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QUALITY AT WORK

The quality part-time work imperative

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CONTENTS

1	KEY MESSAGES	1
2	WHY ‘QUALITY’ PART-TIME WORK	2
3	DIMENSIONS OF QUALITY PART-TIME WORK	4
3.1	WORK-LIFE BALANCE	4
3.2	FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS	5
3.3	CHOOSING PART-TIME WORK	6
3.3.1	<i>Gender based differences</i>	8
3.3.2	<i>Casual work and job security</i>	8
3.3.3	<i>Industry and Occupation based differences</i>	9
3.4	PAY EQUITY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SKILL LEVELS	10
3.5	SKILL USE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT	11
3.6	CHALLENGING VERSUS REPETITIOUS WORK	13
3.7	AUTONOMY AT WORK	14
3.8	JOB SATISFACTION	15
3.9	THE STRONG BUSINESS CASE FOR QUALITY PART TIME WORK	16
4	QUALITY PART-TIME WORK – CHECK LIST	18
	REFERENCES	20

1 KEY MESSAGES

This report draws together findings from research and workplace experience, as well as from key data sets, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics and HILDA¹. The key messages from this combined analysis follow.

- ☑ QUALITY PART TIME WORK IS ASSOCIATED WITH A RANGE OF WORKPLACE BENEFITS THAT INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND ENABLE EMPLOYEES TO EFFECTIVELY BALANCE WORK WITH OTHER LIFE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

- ☑ QUALITY PART TIME WORK IS A KEY TOOL THAT ASSISTS PEOPLE THROUGH MAJOR LIFE TRANSITIONS, SUCH AS, MOVING FROM FULL TIME STUDY TO WORK, TO PARENTHOOD AND TO RETIREMENT. QUALITY PART TIME WORK ENABLES PEOPLE AT DIFFERENT LIFE STAGES TO BALANCE WORK AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES AND TO ACHIEVE BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE.

- ☑ QUALITY PART TIME WORK IS A CHOICE THAT EMPLOYEES MAKE, RATHER THAN SOMETHING WHICH IS FORCED UPON THEM. REDUCED HOURS MEAN REDUCED PAY, AND SOMETIMES MEANS WORKING AT A LEVEL LOWER THAN THE EMPLOYEE'S QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE. THE LOSS IS ACCEPTED IN ORDER TO BETTER MANAGE OTHER LIFE ROLES, SUCH AS, PARENTING AND STUDY. CHOICE IS A CRITICAL INGREDIENT IN QUALITY PART TIME WORK.

- ☑ ANOTHER FEATURE OF QUALITY PART TIME WORK IS THE ABILITY TO MOVE EASILY BETWEEN THIS AND FULL TIME WORK WITHOUT INCURRING A LONG LASTING PENALTY.

- ☑ WOMEN AND MEN USUALLY HAVE DIFFERENT REASONS FOR WANTING TO WORK PART TIME, AND HAVE DISTINCT PATTERNS OF PART TIME EMPLOYMENT THAT CAN ALSO VARY WITH DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS. QUALITY PART TIME WORK SUPPORTS THEM TO MAKE THOSE CHOICES.

- ☑ QUALITY PART TIME WORK ENSURES THAT EMPLOYEE SKILLS CONTINUE TO BE DEVELOPED AND THAT THEY HAVE THE SAME ACCESS TO TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AS FULL TIME WORKERS. IT ALSO MEANS THAT THEIR SKILLS ARE NOT UNDER-UTILISED AND THAT EMPLOYERS BENEFIT FROM THEIR SKILLS.

¹ The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey

2 WHY 'QUALITY' PART-TIME WORK

Part time work is now a key feature of employment in Australia having grown significantly over the past two decades so that Australia has a higher proportion of part time workers than most other OECD countries. Traditionally seen as the 'poor cousin of full time work', part time work has evolved and now can have the features of a quality experience traditionally associated with full time work.

