Exploring the Process of Adjustment to Retrenchment:

Putting Home in its Place

Johannes Pieters BA, Grad Dip Soc Sci, MRUP

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School of the Environment, Faculty of Science and Engineering

Contents

Abstract

'Home' has been defined as a place of belonging, community, domesticity and safety as well as being materially significant as a major household cost and or investment and may be experienced as a haven from work and or a source of ontological security in an uncertain world (Giddens, 1991; Saunders, 1990). The experience of ontological security through homeownership may be constrained in times of high interest rates (Colic-Peister and Johnston 2010). Proponents of the risk society thesis (Beck, 1992) which holds that the first modernity's concern with scarcity and class is being supplanted by the second modernity's concern with risk and individualisation, point to globalisation as the driver behind the changing nature of work and in particular behind job insecurity. Flexible accumulation and labour market flexibility is the new mantra. A "job for life" once provided the orientation to and possibility of a sense of security within Fordism as did other institutions such as family, religion and 'home', in the latter case particularly through home ownership. When retrenchment arises decisions need to be made about career and finances and there may be positive and negative implications for current plans regarding housing and the meaning of home. What do you do when you don't belong at work anymore?

The labour market outcomes for individual workers following retrenchment have been the subject of considerable academic and policy research particularly by labour market analysts, psychologists concerned with the cognitive and affective dimensions of work and unemployment, by sociologists concerned with the role of work in sociality and geographers concerned with the spatial distribution of economic activity and employment. Media treatment of retrenchment invariably is couched in the language of 'moral panic' and casts retrenched workers, including those who volunteer for retrenchment packages, as being victims of uncaring companies and or governments. This form of media construction is often triggered when companies announce plant closures with little or no warning to the workers, the unions or the government. However very little research has been conducted which attempts to work across these disciplines by drawing attention to the interaction of processes of adjustment over time, within place

and across labour markets and within the context of structures of subjectification and or resistance, mediated by house and home.

How should we explain the housing decisions and attitudes of people during retrenchment given the plethora of theories regarding the role of home in the contemporary era and the variability in the individual circumstances of workers with respect to labour market success? This thesis contributes to a bridging of the adjustment to retrenchment and 'home' literatures through a longitudinal study of retrenchments within the automotive industry and asks how does home constrain and or enable the process of adjustment to retrenchment?. A mixed methods approach is used with an emphasis on the analysis of data on the subjective experience of adjustment in order to understand how meanings about home and work influence adjustment decision making. ata was analysed from an Australian Research Council (ARC) funded study on a sample of 372 workers retrenched following restructuring and plant closure at the Adelaide, Australia branch of a large multinational automotive industry company, announced in May 2004. This data comprised three telephone surveys at approximately one year apart, interspersed with two in depth interviews with a randomly selected subsample of 38 workers.

Using thematic, content and case study analysis the thesis identified the mechanisms through which home enabled and constrained adjustment and through which workers maintained a strong sense of home. The research found that retrenchment packages were essential for workers to be able to plan a meaningful future, demonstrating the importance of the manifest benefits of work in assessing the psychological implications of job loss; nevertheless workers missed the social interaction with former workmates. Retrenchment packages were used to reduce or pay out the mortgage which has less to do with strengthening workers' homeowner identities than it did with establishing financial security and a secure base for the post retrenchment world. Less than 10 per cent of workers relocated during the study period. Place attachment by workers was informed by a commitment to the existing local relationships and educational development of their children, connections with friends and relatives and the environmental amenity. The

thesis demonstrated how meanings of home can change for workers as a result of the retrenchment episode and how the sense of home anchors narratives of job loss and animates life biographies in the risk regime of employment

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Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed:

Date:

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List of Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCI	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ACIS	Automotive Competitiveness and Investment Scheme
ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
AHURI	Australian Housing and Research Institute
AIRC	Australian Industrial Relations Commission
AMWU	Amalgamated Metal Workers Union
ATO	Australian Tax Office
CBD	Central Business District
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CES	Commonwealth Employment Service
CITCA	Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia
DFI	Direct Foreign Investment
EBA	Enterprise Bargaining Agreements
GM	General Motors
HILDA	Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia
ICT	information, communication and technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
LATA	Labour Adjustment Training Arrangements
MMAL	Mitsubishi Motors Australia Limited
MMC	Mitsubishi Motors Corporation
NLAC	National Labour Advisory Council
TCF	Textile, Clothing and Footwear
TCR case	*The Termination, Change and Redundancy Case of 1984*
UK	United Kingdom
WA	Western Australia

Chapter 1: Introduction

Employment insecurity has been argued to be emblematic of the contemporary risk society era (Beck 1999) independent of cyclical downturns and globalisation and its correlates cause organisations to seek to produce 'appropriate individuals' (Alvesson & Willmott 2002) with subjectivities suitable for the 'new economy' (Baldry et al. 2007). The era of a 'job for life' is apparently over and long-term commitment by employers or employees to a workplace is on the negotiating table. It has been argued that 'the old goal of HR management—to minimize overall employee turnover—needs to be replaced by a new goal: to influence who leaves and when' (Cappelli 1999:9).

It appears however that Australians at the turn of the century were relatively confident about not being retrenched. In an Australian wide survey in 2003, only one in eight respondents felt that losing their job was likely or very likely (Wilson et al. 2003). Nevertheless in 2004, there were 270,700 people retrenched in Australia and of these, nearly 40 per cent had only been employed for a year of less. Australian retrenchment research (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2002) shows that in order to find a new job, 30 per cent of workers have to change industry, 23 per cent change occupation, 13 per cent change hours of work and 16 per cent change between permanent and casual status. What it means for a worker's sense and meaning of home or residential location is not reported in these statistics. This thesis bridges the gap between literature on the role of home in the contemporary risk era and scholarship regarding adjustment to retrenchment. It identifies the mechanisms through which home enables and constrains adjustment to retrenchment over time. In order to provide a framework for the scope of the research, following Greig (2006:319), the thesis acknowledges the distinction made between a house as a physical structure and a dwelling for people to occupy, while a home is a place of belonging. As such, home does not necessarily have to be a house, although for many people that will be the case.

