

# Underneath the headlines: understanding price change in the Australian economy

22 – 23 May 2023

Venue: H.C. Coombs Centre  
122A Kirribilli Avenue, Kirribilli NSW 2061

## Conference agenda

### Day 1 – Monday 22 May 2023

Time	Agenda item
7:30am	Coffee, tea and breakfast
9:30am	<b>Dr John Simon</b> , Reserve Bank of Australia Conference opening and Acknowledgement to Country
9:40am	<b>Dr David Gruen</b> , Australian Bureau of Statistics Opening remarks
9:50am	<p><b>Session 1 – The pandemic, natural disasters, and geopolitical events have led to supply shocks which have had significant impacts on prices. The intersection of these supply chain impacts and the level of competition in sectors of the economy has contributed to the price shocks flowing through the economy. How can the use of business microdata sets assist in understanding these mechanisms?</b></p> <p><b>Michael Smedes</b>, Australian Bureau of Statistics <i>Setting the Scene: Business Microdata, Supply Chains, and Graphically Linked Information</i></p> <p><b>Gina Cass-Gottlieb</b>, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission <i>The role and benefits of deep data in delivering the ACCC’s mission to promote competition and make markets work in the interests of consumers, businesses and the economy</i></p> <p><b>Break</b></p> <p><b>Michael Brennan</b>, Productivity Commission <i>What can we learn about industries’ vulnerability to overseas price shocks from Merchandise trade data in BLADE?</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Dan Andrews, e61</i> <b>Chair:</b> <i>Michele Bullock, Reserve Bank of Australia</i></p>
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	<p><b>Session 2 – The unemployment rate is as low as it has been for decades and there are wide-spread reports of labour and skills shortages; meanwhile the most used measures of wage inflation remain stubbornly low. Can detailed data and associated analysis of the labour market and relationships between employers and employees help explain this phenomenon?</b></p> <p><b>Professor Jeff Borland</b>, University of Melbourne <i>Why do we have slow wage growth when the rate of unemployment is 3.5 per cent?</i></p> <p><b>Jonathan Hambur</b>, Reserve Bank of Australia <i>Using new data sources to understand and monitor changes in prices, wages and incomes</i></p> <p><b>Dan Andrews</b>, e61 <i>Non-compete clauses in Australia: Structural policy meets economic measurement</i></p> <p><b>Break</b></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>David Turvey, Jobs and Skills Australia</i> <b>Chair:</b> <i>Dr John Simon, Reserve Bank of Australia</i></p>

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**Jonathan Hambur**, Reserve Bank of Australia  
**Bjorn Jarvis**, Australian Bureau of Statistics  
**Kate Fernandes**, Department of the Treasury  
*Panel discussion: Using Single Touch Payroll for labour market analysis*

**4:30pm** Close session 2

**6:00pm** **Introduction:** *Dr David Gruen*  
**Dr Gordon de Brouwer**, Australian Public Service Commissioner  
*Reflections on the RBA Review*

**7:00pm** Conference dinner

**9:00pm** Close day 1

## Day 2 – Tuesday 23 May 2023

Time	Agenda item
7:30am	Coffee, tea and breakfast
9:00am	<p><b>Session 3 – As price inflation outstrips wage growth all eyes turn to the reaction from consumers and the impact of this decline in real incomes on the welfare of different population groups. What can we learn about the consumer response and the impact on living standards from the ever-increasing volume of consumer behaviour data from private sector sources?</b></p> <p><b>Robert Ewing</b>, Australian Bureau of Statistics  <b>Leigh Merrington</b>, Australian Bureau of Statistics  <i>How do consumers react to the price of food? Evidence from supermarket micro data</i></p> <p><b>Fred Hanmer</b>, Reserve Bank of Australia  <b>Michelle Marquardt</b>, Australian Bureau of Statistics  <i>New Insights into the Rental Market</i></p> <p><b>Break</b></p> <p><b>Dr Gianni La Cava</b>, e61  <b>Nicole Adams</b>, e61  <i>The Effects of Changes in Unemployment Benefits on Consumer Spending: Evidence from the Australian JobSeeker Supplement</i></p> <p><b>Professor Kevin Fox</b>, University of New South Wales  <i>Multilateral index number methods for Consumer Price Statistics</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Dr Cassandra Goldie, ACOSS and Brendan Coates, Grattan Institute</i>  <b>Chair:</b> <i>Elizabeth Williamson, Australian Bureau of Statistics</i></p>
12:30pm	<b>Dr John Simon</b> , Reserve Bank of Australia Closing remarks/wrap up/summary/key takeaways
12:45pm	Lunch and depart