⇒ In 2009 part time employment in South Australia represented **34.1%** of all employment.

⇒ Approximately one in two women and one in five men work on a part time basis.

Depending on how it is managed, part time work can be a valuable work-life-balance tool for employees while being valuable to employers in terms of productivity. When part time employment brings benefits for both parties it is considered to be 'quality part time work'.

QUALITY PART TIME WORK IS ASSOCIATED WITH A RANGE OF WORKPLACE BENEFITS THAT INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND ENABLE EMPLOYEES TO EFFECTIVELY BALANCE WORK WITH OTHER LIFE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The *Quality Part-Time Work Project* was initiated by the *SafeWork SA WorkLife Balance Strategy* in response to the important role that part-time work plays in South Australia and to focus attention on the dimensions and importance of quality part-time work in the context of work-life balance objectives.

This discussion paper is part of that Project, and draws together information from work-related research and from key data sets (such as the ABS) in order to isolate the factors that determine quality part time work.

In Australia, part-time work involves employment of less than 35 hours per week. It is now a key feature of employment in Australia having grown significantly over the past two decades.

What are the benefits for employers?

'Quality jobs', whether they are part-time or full-time, provide benefits to employers that include:

- ☑ increased labour productivity,
- ☑ healthier workforces,
- ☑ greater workforce stability,
- ☑ reduced sickness and absenteeism, safer workplaces, and
- ☑ more engaged employees.

Quality employment can also bring –

- ☑ enhanced recruitment and retention of experienced and skilled staff,
- ☑ increased workforce morale, productivity and efficiency and
- ☑ a range of benefits associated with becoming an 'employer of choice'.

Quality part-time work not only recognises the needs and preferences of a large proportion of the population and women and older workers transitioning to retirement in particular, but is an excellent attraction and retention strategy for employers. This will be increasingly important over the next decade as the labour market tightens in response to an accelerating retirement rate.

What is quality part time work?

Quality part-time work involves the same benefits, rights and conditions (for example, paid leave, training and career development) as comparable full-time work. In other words – a reduction in hours from full-time should not bring disadvantage or inequity.



These features are reflected in workplaces that have a commitment to quality part-time work. They are evident in the processes and provisions that support individual employees to negotiate their part-time work conditions while providing a framework for employers to make informed decisions regarding the use of part-time work in their organisation.

GOAL 1: PART-TIME WORK IS PART OF A BROADER WORKPLACE CULTURE THAT VALUES WORK LIFE BALANCE AND HAS PROCESSES IN PLACE TO ACHIEVE THIS OUTCOME

- ✓ INDICATOR 1: Senior management demonstrates leadership and commitment to quality part time levels, at all levels in the organisation, and consistent responses to requests for part time work
- ✓ INDICATOR 2: Backfill/shadowing is provided to support quality part time work at all levels
- ✓ INDICATOR 3: Part time work is part of a broader suite of flexible work and leave options
- ✓ INDICATOR 4: Part time work includes predictable hours and worker-sensitive scheduling and rostering and is available in hours that don't conflict with family and personal life

3 DIMENSIONS OF QUALITY PART-TIME WORK

3.1 WORK-LIFE BALANCE

QUALITY PART TIME WORK IS A KEY TOOL THAT ASSISTS PEOPLE THROUGH MAJOR LIFE TRANSITIONS, SUCH AS MOVING FROM FULL TIME STUDY TO WORK, TO PARENTHOOD AND TO RETIREMENT. QUALITY PART TIME WORK ENABLES PEOPLE AT DIFFERENT LIFE STAGES TO BALANCE WORK AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES AND TO ACHIEVE BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE.

Part time work can be a critical means of balancing work and non-work activities at different stages of the life cycle. Sometimes life events, such as sickness or disability, or other factors that inhibit full time participation in paid work, mean that part time employment provides the most viable means of remaining in the labour force. Quality part time work is critical to the following transition points -

- full time study to paid work
- work and raising a family
- moving from work into retirement
- assuming caregiving responsibilities, for example, ageing parents or a relative with disability²
- becoming ill or acquiring a disability, for example, through a workplace accident.