In that regard, the definition adopted by Dovey (1985) outlines the relational nature of home:

> Home can be a room inside a house, a house within a neighbourhood, a neighbourhood within a city, and a city within a nation. At each level the meaning of home gains in intensity and depth from the dialectical interaction between the two poles of experience—the place and its context at a larger scale ... Home is a place of security within an insecure world, place of certainty within doubt, a familiar place in a strange world, a sacred place in a profane world. It is a place of autonomy and power in an increasingly heteronomous world where others make the rules.

This definition is also sufficiently relational to embrace the critique from feminist and cultural geographers that domestic life should not be seen as a haven but rather where public and private life imbricate and flow into each other (Gorman-Murray 2007). Consequently the definition of home provided by Blunt and Dowling (2005:23) is also relevant:

> Home is lived; what home means and how it is materially manifest are continually created and recreated through every day practices

To the extent that globalisation is for many people the driver of insecurity, then Morley's (2000) argument has particular traction—for most people, most of the time, the impact of globalisation is felt not in travel, but in staying at home. Further:

> The paradigmatic experience of global modernity for most people is that of staying in one place but experiencing the displacement that global modernity brings them (Morley 2000:15).

Models of adjustment to retrenchment from within labour market economics, psychology and sociology do not adequately address the role of home in adjustment and there is a tendency in the adjustment to retrenchment literature to characterise some individuals and households living in poorly performing labour market areas as being 'locked in place' (Oswald 1996; Strangleman 2001; Weller 2007). While that may be true for some people, it has always been assumed that place attachment is an integral part of human identity (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996), may serve as defence against crisis in periods

of transitions between successive developmental stages in the life course (Hay 1998) and is good for the neighbourhood since it facilitates involvement in local affairs (Lewicka 2005). Bauman (1998) has suggested that impoverished and marginalised groups become 'localised' and similar arguments have been raised by Fried (2000), Castells (1996) and Putnam (1993).

This chapter commences by outlining the macro level context within which employment and retrenchment are configured within the Australian automotive industry and provide the space for the exercise of agency by individual workers in working in the industry and in adjustment to retrenchment. It suggests that the risk era as formulated by Beck (1992) can provide a model for understanding the relationship between the individual, employment and society in the contemporary era and one within which processes of belonging, identity and home are also configured. In the next section, an argument is advanced for the development of a multi-disciplinary approach for research on this topic. In the Research Problem section, the thesis' guiding research question and sub-questions are outlined. The chapter concludes by outlining the structure for the thesis.

1.1 Running the risk of retrenchment at home, in a globalising world

While economists and social scientists differ on the drivers for plant closures and retrenchments (Tomaney, Pike & Cornford 1999), there is general agreement that contemporary capitalism and its preferred production and accumulation processes, particularly under the banner of flexibility, have altered the nature of national and regional labour markets, such that the concept of a job for life has become outdated (Elliott 2007). For many people, employment loss through retrenchment is one of the inevitable consequences of the ongoing restructuring of economies, even if new jobs may also be created through waves of 'creative destruction' (Rubin & Smith 2001:323). Organised resistance to downsizing and retrenchment is made problematic by the fact that while capital is global, labour is local and disaggregated (Castells 1996). Further, the evidence suggests that downsizing is not always undertaken with the view to improving capacity to restore profitability but is

instituted as a measure to restore faith in the share price of the company (Budros 2002).

Notwithstanding the fact that there may be debates about the reasons why retrenchments occur or what they achieve, large-scale redundancies are recognised as having a profound effect on the well-being of individuals (Winefield, AH et al. 2002; Weller 2007), communities (Leadbeater & Robinson 1991) and regions (Fallick 1997). These effects include adverse consequences for the physical and mental health of affected workers (Winefield, A & Tiggemann 1985) and their families (Aubrey, Tefft & Kingsbury 1990), increased incidences of homelessness and marginalised housing due to reduced incomes (Berry & Dalton 2000; Ranzijn et al. 2006), periods of unemployment or underemployment (ABS 2002), periods of reduced income estimated to be in the order of between 10 per cent and 25 per cent below the pre-retrenchment salary (Brand 2004) and reduction in social participation (Brand 2008).

In Australia, retrenchments are conducted within a specific legal and industrial framework that secures, through Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBA), minimum standards for compensation payments and other benefits for voluntary and involuntary retrenched workers. Consequently, even workers who are involuntarily retrenched may have access to large retrenchment packages that may influence their experience of retrenchment. The experience of retrenchment is therefore structurally different from the experience of unemployment. Retrenchment payments that are regulated and negotiated amongst the parties involved in EBAs are also subject to concessional treatment by the Australian Tax Office (ATO). Support for retrenched workers and affected communities is also provided within labour market adjustment policies as announced from time to time by the federal and state governments. Both tiers of government pursue productivity and growth strategies at industry and regional levels. Consequently, conceptualisation of the adjustment process and its interaction with housing as an expression of home must take into consideration the compensatory and strategic support provided to retrenched workers.

An understanding of retrenchment requires an appreciation of the interaction between investment markets, industry policy, labour market dynamics and household aspirations. The central debate regarding the drivers of retrenchment is the extent to which the economic restructuring process is inevitable and caused by forces beyond the control of national governments, or whether retrenchments are policy driven and are the outcome of decisions that are socially embedded. This debate has implications for the extent to which coping with retrenchment might be influenced by the individual. This debate has been led in the last 15 years by Ulrich Beck in two highly influential books – the Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity (1986) and The Brave New World of Work (2000) Becks' thesis is that the West, if not the whole world, is in a new kind of modernity, largely brought about by failure of technology and science in general to deliver on the promise of progress. The second modernity according to Beck has delivered a shift from a class based society concerned with scarcity to a risk based society concerned with insecurity. The thrust of the risk thesis is that individual agents are caught up in an ever more individualised drive to take responsibility for their life journeys, particularly employment, in an environment where risks are often incalculable and the traditional sources of security such as family and religion continue to play smaller and smaller roles. This lack of access to traditional sources of security includes access to stable employment. irrevocably altered when the Fordist era of mass production and consumption gave way to a post Fordist era of flexible accumulation and flexible employment. The vehicle for this shift is argued to be economic globalisation and it has delivered job insecurity through, amongst other measures, voluntary and involuntary retrenchment. Beck's thesis, despite its impact, is not without it criticisms particularly in relation to employment (Mythen, 2005, Tulloch and Lupton, 2003) where the main critique is to do with the claim by Beck that the risk paradigm is universal and totalizing. His opponents argue that individualisation is mediated by the cohesiveness of social structures and the complexity of social reproduction in different contexts. Central to the question of agency in the face of the forces operating in post Fordist, second modernity era is whether the best way

forward for workers is simply to become 'flexible' in the face of uncertainty or stick with the Fordist model of collective bargaining and or resistance?.

