

[[Previous](#)] [[Major News - Federal Politics - Workplace Issues](#)] [[Next](#)]

Tuesday 07 March 2006

THE AUSTRALIAN
FINANCIAL REVIEW

States sidestep federal IR body

Author: Mark Skulley

Publication: Australian Financial Review (8, Tue 07 Mar 2006)

Edition: First

Keywords: **Industrial (6), Workplace (1), Kevin (1), Andrews (1), union (1)**

The federal government has had another setback in its push to give unchallenged primacy to the new Fair Pay Commission in the setting of minimum wages ahead of state **industrial** tribunals.

The NSW **Industrial** Relations Commission yesterday rejected a submission from **Workplace** Relations Minister **Kevin Andrews** to delay hearing a state wage case until the FPC brought down its first ruling later this year.

The IRC ruled that, from June 5, it would hear an application by Unions NSW for a 4 per cent pay rise.

Unions are trying to partially sidestep the FPC by running state wages cases before the new body brings down its first ruling.

State **industrial** tribunals in Queensland and South Australia have recently rejected similar arguments by Mr Andrews, while unions are pushing the same claims in Western Australia and Tasmania.

A spokesman for Mr Andrews said yesterday that the government was disappointed with the decision, given the commonwealth had raised the prospect of a "potential wages breakout if states go their own way".

National cases were previously conducted by the Australian **Industrial** Relations Commission, but the federal government wants the new body to pay more attention to the unemployed and low paid, which is expected to lead to lower wage rises being awarded.

It will be about 18 months between minimum-pay rises, instead of the usual year, because of the setting up of the new body, but Mr Andrews has said the FPC's ruling would take that delay into account in its decision.

Unions NSW secretary John Robertson said the decision was good news for low-paid workers covered by state awards in industries such as retail, hospitality and clerical.

He said the hearing of the case would mean that workers in the state system would be "protected from the worst excesses" of the federal government's agenda.

The NSW Minister for **Industrial** Relations, John Della Bosca, welcomed the decision and said that "any further delay in this wage case would cause undue and unacceptable hardship for minimum-wage workers in NSW".

KEY POINTS

- The NSW **Industrial** Relations Commission will hear a **union** application for a 4 per cent pay rise.
- Setting up the Fair Pay Commission would result in 18 months between minimum-wage rises.

Headline: States sidestep federal IR body

Author: Mark Skulley

Edition: First

Section: News

[[Previous](#)] [[Major News - Federal Politics - Workplace Issues](#)] [[Next](#)]

Copyright © Fairfax