Quality part time work can mean the difference between working and not working, and between good quality of life and poor work life balance. This is also good for people's health and wellbeing, and a healthy workforce is a productive workforce.

The Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI) is a national survey of work-life balance that is applied over time. It shows that work-life strain has increased –

- ⇒ people working long hours (48+ each week) – which is more likely to be men than women
- ⇒ women more than for men, mainly because of worsening strain for mothers.

However, the majority of workers in SA and Australia (about two-thirds) are satisfied overall with their work-life balance. *Working less hours, that is part time, assists in achieving this balance.*

² Carers (other than parents) are less likely to be in paid employment due to the number of hours most spend in providing care. Those who are working are more likely to be in part time work compared to non-carers.

FAST FACTS ABOUT **WORK-LIFE BALANCE** IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- 83% of working **males** work 35 or more hours per week.
 - 23% of working males would like to work *fewer* hours.
 - 13% of working males would like to work *more* hours.
- 47% of working **females** work 35 or more hours per week.
 - 16% of working females would like to work *fewer* hours.
 - 15% of working females would like to work *more* hours.
- Half of males and females who wanted to work *fewer* hours wished to do so for personal reasons.
- Almost all males and females who wanted to work *more* hours were motivated by the desire to achieve a higher income.
- Part-time workers are more satisfied with the flexibility of their work-life balance - satisfaction is highest for those aged 56 years and over*

Source: ABS, 2009; *HILDA, 2009

In response to the SA Government's Strategic Plan target to improve the quality of life for South Australians through a healthy work-life-balance, a new Code of Practice for Working Hours was implemented in July 2010, as part of SA's Work Life Balance Strategy.

3.2 FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

Part-time workers are more satisfied than full-time workers with the number of hours worked and the flexibility of their work.

As the data in the box below indicate, regardless of age or life stage, women part time workers report high levels of flexibility in their work while only those men in older age groups who work part time report such flexibility.

Being able to work flexibly is critical to balancing work and other life responsibilities, and becomes more important as workers near retirement ages. Phased retirement is becoming increasingly popular as people work beyond the expected retirement age, and can be a critical strategy for retaining the accumulated experience of mature age employees.

FAST FACTS ABOUT FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- 15% of unemployed males looking for work are seeking part-time positions.*
- 45% of unemployed females looking for work are seeking part-time positions.*
- Part-time workers have considerably more flexibility in making decisions about the hours they work compared to full-time workers.
 - Female part-time workers across the life course report similarly high rates of flexibility.
 - Male part-time workers aged 56 years and over report the most flexibility in work hours.
 - Female *full*-time workers have less flexible working hours, compared with all other workers, with young female full-time workers the worst off.

Source: HILDA, 2009; *ABS, 2011

3.3 CHOOSING PART-TIME WORK

QUALITY PART TIME WORK IS A CHOICE THAT EMPLOYEES MAKE, RATHER THAN SOMETHING WHICH IS FORCED UPON THEM. REDUCED HOURS MEANS REDUCED PAY, AND SOMETIMES MEANS WORKING AT A LEVEL LOWER THAN THE EMPLOYEE'S QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE. THIS LOSS IS ACCEPTED IN ORDER TO BETTER MANAGE OTHER LIFE ROLES, SUCH AS PARENTING AND STUDY. CHOICE IS A CRITICAL INGREDIENT IN QUALITY PART TIME WORK.

At different stages of their lives, people choose part-time work because it allows them greater flexibility in how they manage different aspects of their lives. For many workers, part time employment involves a *trade-off* where a disadvantage like reduced income is exchanged for increased flexibility or better work-family balance. This of course, assumes that **choice** is involved – and that is patently not the case for many part time workers.