. The social and cultural effects of globalisation and attendant risks are not fully understood but it is believed they can be managed, particularly with or through housing. Mitchell (2001:236) has suggested that in Australia, working multiple jobs, home ownership, internal retraining and post-retrenchment services can all be seen as components of a 'social risk management framework' for addressing the effects of globalisation. In her framework, the risks to community welfare associated with globalisation are spread across the informal and formal sectors of the economy and require a mix of risk reduction, mitigation and coping strategies. This framework locates internal retraining and post-retrenchment services as risk prevention (reducing risks) strategies in the formal/market sectors of the economy and home ownership and working multiple jobs as risk mitigation strategies in the informal/family sector of the economy.

Social risk management framework

Strategy	Informal — families	Formal — public	Formal — market
Risk reduction	Diversified skills/ Education (lifelong learning)	Labour market & wages policies Education & training	Internal re-training Post-retrenchment services
Risk mitigation	Multiple jobs Home ownership	Safety net pensions Mandated insurance for certain risks Medicare	Investment in multiple financial assets Superannuation Disability/ accident/private health insurance
Risk coping	Selling of assets Charitable assistance Extended family	Income transfers Community services Public works	Borrowing from financial institutions Credit card debt Publicly funded NGO services

Clapham (2005) has suggested that the operation of flexible labour markets has raised insecurity and this may cause people to view their homes differently and cause them to change what they want from their homes. Sennett (1997) has suggested that as people move and lose jobs and careers more frequently, there is a decline in the security of workplace identity and ultimately a stimulation of investment of identity in house and neighbourhood. From a cultural studies perspective and using Foucaultian concepts of reflexive government and subjectification, research in regional Australia by Dufty (2007) has shown how neoliberal rationalities have been resisted by public housing tenants through the development of a counter hegemonic 'countrymindedness' discourse that express a sense of home and belonging to a place in the face of pressures to become locationally flexible in pursuit of work.

However Putnam (1993:156) has suggested that the modern home is inconceivable except as a terminal in a network affording the benefits of but also providing legitimating support to a vast infrastructure facilitating flows of energy, goods, people and messages. For Putnam (1993:157), the subordination of local communities to the new networks has led to the transformation of neighbourhood aspects of residence and:

> The shared experience of work and home life within local geographic scales has become a sign of social and economic marginalization. This is not simply an effect of mobility, but of changes in the means by which sociality and identity are established and cultural and economic resources can be accessed, which have altered the parameters within which meaningful lives can be made.

Global economic restructuring includes technological innovation particularly in information, communication and technology (ICT) and robotics, use of low-cost labour in the emerging economies of China, India, Mexico and South America, deepening interdependence of national financial markets and growth in the economic power of multinational companies to influence economic, if not social, policy within sovereign states. The effect is to establish and maintain pressure on local economies and industries associated with major

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urban centres. These local economies are required to adapt, usually through development of more flexible labour markets, often under the umbrella of strategic plans designed to make inbound investment, particularly Direct Foreign Investment (DFI), more attractive. Boosterism and picking winners are common strategies within the 'entrepreneurial city'. The once favoured national policy lever of tariff protection is being phased out under the pressure of deregulated trade market and the automotive industry in Australia is currently under such pressure. The preferred option now is industry and corporate restructuring to improve competitiveness and this process is often accompanied by large-scale retrenchment in the hope that the plant will be more profitable in the longer term, although there is little evidence that this occurs (Budros 2002). Such restructuring may be accompanied by up-skilling and multi-skilling of workers, in some cases including those who were made redundant, taking some production offshore, outsourcing some production components locally and collaboration through industry clusters. Overall, the focus is on value adding and export. In this context, workers can no longer be assured of a 'job for life'.

Castells (1996:86),while not entirely ignoring the risks of the second modernity is optimistic about the new world of 'informational' global capitalism, arguing that in relation to the diffusion of information technologies:

> While certainly eliminating some jobs, it has not resulted, and it does not
> seem that it will result in the foreseeable future in mass unemployment.

However, Castells (1996) has suggested that the social relationships between capital and labour in his 'global network' conceptualisation of contemporary capitalism have been transformed largely because capital is global while labour remains local. While networks work to concentrate and globalise capitalism, labour is disaggregated and fragmented and people in locales are segregated and disconnected from each other.

Less optimistically, Lemert (2005) focuses on the marginality and dispossession created by globalisation's assault on modernity. For those still

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able to find jobs in the old economy, they work knowing that those jobs may be on 'a fast track to somewhere else' and face the possibility of being consigned to the lot of the 'economically and socially doomed' (Lemert 2005). For Lemert globalisation is built upon the demise of the nation state and the untying of the knot that

> linked one's place in the social word to the place of one's home. Modernity values the conquest of social space and we are all at risk of our life world being colonised.

