

AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACE AGREEMENTS

408. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Minister for Employment Protection:

Is the minister saying that if the conditions of an AWA are above those of an EBA, the AWA will remain in place?

Mr J.J.M. BOWLER replied:

Yesterday I met with Stephen Smith. Naturally, our party will make announcements leading up to the next federal election. There will be transitional arrangements for those AWAs that pay above either the award or the EBA rate. If a worker is paid above the normal award, a transitional arrangement will be put in place to allow the AWA to continue. In the longer term, employers will be able to convert to a common law contract. It is not very hard to work out. We will make sure that those workers at the bottom end are afforded some protection.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Vasse and the member for Cottesloe to order again.