Involuntary part time employment is a 'precarious' form of employment that for some workers involves a transition to unemployment. Recent Productivity Commission data show that involuntary part time workers are four times more likely than voluntary part time workers to become unemployed and eight times more likely than full time employed workers to do so.

Involuntary part time employment has increased over the past thirty years, particularly during the economic recessions of the early 1980s and early 1990s, and during the economic slowdown of 2001.

FAST FACTS ABOUT CHOOSING PART-TIME WORK IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Of those in part-time work -

- 57% of **young people** (aged less than 26 years) chose part-time work because they were in secondary or tertiary **education**.
- 60% of **women** aged 26 to 40 years chose part-time work as they are **caring for children**.
- 50% of **older** men (aged 56 years and over) and 68% of **older** women prefer part-time work.
- 33% of men aged 41 to 55 years chose part-time work as they prefer the work.
- 32.5% of **men** work part time in order to **study**.

Source: HILDA, 2009; *ABS, 2011

Choice is also important when we consider the ability to move voluntarily between full time and part time work. It is easier to move from full time to part time work than the reverse.

For every Australian part time employee seeking full time hours, there are more than two full time workers who want to move to part time work.

Movement between full and part time work, regardless of the direction taken, may involve changing employers, and losing pay and other benefits in the process. This *downgrading* often represents a trade-off for better work life balance and for meeting family related responsibilities.

ANOTHER FEATURE OF QUALITY PART TIME WORK IS THE ABILITY TO MOVE EASILY BETWEEN THIS AND FULL TIME WORK WITHOUT INCURRING A LONG LASTING PENALTY

Recognising and responding constructively to employee needs regarding hours and how they are worked is important to employers in attracting and retaining employees.

At the same time, part-time work represents a choice for employers, offering the flexibility needed to adjust to the ebb and flow of demands in particular work environments.

3.3.1 GENDER BASED DIFFERENCES

As the data in the box below show, women and men have different patterns of part time employment that vary with age and different life cycle responsibilities. Women are more likely than men to choose part time work during child rearing ages while men are more likely to choose part time work for study than family reasons.

WOMEN AND MEN USUALLY HAVE DIFFERENT REASONS FOR WANTING TO WORK PART TIME AND HAVE DISTINCT PATTERNS OF PART TIME EMPLOYMENT THAT CAN ALSO VARY WITH DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS. QUALITY PART TIME WORK SUPPORTS THEM TO MAKE THOSE CHOICES

FAST FACTS ABOUT WHY **MEN AND WOMEN CHOOSE PART-TIME WORK** IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- **17%** of the male workforce are employed part-time.*
 - Only 15% of unemployed men looking for work are seeking part-time positions.*
 - *The main reason **men** work part time is to **study**.*

- **51%** of the female workforce are employed part-time.*
 - 45% of unemployed women looking for work are seeking part-time positions.*
 - *The main reasons **women** work part time are to **care for children** and because they **prefer to do so**.*

Source: HILDA, 2009; *ABS, 2011

Findings from the AWALI Index found little difference in work-life strain between men and women working full time. However, women working part time are more likely to experience this strain than are men working part time. This may be due demands placed on them outside of work.

3.3.2 CASUAL WORK AND JOB SECURITY

In South Australia nearly **60%** of part time workers are employed casually, compared with 14.5% of full time workers, illustrating the strong link between part time and casual work. However, it should be noted that the share of casual employment in part time work in Australia has *declined* over the past decade and a half.

It is important to separate quality part time work from part time work that is arranged on a casual basis. The two most common benefits lost in casual employment involve paid holiday and sick leave.

- Recent Productivity Commission data show that among casual workers as a whole, only 3% of part time employees and 10% of full time employees had access to both benefits.

An increasing number of Australians are working in **insecure jobs**, that is, jobs with unpredictable working hours and pay, inferior benefits and no security of employment.

Insecure work is increasingly the experience of part-time workers, particularly those in casual, contract or seasonal work. Insecure work is associated with lower pay, no access to leave, less access to training and career development, and a higher risk of workplace illness or injury.

