addition, as pointed out by Mr Blyth of the Trustee Corporations Association of Australia, the trend in industry is to encourage employees to retire younger:

the social environment seems to be saying to people 'you have worked 35 or 40 years. It is time for you to retire' ... a lot of our large institutions are not encouraging their people to work beyond 55.³⁹

15.34 The conjunction of economic, social and retirement incomes developments have resulted in a trend towards gradual decline in the labour force participation by those aged between 55 and 64. This has been consistent throughout developed countries and Australia offers no exception.⁴⁰

15.35 Two submissions pointed out recent changes to policy which recognised the difficulties for older members of the community to gain employment and therefore supported an argument against the increase in the pension age for women. The Women's Economic Think Tank drew attention to the policy outlined in *Working Nation* to exempt those over forty years of age with little workforce experience from having to look for work.⁴¹

15.36 The other change, identified by the Victorian Minister for Women's Affairs, was the introduction of a special allowance for those unemployed who are over 55, in recognition of the fact that there is very little likelihood of their

³⁷ Evidence, p 275

³⁸ Clare R, and Tulpule A, *Australia's Ageing Society*, EPAC Background Paper No 37, Jan 1994, p 45

³⁹ Evidence, pp 97, 99

⁴⁰ Clare R, and Tulpule A, op cit

⁴¹ SW Sub No 73

finding employment. The Minister noted that amongst this group will be women who will have little or no work experience.⁴²

15.37 This is not to deny that there are those, both male and female, who may wish to extend their working lives.

Robbing Peter to pay Paul - need for alternative financial support

15.38 The Committee received evidence that, in light of the difficulties many older women are likely to experience in gaining/maintaining employment, the increase in pension age would create a need for income assistance in those years between the cessation of employment and pension eligibility if a reasonable standard of living was to be maintained.⁴³

15.39 The Victorian Minister for Women's Affairs drew particular attention to those people who have spent much of their lives working as unpaid carers, suggesting a special benefit be available at pension age to women working as unpaid carers in recognition of their inability to provide for themselves.⁴⁴

15.40 The Department of Social Security advised the Committee that a range of alternative income support payments exist to assist women affected by the increase in women's qualifying age for the age pension. These include non-activity tested payments such as Partner Allowance, Wife pension (for those already in receipt of this payment), Widow Allowance, Widow B pension, Mature Age Allowance, Carer pension, Disability Support pension and Sickness Allowance, as well as activity tested Job Search or Newstart Allowance. Those expected to look for work will have access to special provisions.⁴⁵

15.41 The Department estimates that, in 1995-96, because many of the women affected by the change belong to an age cohort whose labour force participation rates and accumulated superannuation benefits are relatively low, the vast majority (83 per cent) will be granted (or continue to receive) alternative forms of income support. Around 17 per cent will be ineligible for income support

⁴² SW Sub No 66

⁴³ SW Sub Nos 23, Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific; 28, Trustee Corporations Association of Australia; 32, Older Women's Network; Ryan S, Evidence, p 192

⁴⁴ SW Sub No 66

⁴⁵ SW Sub No 92

because either their own or their partner's income is over the means test thresholds.⁴⁶

15.42 The tables below indicate the number of women expected to transfer from the age pension to other payments and the percentage of affected women that this represents.

Table 15.3: Expected transfers to other payments ('000)⁴⁷

	Age 60	Age 61	Age 62	Age 63	Age 64	Total
1994-95	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1995-96	9.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.5
1996-97	12.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.8
1997-98	23.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.0
1998-99	26.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26.5
1999-00	26.9	11.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	38.4
2000-01	27.8	15.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	43.0
2001-02	28.9	27.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	56.7
2002-03	29.0	32.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	61.7
2003-04	30.8	32.8	13.6	0.0	0.0	77.2
2004-05	33.5	34.8	17.7	0.0	0.0	86.0
2014-15	43.9	48.9	51.6	53.6	54.5	252.6

Source: *Submission No SW 92 Supp. - Department of Social Security*

Table 15.4: Per cent expected to continue to receive Social Security payments

	Age 60	Age 61	Age 62	Age 63	Age 64	Total
1994-95						
1995-96	79.5					79.5
1996-97	79.5					79.5
1997-98	78.8					78.8
1998-99	78.0					78.0
1999-00	78.0	79.5				78.5
2000-01	78.0	79.4				78.5
2001-02	78.0	79.5				78.7
2002-03	78.0	79.4				78.8
2003-04	78.0	79.4	80.2			79.0
2004-05	78.0	79.4	80.2			79.1
2014-15	78.0	79.4	80.2	81.6	84.0	80.7

Source: *Submission No SW-92 Supp. - Department of Social Security*

⁴⁶ *ibid*

⁴⁷ Figures conform with those supplied

15.43 It could be argued then that this is an exercise of 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' with little gain and which will result in a great deal of anxiety and worry for those affected. The Committee sees the availability of alternative maintenance benefits which protect those who are unable to obtain or maintain employment as vital. It is perhaps lack of awareness by many of those who will be affected of the availability of these payments, and their fears about whether or not they will be eligible, that is the cause of the anxiety.

15.44 After considering the evidence, the Committee believes that there is a major psychological change taking place among younger women. The change is in the perception of a women's right to maintain full employment if she wishes to and she is capable.

