



Results of Madgwicks 2011 Workplace Relations Barometer

The Madgwicks Workplace Relations team is pleased to release the results of our 2011 Workplace Relations Barometer. The purpose of the survey was to gauge the sentiment of our clients about the operation of Fair Work Australia.

Overall the results of the survey show that our smaller business clients in Melbourne are less happy about the Fair Work Australia regime compared to larger businesses. Larger clients (greater than 15 employees) have indicated that the changes introduced by the current Fair Work Act have had little impact on their operations.

We received over 50 responses to the survey, which provides a useful indication of experience of the SME sector we work with. There were twice as many responses from firms with more than 15 employees than small business with less than 15 employees.

Some of the key findings from the survey were:

- Approximately 66% of our clients believe the Fair Work Act is operating indifferently or negatively. However, when compared to WorkChoices, there is an even spread of responses for worse, no difference or better.
- Re-introduction of unfair dismissal laws is regarded as negatively impacting upon employment hiring intentions for small business but is otherwise not having a significant impact on business.
- Most clients are aware of their relevant modern award and are finding it easier to use than the previous award. Most clients are also aware of the individual flexibility provisions in the award but there is limited take up of those individual flexibility provisions.

The major current Workplace Relations issues now and for 2012 are recruitment and retention which is good for the economy generally. The increasing concern about social media and adverse actions or general protections claims is reflected in our experience.

We take this opportunity to thank clients for participating in the survey and would be pleased to discuss any aspect of it at your convenience.

Seasons greetings and best wishes for the New Year.



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