FAST FACTS ABOUT **JOB SECURITY** IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- One in four Australian people are casual workers, more than half of whom have been casually employed in their current job for more than a year.
- More than half of these workers would prefer a permanent job.
- Most have little control over their working hours and are required to work at short notice, or to work anti-social hours without adequate compensation.
- Part-time workers feel less secure in their current jobs than full-time workers.
 - Male part-time workers feel the most insecure in their current job, overall.
 - Female part-time workers in the youngest (aged less than 26 years) and oldest groups also felt insecure.

Source: ACTU, 2010 ;HILDA, 2009

3.3.3 INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION BASED DIFFERENCES

ABS data reveal distinct patterns of part time work that vary by industry and occupation.

- In South Australia the industries with the highest concentrations of part time work in 2011 are **retail trade** and **health care and social assistance**. The proportion of part time work in these industries has increased only slightly in twenty-five years.

- The occupations with the highest proportions of part time workers in South Australia are **sales workers, community and personal service workers, and labourers**. In each of these occupations, **women** are more highly represented than are men.

☑ **GOAL 2: PART-TIME WORK IS ACCESSIBLE FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS OF WORKERS**

- ✓ INDICATOR 5: Part time work is accessible for both women and men
- ✓ INDICATOR 6: Part time work is accessible at all levels, including management
- ✓ INDICATOR 7: Employees can move between part time and full time work, in either direction, without having to change employers, or face downgraded pay and conditions

3.4 PAY EQUITY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SKILL LEVELS

Paying the same wage for the same work is a corner-stone of Australian industrial law, and contributes to the sense of fair-go and equity within Australia.

Many part-time workers are in low skilled work, and therefore receive low hourly rates of pay – with the result that they are *twice as likely* as full-time workers to live on incomes below the poverty line.

Part-time workers at the high end of the skill spectrum receive hourly wages comparable to their full-time colleagues, but low-skilled part-time workers are less likely to receive an equivalent hourly rate.

However, pay parity is affected by a number of factors other than the number of hours worked - in particular *age, education level, industry of employment, occupation and job tenure*. It is the interaction between these factors and part time employment that ultimately determines pay parity.

Men still take on the predominant bread-winning role in Australian society, particularly during childrearing years. However, as part-time males receive 88% of the hourly wage of their full-time counterparts it is not surprising that they are less satisfied with their pay at this critical life phase.

FAST FACTS ABOUT **PAY EQUITY** IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- On average, part-time workers get paid less per hour than full-time workers -
 - Full-time workers earn \$18.58 an hour
 - Part-time workers earn \$15.60 an hour
- Part-time workers are more common in low-skilled work -
 - 9% of managers are part-time
 - 15% of technicians and trade workers are part-time
 - 24% of professionals are part-time
 - 35% of clerical and admin workers are part-time
 - 58% of labourers are part-time
 - 62% of community & personal services workers are part-time
 - 62% of sales workers are part-time.
- The average hourly rate of male part-time workers is approximately 88% of full-time workers.*
 - Part-time males (aged 26 to 55 years) were least satisfied with their pay.

Source: HILDA, 2009; *Productivity Commission, 2008

As women make up the majority of part-time workers, any action taken to recognise, value and upgrade qualifications and skills is an investment in a more equitable workplace. Similar benefits flow from the recognition of the skills and capabilities of young workers.

GOAL 3: PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME WORKERS ARE PAID THE SAME AMOUNT FOR THE SAME WORK

- ✓ **INDICATOR 8:** Hourly wage is the same for part-time and full-time workers in comparable occupations.

3.5 SKILL USE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Investment in qualifications and skills acquisition is a key driver of productivity, delivering quality goods and services while supporting employees' career development and fostering high levels of work satisfaction. Quality part-time employment recognises that skills acquisition and upgrade of qualifications is important for both full-time and part-time employees. It seeks to encourage and support career advancement at all levels for both part-time and full-time employees.