However, Tomaney et al. (1999) consistent with the earlier critique of the universal application of Beck's thesis, argues that irrespective of high order abstraction of economic imperatives, at the end of the day, plant closures, redundancies and redundant workers are embedded in social structures, institutions, processes and relationships such as household and local networks. This analysis is informed by political economy, sociological and institutionalist theorisation, which allows regional political economy to:

> Be open to human and institutional agency in both individual and collective forms, path dependency, complexity and heterogeneity, as well as the importance of local context. (Tomaney et al. 1999:403)

These authors suggest that researchers should move beyond simple quantification of outcomes, as is argued is the situation in much plant study closure 'case study' research, and focus attention on the various social and economic processes that produce the experience of redundancy. In contrast to the determinism inherent in neoclassical and earlier political economy accounts of retrenchment, Tomaney et al. (1999:402) argue that plant closures and redundancies are socially produced, politically and legally regulated and that research should identify structure, agency and contingency in understanding empirical events. This sentiment is best expressed by Fryer and Fagan (1993, p 119) working within a critical community psychology perspective:

> Coping with unemployment, like all social behaviour and experience, comes into existence in a process of continuous renegotiation over time involving fundamental issues of power and agency at the intersection of

the individual, broader family, social, and community settings with powerful social institutional arrangements.

1.2 Understanding Adjustment to Retrenchment and Home: Towards an interdisciplinary Framework

As discussed above, social theory embracing risk and other perspectives on the relationship between the individual and employment in the contemporary era identifies links to home as both a place of security and as an asset – in essence to provide a measure of agency. Assessing what housing means or can or even must become in the risk era, in the case of retrenchment, calls for a variety of disciplinary vantage points.

Two research traditions have dominated the academic research on retrenchment. Labour market economists have been concerned with strategies for understanding the labour market performance of unemployed people and identifying how job search effort can be maximised given the context dependant importance of variables such as age, skill level, gender and ethnicity for predicting return to work (Webber & Campbell 1997). Psychologists have been concerned with the mental health of unemployed people and applying general models of the psychology of work and of coping with stress to the unemployment situation (Winefield, A 1995). Findings have led to policy prescriptions to address both issues.

Over the last 20 years, academic labour market research on and policy analysis regarding the role of the home in adjustment to unemployment has largely been concerned with the ways in which housing tenure constrains or enables the ability of unemployed workers to relocate to take up new jobs—to be 'not locked in place' (Strangleman 2001; Green & Hendershott 2002; Weller 2007). The research on a tenure effect is informed implicitly or explicitly by a larger body of work regarding the consequences of homeownership for households regarding residential mobility, labour force behaviour, social cohesion, health status and wealth accumulation (Dietz &

Haurin 2003). In the Australian context, drivers for and consequences of home ownership are reflected in the discourse of the 'Great Australian Dream'—home ownership on a quarter acre block and the concept of progression up a housing tenure ladder linked to income security through paid work (Paris 1993). There is limited research on the extent to which the emotional costs of relocation are mediated by the sense of home (Riemer 2000).

However, labour market literature confirms that notwithstanding the potential for serious psychological, financial and marital issues to develop as a consequence of the stress of retrenchment, most retrenched workers do not need to relocate to find work and most find work within three to six months of retrenchment. For most, this employment is less well remunerated than the previous job and often comes with compromises on the coordination between the home and work spheres (Deery et al. 1986) and changes in commuting patterns may also have implications for home/work integration. The literature also suggests that some workers experience retrenchment as very positive and many volunteer for retrenchment when the opportunity arises (Clarke 2007). The literature on what drives the level of satisfaction with the decision to take redundancy suggests some workers have disrupted access to both the latent and manifest benefits of work, which in turn influences their perception of the labour market and non-labour market outcomes of retrenchment (Hassall, Muller & Hassall 2004:73).

A large body of work from within different disciplines but fitting loosely within the domain of 'housing' studies suggests that while relocation may only be a decision/calculable risk for a minority of retrenched workers (not forgetting that the decision to stay is also an act of agency), home is a potentially important factor regarding adjustment. Research on the meaning and importance of home within the contemporary era has been undertaken by within feminism (Watson 1991), sociology (Saunders & Williams 1988; Kemeny 1992; Kearns et al. 2000), critical geography (Blunt & Dowling 2006), economics (Dockery & Milsom 2005) housing studies (Beer 2005) and cultural theory (Putnam 1993) to name a few

This may be summarised as debates taking place regarding the relationship between place, sense of home, belonging, identity, security and the built form of housing over the life course. What is required is a research approach that gets the best out of the disciplinary perspectives such as housing studies, geography, sociology, psychology and labour market analysis so research is sufficiently sensitive regarding housing as multi-faceted with physical, financial, locational/spatial and psychological/social characteristics (Carter and Polevychok, 2004) and work as a contested arena regarding identity, material well being, fulfilment and agency

1.3 Research Question and Aims

This thesis argues that the role of home adjustment to retrenchment is under developed in conceptualisations of the process of adjustment to retrenchment. This can be addressed in a longitudinal study of retrenchment that involves collection and analysis of meanings of home and of retrenchment in the context of job search and long term labour market outcomes and positioning. Three inter-related factors are argued to be particularly important for understanding how people cope with retrenchment: the relative importance of loss of the latent and manifest benefits of work (Hassal et al 2004), the role of retrenchment packages (Ezzy, 2002) and the level of job satisfaction attached to the new job, Home is implicit in all of these. Consequently the guiding research question for the thesis is: 'How does home mediate the process of adjustment to retrenchment?. The thesis seeks to identify mechanisms which constrain, and or enable the process, directly or indirectly.

The context in which this question arises is the disjunction between four key research agendas. Firstly there is research on the role of home and place in the contemporary era largely led by sociologists, geographers and environmental psychologists, with a strong emphasis on feminist scholarship as articulated by Blunt and Dowling (2006). Secondly there is research being conducted by sociologists and geographers examining globalisation and the

future of work and much of this is in the context of Beck's risk society thesis and its elaboration in the 'risk regime' of work (Beck 2000), Thirdly there are labour market economists and psychologists examining the consequences of large scale retrenchments for individuals and communities; questions of housing tenure, home and place have started to emerge on the labour market side of the research. Work by Weller on retrenchments at Ansett Airlines is a case in point (Weller, 2007). Fourthly there is work by housing policy researchers examining linkages between housing and labour markets and between work and home. The edited volume by Allen and Hamnett (1991) is a good example

The challenge that arises out of this is how should we conceptualise and construct hypotheses regarding the role of home in relation to adjustment to retrenchment in a way that does justice to the findings and conceptualisations within and across these disciplines. In particular how to conceptualise in ways that recognises the structural and cultural challenges – macro level factors - facing retrenched workers and the individual capacities and circumstances, especially the sense of home – micro level factors - that enables and constrains coping and adjustment; and the interaction between them – structure and agency. As Reimer (1998:125) asks

> Has the experience of precarious and insecure work altered the meanings which men and women invest in paid employment, for example?

