

Article Information

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Employment Relations Podcast #14 - The impact of the gig economy on the concept of “work”: it’s broader than you might think

In Episode 14 of our Employment Law for the Time Poor podcast, Professor Andrew Stewart and Emily Haar build on their last discussion about what it means to be an employee by considering the so-called “gig economy”, or the use of digital platforms to find and perform work.

This is a growing area, which does not just include ride share and food delivery. There are platforms for professional services, aged and disability care, as well as odd jobs and clerical roles.

The status of workers in the gig economy can be unclear, and there have been some high profile cases where the issue has been put to the test. The Victorian State Government enquiry into the on-demand workforce is currently receiving submissions, following former Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James’ report being released in June 2020.

Many of the recommendations in that report could have application well beyond the “gig economy”, and organisations who are using new digital technologies to enable work to be performed need to be mindful that the risks associated with misclassifying an employee as a contractor may not just stop with the platform itself.

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