QUALITY PART TIME WORK ENSURES THAT EMPLOYEE SKILLS CONTINUE TO BE DEVELOPED AND THAT THEY HAVE THE SAME ACCESS TO TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AS FULL TIME WORKERS. IT ALSO MEANS THAT THEIR SKILLS ARE NOT UNDER-UTILISED AND THAT EMPLOYERS BENEFIT FROM THEIR SKILLS.

Productivity Commission data show that part time workers are under-represented in higher skill levels and over-represented in lower skill levels relative to full time workers - but this is not consistent across all occupational groups.

People working at levels requiring only a Certificate I or II are more likely to be working part time, while those with the highest levels of education are most likely to be employed full time.

GOAL 4: PART-TIME WORKERS HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES TO USE AND DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS AS FULL-TIME WORKERS

- ✓ INDICATOR 9: Part-time workers are distributed across all positions in the organisation
- ✓ INDICATOR 10: Part-time workers (pro rata) attend the same amount of skill training as full-time workers

GOAL 5: PROMOTION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE AT ALL OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS

- ✓ INDICATOR 11: Part-time workers are promoted at equivalent rates to full-time workers of comparable level and skill.
- ✓ INDICATOR 12: Part-time workers (pro rata) participate in the same amount of career development opportunities as full-time workers

It is beneficial and cost-effective for employers to draw on the existing skills of both part-time staff and full-time staff. Utilising existing skills harnesses previous investments in education and training and can avoid the costs associated with high turnover and recruitment.

FAST FACTS ABOUT **SKILL USE AND DEVELOPMENT** IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- Full-time workers report using their skills and abilities more than part-time workers.
- Young part-time workers (aged less than 26 years) report lowest use of their skills and abilities.
- Women in part-time employment during childbearing years (26 to 40 years), also report lower use of their skills than others of the same age.
- Full-time workers are more likely (than part-time workers) to have jobs where they are required to learn new skills.
- Older part-time workers (56 years and over) are least likely to have to learn new skills.

Source: HILDA, 2009

3.6 CHALLENGING VERSUS REPETITIOUS WORK

Quality work involves tasks that challenge and motivate employees. It involves recognising the different skills sets of individuals and the roles they have been employed to do.

Currently, many part-time workers are engaged in roles with considerable repetition, especially if the work involves lower levels of skill. They do not always have the same opportunities to get involved in work entailing complex tasks and problem solving. Nor are they regularly involved in planning or decision making.

While many people struggle with a heavy workload, this can be more cumbersome for part-time staff, with these staff sometimes struggling to achieve what amounts to a full-time workload in a shorter week. As the box below indicates, part time workers are more likely than their full time counterparts to find their work repetitious

GOAL 6: JOB CONTENT FOR PART-TIME WORK HAS EQUIVALENT CONTENT, INTEREST AND TASK AUTONOMY AS FULL-TIME WORK

- ✓ INDICATOR 13: Part-time workers are engaged in work of the same complexity and interest as full-time workers
- ✓ INDICATOR 14: Part-time employees have the same control over their work tasks as full-time workers

FAST FACTS ABOUT **CHALLENGING VERSUS REPETITIOUS WORK** IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- Part-time workers believe their jobs are considerably less complex and difficult than full-time workers.
 - The youngest (aged less than 25 years) and oldest part-time workers (56 years and over) reported the least complexity and difficulty in their work.
- Part-time workers reported more repetition in their work than full-time workers.
 - Task repetition is more common for young workers (aged less than 26 years) whether they are full or part-time.
 - Task repetition is least common for older full-time workers (aged 56 years and over).
- Part-time workers find they don't have enough time to do everything in their job.
 - This is most common for the youngest and oldest cohorts of female part-time workers.