For example despite suggestions that consumption rather than production has become the sphere in which people define their identities, work remains an important basis for identity, through its capacity to influence self-development, social ties, status and consciousness (Leidner, 2006). Loss of the routine and social relations associated with working life can trigger insecurity regarding identity and undermine ontological security - the "sense of confidence and trust in the world as it appears to be" (Giddens, 1990) This impact may be exaggerated for retrenched workers accustomed to an employment relations culture where companies promote the concept of a "shared destiny" between employers and employees (employees as

"associates") (Delbridge,1998, Perucchi and Stohl, 1997) as is the case in some variants of the "lean production" automotive industry production model. It has been suggested that home can provide the conditions for the maintenance of ontological security through it being "a site of constancy in the social and material environment", "a spatial context for day to day routines", "a site free from surveillance" and "a secure base for identity construction" (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998). However research by Kearns et al (2000) has shown that three psycho-social benefits of home – haven, autonomy and status - may not be achievable if people live in an area with a poor reputation or containing problem neighbours

Alternatively the risk society thesis (Beck 1992) argues that economic, financial and social risks have been shifted from businesses and governments to the individual leaving individuals responsible for the construction of their position in the labour market (Breen 1997) and urged to become more 'reflexive' in general. So rather than retrenchment being considered unusual or 'abnormal' and the structural circumstances causing it to be a trigger for collective responsibility (Weller 2007) it becomes discursively constructed as part of the wider framework of risk, the solution for which is for workers to become more 'flexible'. From that perspective housing could mediate the process of adjustment by, for example, providing sufficient financial security to explore alternative employment or business opportunities or constrain adjustment as suggested by Oswald (1990) by reducing geographic mobility especially in the case of homeownership. Equally a home, independent of housing tenure, could enable the process of adjustment by providing the foundation for the maintenance of ontological security under the right conditions or constrain adjustment by encouraging withdrawal into the privacy of the domestic sphere, reinforcing both the depoliticisation of unemployment (Sharone, 2007) and the individualisation process suggested by Beck (2000) to be emblematic of the "risk regime" of employment.

In order to assess the efficacy of these propositions the thesis has three main aims

(a) to document and analyse the journeys of adjustment to retrenchment by a cohort of workers as expressed in their own words and as measured through indicators

(b) to identify the aspects of context that are unique to the participants in the study and understand how these shape events, actions and meanings. Dimensions of context in relation to retrenchment include the institutional, regulatory and political environment , the places in which retrenchment was experienced and the nature of the local labour market. In particular this would involve assessing how well does Beck's model of the post Fordist era applies to the circumstances and events surrounding the retrenchments at MMAL? For example is there any evidence that workers perceived or behaved as if there were difficulties identifying and weighing up the risks of staying employed at the company prior to retrenchment or assessing their options and making decisions once retrenchment were announced?. Was there any evidence that workers had not been involved in any decision making about the labour process at MMAL and or the particulars of the retrenchment in question? Is there any evidence that given the role of individualisation within the second modernity workers were reflexive about the retrenchment process – what did they learn, if anything, about themselves as workers and as subjects within the new flexibility framework (Reimer 1998) – were there any counter subjectivities produced and what was the role of home or housing (Dufty 2006)

 (c) to develop an interdisciplinary model of the process of adjustment to retrenchment and the role of home in that process

1.4 Thesis Structure

Chapter 2 charts the history of the evolution of the Australian industrial relations regulatory framework through which retrenchment decisions and the strategies of stakeholders take place. It then reviews the statistical evidence regarding the nature and prevalence of retrenchment in Australia and examines the 'structural adjustment' that took place within the automotive industry in Australia in the lead up to 2004. The recent history of the regulatory environment in Australia regarding retrenchment has been characterised by the debate over the extent to which employers, the state and workers should shoulder the burden of structural adjustment within the economy. The introduction of technological change and cyclical down turns in the economy have been drivers of retrenchment decision making. The claim by employers that they need flexibility to hire and fire particularly within a globalised and less tariff-protected market has been balanced by industrial tribunals with an acknowledgement of the rights of workers to job security and adequate compensation for loss of benefits that they otherwise might have accrued had employment continued. A shift to decentralised bargaining between employers and employees to the enterprise level has seen wide variation in retrenchment packages above minimum entitlements established by the courts. These variations reflect the industrial relations leverage achieved by some workers though the trade union movement. Retrenchment represents approximately half the unemployment rate in Australia at any one time and retrenchment ratios vary by industry, occupation and age. The likelihood of being retrenched two or more times in a given period decreases with age. In order to obtain another job, nearly half of all retrenched workers in Australia must consider changing industry, occupation and/or shifting from full to part time or full time to casual status. In 2004, over 270,000 people were retrenched from permanent positions and over 50 per cent of those workers had only been in the job for one year. Consequently, they would not have been entitled to any severance pay. Structural adjustment in the automotive industry in Australia has been driven by Commonwealth Government demands that the industry become less

dependent on tariffs and subsidies. Wages within the industry have been artificially inflated through subsidies. Commonwealth Government inquiries into the automotive industry over the last 15 years have seen measures put in place to assist workers to 'adjust' to the requirements of lean production, the dominant production and management strategy within the automotive industry.

