

**Submission
No 15**

INQUIRY INTO REVIEW OF THE MODERN SLAVERY ACT 2018

Organisation: Project Futures
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Submission to the Parliament of NSW
Modern Slavery Committee Inquiry
Review of the Modern Slavery Act 2018



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About Project Futures

PROJECT FUTURES is a not-for-profit organisation, run by a passionate and diverse network of inspiring professionals. We raise awareness and funding for programs dedicated to combating human trafficking and sexual exploitation globally. The vision of PROJECT FUTURES is to create an empowered world where every person can take action against modern slavery and exploitation.

Founded in 2009, PROJECT FUTURES has paved the way for innovation in this space, creating meaningful experiences and events for businesses, schools and professionals. We create innovative ways to raise awareness of the issue and provide tangible ways for all people to make real change.

The main Beneficiary of Project Futures work is AFESIP Cambodia who Restore the lives of young girls that have been victims of rape, sexual slavery and exploitation in Cambodia. The AFESIP Centre provides accommodation, rehabilitation (both physical and psychological), education and legal services, empowering women to transition from victims to survivors.

The Global Slavery Index

The 2023 Global slavery Index report by Walk Free (<https://www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/>) estimates that 50 million people were living in modern slavery on any given day in 2021, an increase of 10 million people since 2016. They also give a breakdown of the prevalence of human slavery in each country, including Australia. It is particular to note in the report, the prevalence of modern slavery in the countries that make up most of our business supply chains.

The report estimates that in Australia alone 41,000 people are living in modern slavery. An increase from 2018, which was 15,000.

Recommendations

We would like to discuss a few factors to consider in the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* to support victims and **reduce the need** of slavery.

1. The Act primarily focuses on Supply Chains and encouraging good practice to remove slavery within these supply chains. We would like to see this extended to ensuring that wages of staff are also included in reporting requirements to ensure livable wage conditions are being paid to the people making items for Australian consumers.

2. More needs to be done to spread awareness to the broad public about human trafficking in Australia. Creating awareness creates deterrence. The public need to know what trafficking/slavery is, the signs to detect its occurrence, and who to contact if they want to make a report. While this is established in the Act, more effective campaigns to educate the broader public need to occur.
3. Sex trafficking and sex tourism must also be considered in this Act. Involving the tourism industry in the Act to pave a way for due diligence and reporting. Creating knowledge and awareness will create deterrence from potential offenders.

The *Modern Slavery Act 2018* needs to focus on ways to remove the demand for slavery and slavery-like practices. Removing the demand eliminates slavery.

Well-informed public campaigns instill awareness and deter potential offenders, while, more stringent reporting including the calculations of factory workers wages, removes loopholes of unlivable wage conditions to 'remove' slavery from supply chains.

Specific comments to the Act

Division 2 - 9 General functions of Commissioner

Section 1 b and d – does this include people outside of NSW and Australia? Most supply chains for big retail outlets are based in offshore factories (This coincides with item 1 in our recommendations).

Section 1 Section c and g – What effort has been made to inform the public, including who to report to if slavery is suspected? This needs to be a bigger priority moving forward.