Source: HILDA, 2009

Some workers may choose part time work that is not challenging because it is for a short period of time, for example, while completing full time studies. They know that their future work will be different and of greater quality. It is those who are unable to make such a choice who are among our most disadvantaged workers.

3.7 AUTONOMY AT WORK

High levels of autonomy at work can help to generate higher levels of work satisfaction and productivity, harnessing the full range of skills and capabilities of employees and underpinning successful retention strategies. A degree of autonomy, for example, in being able to choose when to take a break, or the order in which tasks are undertaken, is also associated with lower workplace injury and ill health.

However, the ability to make decisions about how work tasks are ordered, or when breaks can be taken, are usually the domain of managers and professionals. Part-time workers are less likely than full time workers to be employed in positions that bring autonomy.

FAST FACTS ABOUT **AUTONOMY AT WORK** IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- Part-time workers have less freedom to decide *what* they do at work, compared to full-time workers.
 - Female part-time workers are least able to decide *what* they do at work.
 - The freedom to decide what they do at work is equivalent for female full-time workers and male part-time workers.
 - Young female *full-time* workers (aged less than 26 years) rate their ability to decide what they do at work, lower than all other workers.
- Part-time workers have less freedom to decide *how* they do their work.
 - Female part-time workers are least able to decide *how* they do their work.
 - Young female *full-time* workers (aged less than 26 years) rate their ability to decide *how* they do their work, lower than all other workers.
- Part-time workers have similar opportunity to decide *when* they do their work.

Source: HILDA, 2009

3.8 JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction means different things to different people, and is a balance between personal and work based factors. Personal factors include the reasons individuals are engaged in the workforce, their skill levels, motivation and expectations. Work-related factors include pay level, job security, work hours, nature of work, how work is organised, and flexibility.

Across all of these dimensions, part time and full time workers have been found to report similar levels of satisfaction (Productivity Commission 2008). The only clear differences being in relation to working hours and flexibility – with part time workers slightly more satisfied with these elements than full time workers.

GOAL 7: JOB SATISFACTION FOR PART-TIME WORKERS IS EQUIVALENT TO FULL-TIME WORKERS

- ✓ INDICATOR 15: Levels of job satisfaction are similar for part-time and full-time workers

The Productivity Commission recently found that job satisfaction varies by **age**, but not by gender, with younger part time workers reporting lower satisfaction with job security compared with older part time workers. Older part time workers were more satisfied with work hours – possibly reflecting changing life stage priorities.

Working arrangements were also found to influence job satisfaction -

- Casual part time workers were less satisfied with work hours than other part time workers.
- Casual workers (both full and part time) were less satisfied with the nature of their work.
- Contract workers were much more satisfied with their pay than permanent workers.
- Highly skilled part time workers were more satisfied with their pay than their full time equivalents, and more satisfied with their work hours in contrast to those in lower skill levels.

FAST FACTS ABOUT **JOB SATISFACTION** IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- Overall, workers were satisfied with their jobs.
 - Older workers were most satisfied, with older part-time workers most satisfied.
- Part-time workers are more satisfied with the hours they work, than full-time workers.
 - Older part-time workers (aged over 56 years) were most satisfied with the hours they worked.
 - Older *full*-time workers (aged over 56 years) were least satisfied with the hours they worked.
- Part-time workers are more satisfied with their work-life balance, than full-time workers.
- Full and part-time workers were generally satisfied with their pay.
 - Part-time male workers aged 41 to 55 years were least satisfied.
- Satisfaction with job security was uniformly high for full and part-time workers.
 - Whilst still reporting high levels of satisfaction with their job security, part-time male workers aged 26 to 55 years were least satisfied.
- Satisfaction with the work itself tended to be quite high for all workers.
 - Young females (both full and part-time) reported lowest work related satisfaction.

Source: HILDA, 2009

3.9 THE STRONG BUSINESS CASE FOR QUALITY PART TIME WORK

Just as part time work can represent a viable choice for individuals at different stages of the life cycle, so too does it provide an appropriate choice for employers in response to fluctuations in the business cycle and the wider economy. This is most evident in periods of economic downturn when employers reduce hours, and when they create more full time jobs to meet increased demand during upswings.