Chapter 3 argues that home and work are in a creative tension in the context of the life course and that job loss can be problematized in different ways culturally, conditioning the way personal and household factors mediate coping. Researchers working within psychological and sociological perspectives have identified processes and resources through which well-being is maintained in challenging situations and in particular have investigated responses to job loss and retrenchment. Labour market economists have identified the ways in which local and national labour markets influence unemployment duration and the likelihood of re-employment. Psychologists in particular have debated the nature of reactions to job loss, particularly on the question of the extent to which loss of access to the latent and manifest benefits of work determines psychological adjustment and its effect on subsequent job search effort. Direct or indirect research on job loss and adjustment to retrenchment and the role of housing has largely been conducted from the perspective that individuals cannot compete in alternative labour markets when they are 'locked in place' due to reliance on supportive networks or housing tenure. The focus of these investigations is on willingness and/or capacity to relocate to take up a new job. Researchers across the social sciences and architecture have debated the importance of home in the contemporary era which is characterised by uncertainty, risk and in particular, employment insecurity. The need for a sense of home and a place where one belongs has been stressed. The role of the retrenchment package, the significance of previous experience of retrenchment and the distinction between voluntary and involuntary retrenchment regarding the role of the home have not been investigated. The chapter develops, for heuristic purposes, a conceptual model of the experience of retrenchment and maintaining a sense of home.

Chapter 4 discusses alternative approaches to addressing the research questions and aims and the mixed methods perspective that informed this study. It discusses the role of the qualitative data collection and analysis particularly its utility in illuminating processes of adjustment to retrenchment and the experience of home—the focus being on subjective experience and meaning. As such, it establishes the basis for identifying and analysing in what ways and for what purposes home, house and place were framed/introduced in the retrenchment journeys/stories/narratives of research participants as they went through the stages of addressing the challenges of a major life event such as retrenchment..

Chapter 5 demonstrates, using aggregate longitudinal data, the influence of gender, previous experience of retrenchment, the nature of retrenchment (whether voluntary of involuntary) and job search on employment outcomes over time. It also identifies the implications arising from changes in the journey to work. This chapter sets the scene for reviewing and analysing the subjective experience of adjustment as discussed in Chapters 6-9

Chapter 6 identifies the factors which influenced the home/work relationship prior to retrenchment through using the concepts of trajectories of the sense of home informing the housing decisions of retrenched workers before retrenchment the *experienced* and *imagined* home, housing histories, the importance of home and homeownership, attachment to place and the meanings of home. . It establishes how the commodity, cultural and biographical meanings of home mediate the experience of belonging and being embedded in the job, in the workplace and in the region.

Chapter 7 discusses how and when home plays a role in processes of adjustment once retrenchment was announced, using the five major tasks/processes involved in integrating a major life challenge to structure the data. The role of home is illuminated in accounts of adjusting to losses of the latent and manifest benefits of work. The chapter establishes how home was used, defended or experienced as people went through adjustment through

analysis of references to home, house and place. The chapter discusses initial reactions to job loss, the experience of getting a new job and final assessment of the retrenchment experience. It uses content, thematic and narrative analysis of workers' experience and evaluation of retrenchment and identifies transitions or pathways in adjustment that incorporate the home.

Chapter 8 identifies linkages between the home and adjustment to retrenchment by focusing on the interconnectedness of the personal, financial and career aspects of adjustment. To do this it examines the contribution to well-being that arises through the retrenchment package, from obtaining a new job, and how meanings of home change in the adjustment process.

Chapter 9, using case studies, highlights the diversity in the expression of the sense of home and its anchoring role in the context of households and their adjustment journeys. It highlights these linkages across different situations — a male who has previously experienced retrenchment, a women who has an ethnic background and has taken up caring for her ageing relative, a male living alone and renting in the private sector, a male who experienced marital separation following retrenchment and now lives in a refurbished shed on his rural property and a male homeowner looking for work. The structure for these constructed case studies involves six elements. The first is a brief overview of the basic demographic, employment history and facts of retrenchment (Introduction). The second element focuses on what home means and where it is with an emphasis on processes and structures of place attachment and homemaking (The sense of home: What and where is home how is it made?) The third element establishes the manifest and latent benefits of working for Mitsubishi Motors Australia Limited (MMAL) over the period of employment (What did it mean to work for MMAL?) The fourth element captures the immediate and longer term material and psycho-social effects of the retrenchment (Personal and household impacts of retrenchment: Positive and negative). The fifth element explores the personal dispositions and household approaches to dealing with the emotions and issues surrounding retrenchment (Coping strategies and tactics). The final element engages the hopes and plans of the respondents as they consolidate their post-

retrenchment situation (The future). Each retrenchment account is discussed in relation to the significance of the sense of home for how individuals went about coming to terms with retrenchment. Pseudonyms have been used.

Chapter 10 concludes the research. It discusses the relevance of the findings in terms of the aims and key research questions and how the conceptual model of the process of adjustment to retrenchment and maintaining a sense of home might be developed.

Chapter 2: Managing The Risk of retrenchment in Australia; the Case of Structural Adjustment in the Automotive Industry

> A job, which one has sought and obtained on one's merits, gives meaning and purpose to life. It is an essential part of one's self worth. If it is lost as a result of someone's unlawful conduct then compensation ought to reflect the loss that is suffered, quite apart from economic considerations.

(Judge Heerey, Federal Court of Australia reported in the *Financial Review*, 14 May 2008)

Retrenchment is now a common feature of working life in Australia and large-scale redundancies have a long history in this country. This chapter provides an overview of retrenchment as a public policy issue in Australia and reviews how retrenchment was used in a restructure of manufacturing operations at MMAL in 2004. The purpose of the chapter is to examine the legal, labour market and industry policy dimensions that determine how retrenchment unfolds in any particular enterprise and how it unfolded in the automotive industry in Adelaide in 2004. Fundamental to an understanding of the management of retrenchment in Australia is that, in principle, no blame attaches to the individual who is retrenched (although they may subsequently experience social stigmatisation in the community and prejudicial treatment in the labour market)—it is the job that is no longer required and the incumbent, in principle, bears no formal responsibility for being retrenched, whether the retrenchment is voluntary or involuntary. Consequently, policy development regarding the management of retrenchment proceeds on the basis that individuals should not be asked to carry any more of the burden of the costs of restructuring, within a company, industry or region than is absolutely essential. It is expected that workers will find another job under the best possible employment conditions in the shortest possible time and with the least psychological and financial impact.

