

SACOSS Energy, Water and Telco Conference: Working to Make Ends Meet

Tuesday, November 24, 2020 – Virtual Event

9:00am Welcome to Country
9:10am Conference Opening - David Panter (Chair, SACOSS) & Ross Womersley (CEO, SACOSS)
9:20am Opening Address by Hon Christian Porter MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations Invited
9:30am Keynote Address: Drivers of Waged Poverty Saunoamaali'i Dr Karanina Sumeo (Commissioner at New Zealand Human Rights Commission) Confirmed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview of research on 'in-work poverty' conducted by the NZ Work Research Institute• Why is in-work poverty / waged poverty a human rights issue?• What are the types of policy solutions that can help address the issue of in-work/waged poverty?• What do you see as the key challenges for waged poor households in a post-COVID economy?
10:30am Morning Tea
10:50 am Findings from SACOSS Waged Poor Research Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rebecca Law (Senior Policy Officer, SACOSS): Energy report findings Confirmed• Dr Greg Ogle (Senior Policy and Research Analyst, SACOSS): Telco report finding Confirmed Responding : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teresa Corbin (CEO, ACCAN): Response to Telecommunications report findings Confirmed• Lynne Gallagher (Interim CEO, Energy Consumers Australia): Response to Energy report findings Invited Facilitator: Ross Womersley
11:20am The Rise of Waged Poverty in a post-COVID Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Structural factors that entrench people in poverty• What is the impact of this narrative and framing?• Unpacking myths around who is in poverty and why• How do we change the conversation about the deserving and undeserving poor? Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alison Pennington (Senior Economist, Centre for Future Work) Confirmed

- Emma Dawson (Executive Director, Per Capita) **Confirmed**
- Angas Story (Unions SA) **Confirmed**
- Martin Haese (Business SA) **Invited**

Facilitator: Dr Cassandra Goldie (ACOSS) **Confirmed**

12.10 Utilities Stress Pilot Launch

This session presents a pilot analysis of households having trouble paying utility bills by building on the well-known indicator of housing stress (bottom two income quintiles paying more than 30% of their income for housing). The pilot sought to test equivalent affordability stress indicators and benchmarks for energy, telecommunications and water expenditure as a ‘proof of concept’ exercise.

- Dr Greg Ogle

Facilitator: Ross Womersley

[Session sponsored by the Essential Services Commission of South Australia](#)

12:30 Lunch

1:15pm Parallel Sessions

Slipping through the gaps: Who’s missing out on support and why?

Waged poor households are reluctant to seek help from community services organisations for a range of reasons – being “too proud”, “too ashamed” or not knowing where to go for help. This panel attempts to unpack these issues and explore how their organisations are trying to reach those slipping through the gaps.

Speakers :

- Ian Steel (CEO, KickStart for Kids) **Confirmed**
- Ciara Sterling (CEO, Thriving Communities) **Confirmed**

Are Concessions the Answer?

Concessions are used by governments to assist people struggling to meet living costs. But are concessions “the answer” when it comes to lifting people out of waged poverty? This session will explore whether the structure and current levels of concessions are adequate, and other ways we can address cost of living concerns for waged poor households.

Speakers:

- Teresa Corbin (CEO, ACCAN) **Confirmed**
- Con Hristodoulidis (Senior Manager

Designing Customer Supports for Waged Poor Households

Significant variation and unreliability of work hours can mean some waged poor households struggle to budget week-to-week. This session will present a scenario of a waged poor household struggling to pay their utility bill, and ask an industry panel how they would respond.

Speakers:

- Robert Morsillo (Digital Inclusion Senior Specialist, Telstra) **Confirmed**
- Melissa Homes-Allen (Customer Advocacy Program and Credit

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jess Perrin (Head of Social Innovation and Digital Inclusion, InfoXchange) Confirmed <p>Facilitated by Ross Womersley</p>	<p>Regulatory Strategy, AGL) Confirmed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kellie Caught (Senior Advisor, ACOSS) Invited <p>Facilitated by Rebecca Law</p>	<p>Support Lead, Origin) Confirmed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Coombe (Senior Manager, Customer Experience, SA Water) Confirmed
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2.30pm Afternoon Tea

2:30pm The Pitch: Reaching the Waged Poor

Building on the Gruen Transfer segment “The Pitch” where two advertising companies are given a brief to create an ad for an “unsellable” product. Our “unsellable” product in this case are customer support services, building on SACOSS’ research which found that waged poor households were more than ten times less likely to seek assistance from community organisations compared to other households in poverty. If the waged poor are unlikely to seek help, how do we reach them?

Judging panel:

- Kellie McDonald (Senior Manager Brand & Marketing, SA Water)
- Louise Miller-Frost (CEO, St Vincent De Paul Society)
- Hayden Patterson (Director, Worldwide Unemployed Workers’ Unions)

Pitchers TBC

[Session sponsored by SA Water](#)

4:00pm: Closing Remarks

David Panter (Chair, SACOSS)