



# Declaration of Independent Contractors' Rights

(Adopted by ICA, May 2003)

## What we want

Independent contractors have basic rights that include:

- The right to have their status as workers under 'contracts for services' determined only by the authority of independent courts ruling within historically established legal principles.
- The right not to have their legal status violated by bureaucrats, regulators and parties with vested interests in ways that force independent contractors to become employees.
- The right to business-type tax and legal treatment as applies to all entities working under contracts for services, and not to be artificially forced into employee-type tax and legal treatment.

Within these rights, independent contractors accept that they work within business regulatory regimes that involve obligations to treat their contract parties with fairness and justice within the law. In turn, those same business regulatory and legal regimes provide independent contractors with key protections which deliver fairness and justice under the law in a way not available to employees.

Independent contractors:

- Reject the claim that "employment" regulation is the only form of protection available to workers who supply their labour.
- Deliberately seek out contractor status, in the full knowledge that it involves business risks (which are not taken by employees), in the confident expectation that they will achieve reward and success in their own business (which, again, are not available to employees).

## Who are independent contractors?

We are people who have rejected and escaped the bondage of wage-slavery employment. We are not employees and do not want to be employees. We want to be free to work flexibly and efficiently in our own time, and in ways that suit us best, to achieve the required results.

Employees are people who, by law, are subject to the power and authority of employers through a process which denies them control of their working contracts. In its modern form, State regulators attempt to temper the power imbalance by assuming power themselves. Employees are powerless. Employees are dependent.

Independent contractors, under law, have equal rights with their contracting parties to control their working contracts. There are no employers. Power is determined by the marketplace, and the balance will swing over time from one side to another in tune with supply and demand. The State does not need to assume power it should not have. Independent contractors have power. We are independent.

## Freedom

Workers must not be denied the right to choose freely which of the two working options they will access:

- The powerlessness and bondage of employment? (or)
- The equality and liberation of shared power under independent contracting?