This chapter commences by identifying key elements in the evolution of the regulation of retrenchment in Australia between 1984 and 2004. Section 2.2 identifies the key drivers, strategies for and outcomes of retrenchment nationally through the lens of labour market statistics and retrenchment as a form of labour mobility. In Section 2.3, an overview is provided of the perceived relationship between shifts in automotive industry assistance and retrenchments in the automotive industry in Australia, as considered in a series of national reviews of industry assistance between 1990 and 2002. This section concentrates on the extent to which automotive industry assistance policy makers took responsibility for easing adjustment to retrenchment by auto industry workers. In Section 2.4, the concepts introduced in the first three sections of the chapter are used to describe the events leading to the retrenchments at MMAL in 2004.

2.1 The Evolution of the Regulation of Retrenchment in Australia: 1984–2004

From a public policy perspective, decisions about retrenchment—the dismissal of an employee whose position has become redundant—must strike a balance between the legal protections of job security for individual workers and the needs and responsibility of employers to run a company effectively and efficiently. At the regional, state or national level, this dynamic informs policy prescriptions, at respective levels of governance, regarding labour force development and economic/productivity growth in a shift from the post-industrial to the new economy. Job security is essential to protect the investment of human capital made by employees and to protect employees from capricious or prejudicial acts by employers.

In Australia, the tension between the competing needs and expectations of employees and employers informs industrial bargaining under the guidance of industrial conciliation and arbitration tribunals as well as by prevailing industrial relations legislation. The outcome of bargaining is expressed in industry- or enterprise-based awards. Prior to 1993, workers, their representatives and employers in Australia did not have recourse to statutory

unfair dismissal laws at the federal level but could, and did, pursue matters through state-based industrial courts and boards or the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC). The AIRC laid down the foundations for consideration of unfair dismissal, introduction of workplace change and redundancy matters within federal industrial awards in an historic 'test case': *The Termination, Change and Redundancy Case of 1984* (TCR case) (Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission 1984). The TCR case was brought on by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in the context of, as the Commission noted, a large number of retrenchments in industry due to influences such as economic downturn, the rationalisation of enterprises, mergers and takeovers and the introduction of new technology. There was a significant level of industrial disputation regarding termination of employment. The Commission also noted that it had been proposed through submissions, particularly by the ACTU, that in the prevailing weak labour market, job loss had even more severe consequences than in the past for individual workers and that there had been a steady increase in the number of weeks a person who lost their job may be jobless and dependent on unemployment benefits. The Commission also noted that 'persons in older age groups tend to experience longer than average periods of unemployment'. The TCR case was designed to address three interrelated issues: termination—unfair dismissal; introduction of change—protection of workers during work-based change processes; and redundancy—compensation for those made redundant during change processes.

The ACTU claim was extensive. In relation to the introduction of change on the basis of operational, economic, technological, structural or similar grounds, the claim called for employees to be notified of any changes at the workplace that would result in 'significant effects' for them, such as termination of employment and change in the size of the employer workforce. It also asked for consultation with unions to avert or mitigate adverse effects at least six months prior to the introduction of change. It also called for the provision of information about proposed changes and their likely effects to unions at least two weeks before consultation. In relation to redundancies, the ACTU claim called for consultation with unions in all instances except for

exceptional circumstances, at least three months prior to notice of terminations, that the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) must be notified of terminations and that a preference must be given to union members in matters such as retention or re-employment. The ACTU asked that the criteria for selection for termination would be negotiated between unions and employers and that in relation to entitlements on termination the following minimum payments would apply:

- payment in lieu of at least three months' notice
- four weeks pay plus four weeks' pay for each completed year of service
- an additional weeks' pay for workers over the age of 35 and an additional two weeks' pay for each completed year of service over 10 years for workers aged over 45
- full sick, annual and long-service leave entitlements
- a maintenance of income payment for 12 months following termination
- relocation costs and assistance with job search including retraining.

In arguing its claim, the ACTU referred to a large body of Australian and overseas research evidence and determinations in other jurisdictions to which Australia was a signatory, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO). The ILO adopted the *Termination of Employment Convention,* adopted on 22 June 1982, No 158, (entered into force 23 November 1985) (*Termination of Employment Convention*), and *Termination of Employment Recommendation,* adopted on 26 June 1983, No 166 (Forsyth 2008). Both these conventions called for generous consultation, retraining and severance pay policies by member nations.

The commissioners gave weight to evidence presented in other jurisdictions on the importance of work and job security and, in some instances, the importance of the home. For example, the Commission noted the comment of the Donovan Royal Commission on United Kingdom (UK) Trade Unions and Employers' Associations (1965–68) in relation to unfair dismissals:

In reality people build much of their lives around their jobs. Their incomes and prospects for the future are inevitably founded in the expectation that their jobs will continue. For workers in many situations dismissal is a disaster. For some workers it may make inevitable the breaking up of a community and the uprooting of homes and families. Others, and particularly older workers, may be faced with the greatest difficulty in getting work at all.

The Commission also referred to the UK Redundancy Payments Act of 1965. Root (1987:18) in reviewing the foundations for the Act noted that proponents of the Act were seeking to make it easier for workers to change their jobs in accordance with the needs of technological progress and to 'push forward the modernization of British industry as fast as possible, and to enlist the cooperation of workers as well as management in the process'. Root (1987:18) argued that:

The Act established the idea that an employee gains the equivalent of property rights to his or her job by virtue of years of service with the company. Those rights include the privileges and security associated with seniority as well as rights to the job itself.

The Commission also noted Justice Gaudron's 1975 finding in the Food Preservers' Union v. Wattie Pict Limited (the Wattie Pict case) regarding the interaction of financial hardship, disruption to routine and standing in the labour market following retrenchment:

Primarily employment is the chief source of income for Australian families. Its interruption must be attended either by financial hardship or the fear of it. Employment is also part of a worker's daily routine and society; disruption of that routine and social contact necessitates a reorganization of an important aspect of a person's life. Long-term employees may also find themselves with a competitive disability as a result of opportunities foregone in the continuous service of their employers.