15.45 The Committee notes the position put forward by the Department of Social Security that age pension age is often used by employers as a proxy for retirement age.⁴⁸ If the pension age for women is less than that of men, and the pension age is, in fact, considered the retirement age, then there may be pressure for women to retire and 'make way for younger blood'. There is anecdotal evidence that many women, and men, feel that they are denied promotional and other opportunities within organisations because they are near pension/retirement age.

15.46 We must ask the question then, why women should be disadvantaged by this view so many years earlier than their male colleagues, particularly when increasing numbers of women do wish to continue in the workforce either because they gain satisfaction from their work or because the remuneration is greater than that which they would obtain through receipt of the age pension?

Recommendation 15.1:

The Committee recommends that the Government undertake an information program specifically targeted at those women who are likely to be affected by the increase in the pension age which explains the change and outlines the alternative maintenance benefits available. This should be supported by an identified officer within the Department of Social Security to whom women concerned about the change can seek advice.

15.47 The Committee notes the argument put forward by the Victorian Minister for Women's Affairs, the New South Wales Cabinet Office and others, that the prevention of age discrimination in employment as a necessary corollary to increasing the pension age.⁴⁹

Does greater female longevity justify an increase in women's pension age?

15.48 It was suggested to the Committee that because women had a greater life expectancy it was inappropriate that they should retire earlier than their male counterparts. In support of this proposition, Dr Tapen Sinha of the Bond University School of Finance, suggested the longer life expectancies of women meant 'it makes eminently more sense' to have the same retirement age. As we have noted above, Dr Sinha saw this as an opportunity which would allow women to accumulate more superannuation.⁵⁰ This position was supported by the Institute of Actuaries of Australia.⁵¹

15.49 Ms Eva Cox also acknowledged that men may feel aggrieved by the requirement to work longer without access to the pension, particularly in light of women's longer life expectancy.⁵²

15.50 As a counterargument, Ms Rhonda Smith argued that as women tend to work longer hours, have less recreation time and much more family and emotional responsibility than men, they 'need to rest a little by the time they are 60'.⁵³

15.51 Given the arguments presented above, in particular, that there are many alternative forms of support for those women who are unable to obtain or maintain employment, the Committee supports the view that women who wish to continue their working lives should be given every encouragement to do so, particularly since many of them will, in fact, live for many years after their male colleagues. This has been discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

⁴⁹ SW Sub Nos 62, 43

⁵⁰ Evidence, p 344

⁵¹ SW Sub No 61

⁵² Evidence, p 307

⁵³ SW Sub No 19

Given the change, is the phase-in period appropriate?

15.52 Given the reality of the increase in the pension age for women, a number of submissions and witnesses addressed the length of time for the phase-in of the change and whether this was appropriate.

15.53 The Institute of Actuaries supported a more rapid phase-in of the pension age increase.⁵⁴ On the other hand, the Catholic Women's League claimed that achieving 'any semblance of equality is going to take far longer than the 20 year phase in period.'⁵⁵

15.54 Two particular groups were identified as being particularly affected by the current schedule of the phase-in. Ms Bedding identified that the phase-in of the higher pension age provides a particular burden for divorcees, as the laws governing settlement prior to 1975 did not allow women to receive any part of the superannuation.⁵⁶ Ms Morgan, of the Union of Australian Women, noted that the phase-in period meant that some women having faced the marriage bar will also be affected by the pension age increase.⁵⁷

15.55 Ms Morgan argued that it was difficult to establish whether a delay or a longer phase-in would improve the situation.⁵⁸

15.56 For others, such as Ms Canavan, Ms Evatt of the Foreign Service Families Association, and Ms Cox of the Women's Economic Think Tank, the increase in the pension age was considered an issue that would be regarded differently by younger people, for example those born from say 1965 onwards when opportunities for equality were greater and that therefore the phase-in period should be deferred.⁵⁹

15.57 Given the concerns relating to the impact of the phase-in, ASFA, the Cabinet Office of New South Wales and the Older Women's Network argued for a process to be instigated to monitor the impact of the phase-in of the pension age increase.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ SW Sub No 61

⁵⁵ SW Sub No 6

⁵⁶ SW Sub No 1

⁵⁷ Evidence, p 104

⁵⁸ Evidence, p 105

⁵⁹ Canavan M, Evidence, p 391; Cox E, Evidence, p 307; Evatt K, Evidence, p 480

⁶⁰ SW Sub No 43, 41, 32

15.58 For example, the Older Women's Network recommended that a Reference Group be established, alongside an overall review of employment, savings and superannuation opportunities for women over the age of 60. The Network proposed that the Reference Group include representatives from groups representing income-disadvantaged older women, such as the Older Women's Network and the Australian Pensioners and Superannuants Federation.⁶¹

15.59 The majority of the Committee believes that the phase-in for the increase in the pension age for women is appropriate, if the alternative benefits available to women are maintained.

15.60 While the Committee agrees with the need to conduct ongoing monitoring of the effect of the increase in pension age, it is also mindful of the need to provide certainty to prospective retirees.⁶²

Conclusion

15.61 The Committee notes that the two major parties have committed themselves to the increase. The Democrats remain of the view that the pension age for women should not be increased and that any inequality should be addressed by lowering the pension age for men.

⁶¹ SW Sub No 28

⁶² Equal Opportunity Commission, Victoria, SW Sub No 21