Viewed from the perspective of providing ‘good jobs’ there are wider benefits that researchers have found that include –

- ⇒ increased labour productivity,
- ⇒ healthier workforces,

- ⇒ greater workforce stability – particularly enhanced recruitment and retention of experienced and skilled staff,
- ⇒ reduced sickness and absenteeism,
- ⇒ increased workforce morale
- ⇒ safer workplaces, and
- ⇒ more engaged employees.

GOAL 8: PART-TIME WORK MEETS THE NEEDS OF BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

- ✓ INDICATOR 16: Training and guidelines are provided for a) negotiating and b) managing quality part time work
- ✓ INDICATOR 17: Processes are in place to ensure all managers are informed of their responsibilities and all employees are informed of their entitlements regarding quality part time work

4 QUALITY PART-TIME WORK – CHECK LIST

- GOAL 1: PART-TIME WORK IS PART OF A BROADER WORKPLACE CULTURE THAT VALUES WORK LIFE BALANCE AND HAS PROCESSES IN PLACE TO ACHIEVE THIS OUTCOME**
 - ✓ INDICATOR 1: Senior management demonstrates leadership and commitment to quality part time levels, at all levels in the organisation, and consistent responses to requests for part time work
 - ✓ INDICATOR 2: Backfill/shadowing is provided to support quality part time work at all levels
 - ✓ INDICATOR 3: Part time work is part of a broader suite of flexible work and leave options
 - ✓ INDICATOR 4: Part time work includes predictable hours and worker-sensitive scheduling and rostering and is available in hours that don't conflict with family and personal life

- GOAL 2: PART-TIME WORK IS ACCESSIBLE FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS OF WORKERS**
 - ✓ INDICATOR 5: Part time work is accessible for both women and men
 - ✓ INDICATOR 6: Part time work is accessible at all levels, including management
 - ✓ INDICATOR 7: Employees can move between part time and full time work, in either direction, without having to change employers, or face downgraded pay and conditions

- GOAL 3: PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME WORKERS ARE PAID THE SAME AMOUNT FOR THE SAME WORK**
 - ✓ INDICATOR 8: Hourly wage is the same for part-time and full-time workers in comparable occupations.

- GOAL 4: PART-TIME WORKERS HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES TO USE AND DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS AS FULL-TIME WORKERS**
 - ✓ INDICATOR 9: Part-time workers are distributed across all positions in the organisation
 - ✓ INDICATOR 10: Part-time workers (pro rata) attend the same amount of skill training as full-time workers

GOAL 5: PROMOTION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE AT ALL OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS

- ✓ INDICATOR 11: Part-time workers are promoted at equivalent rates to full-time workers of comparable level and skill.
- ✓ INDICATOR 12: Part-time workers (pro rata) participate in the same amount of career development opportunities as full-time workers

GOAL 6: JOB CONTENT FOR PART-TIME WORK HAS EQUIVALENT CONTENT, INTEREST AND TASK AUTONOMY AS FULL-TIME WORK

- ✓ INDICATOR 13: Part-time workers are engaged in work of the same complexity and interest as full-time workers
- ✓ INDICATOR 14: Part-time employees have the same control over their work tasks as full-time workers

GOAL 7: JOB SATISFACTION FOR PART-TIME WORKERS IS EQUIVALENT TO FULL-TIME WORKERS

- ✓ INDICATOR 15: Levels of job satisfaction are similar for part-time and full-time workers

GOAL 8: PART-TIME WORK MEETS THE NEEDS OF BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

- ✓ INDICATOR 16: Training and guidelines are provided for a) negotiating and b) managing quality part time work
- ✓ INDICATOR 17: Processes are in place to ensure all managers are informed of their responsibilities and all employees are informed of their entitlements regarding quality part time work

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