The AIRC acknowledged that technological change was a key factor in retrenchments and that the relationship between technological change and

aspects of firm/sector profitability and labour market impacts had been examined by no less than six inquiries in Australia at the national or state level between 1963 and 1983. One of the most influential of these inquiries was the Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia 1980 (CITCA Report), which suggested that the monetary compensation for retrenchment should comprise the following elements:

- Compensation for non-transferable 'credits' that have been built up, such as: accrued benefits like sick leave and long-service leave; loss of seniority; and loss of the employer's contribution to pension or superannuation

- compensation for the inconvenience or hardship imposed and assistance to the retrenched employee to make the change, with aims such as: to act as temporary income maintenance while the retrenched employee searches for another job; and to allow for the possibility of retraining or relocation to take up a new job

- an element that has a compensation component to the extent that it may allow the retrenched employee to take a share of the benefits that the employer expects from the change, and in which, if still employed, he or she could expect to share; alternatively, this element might be considered as the price of industrial peace.

The Commission rejected the second and third elements of the CITCA report and ultimately determined that the payment of severance pay was justifiable as compensation for non-transferable credits and the inconvenience and hardship imposed on employees. The Commission, in rejecting the second element of the CITCA model for calculation of severance pay accepted the principle, established in the UK, that redundancy payments are not a form of unemployment benefit:

> The purpose of redundancy pay was to provide compensation to the worker for loss of job, irrespective of whether it leads to any unemployment. The losses which the individual may suffer as a consequence of redundancy, such as loss of security, possible reduction in earnings and fringe benefits and the uncertainty and anxiety of changing jobs, may all be present in the redundancy situation even if he has managed to find another job immediately.

The Commission's determination fell far short of the proposed provisions suggested by the ACTU in most areas. The published decision of the Commission includes its reasoning for its conclusions and in most cases the specifics of the determination were strongly informed by previous decisions of the Commission and by industrial tribunals in states and territories and by guidelines such as those developed by the tripartite National Labour Advisory Council Guidelines (NLAC) 'Adjusting to Technological Change' (1969). A central outcome of the TCR case was the decision, contrary to that proposed by employers, that redundancy payments should not distinguish between the causes for redundancy, in particular the distinction between technological change and economic downturn. Ultimately, the Commission was not persuaded that it could distinguish in any definitive sense between the different factors acting on the number and nature of jobs and concluded that:

> Moreover, the reason for the granting of additional notice to employees and the purpose of redundancy payments apply equally to redundant employees whatever be the cause of their termination. Employees, no matter what the reason for the redundancy, equally experience the inconvenience of hardship associated with searching for another job and/or the loss of compensation for non-transferable credits that have been built up such as sick leave and long-service leave. In particular, to make a distinction granting severance pay only in cases of technological change, notwithstanding the equality of hardship on employees in all redundancy situations, would be to penalise an employer for introducing technological change. This would not be consistent with the attitude to technological change adopted in these proceedings by the ACTU, the views expressed by the various inquiries into technological change to which we were referred, or the terms of the Summit Communique. In these circumstances, we do not believe that there should be any fundamental distinction, in principle, based on the causes of redundancy.

The Commission made the following determination about severance pay and it was one that was well short of the ACTU claim for four weeks' pay for every year of service.

Table 2.1: Commission's Determination on Severance Pay

Service	Severance pay
Less than one year	nil
More than one but less than two years	4 weeks' pay
More than two but less than three years	6 weeks' pay
More than three but less than four years	7 weeks' pay
More than four years	8 weeks' pay

Consultation with and timely provision of information to unions and employees by employers regarding workplace change had been a major concern for the unions. The Commission noted that other industrial tribunals and committees of inquiry had not been prescriptive on this matter but had considered that consultation regarding introduction of change should be voluntary and by doing so they would be permitting management to take necessary responsibility for the decisions it makes 'whilst allowing appropriate flexibility as to timing, content and implementation of change'. The Commission did not prescribe a six-month notification of change period as requested by the ACTU but did mandate consultation and provision of information as soon as a decision by management was taken:

> However, at this stage, we are prepared to include in an award a requirement that consultation take place with employees and their representatives as soon as a firm decision has been taken about major changes in production, program, organization, structure or technology which are likely to have significant effects on employees. We have decided also that the employer shall provide in writing to the employees concerned and their representatives all relevant information about the nature of the changes proposed, the expected effect of the changes on employees and any other matters likely to affect employees. However, we will not require an employer to disclose confidential information.

The Commission did not impose the provision to consult unions or employees in situations in which the enterprise employed less than 15 people; however, these employers were required to comply with severance pay and other conditions.

Further refinement of the regulatory framework occurred in 1993 when the Keating Labor Government introduced amendments to the *Industrial Relations Act 1988 (Cth)* specifically to establish provisions for unfair dismissals. Based on this legislation, the AIRC in *Selvachandran v Peterton Plastics Pty Ltd (1995)* determined that:

> A reason for termination must be 'sound, defensible or well-founded'—rather than 'capricious, fanciful, spiteful or prejudiced'—so as to constitute a 'valid reason' for purposes of section 170DE of the IR Act.

According to Forsyth (2008), this case established important principles. Firstly, it established that the onus was on the employer to demonstrate that the need for redundancies related to the operational requirements of the organisation. Secondly, it established that operational requirements were established if it was necessary to 'advance the undertaking' and this could include, for example:

> Past and present performance of the undertaking, the state of the market in which it operates, steps that may be taken to improve the efficiency of the undertaking by installing new processes, equipment or skills, or by arranging for labour to be used more productively.

Thirdly, it established that provided an organisation acted in good faith, the employers' judgement regarding the needs of the organisation should not be called into question. Finally, in addition to establishing valid reasons for terminations, procedural obligations required employers to fully inform and consult with affected employees, consider alternative employment opportunities, formulate and apply objective selection criteria in a non-discriminatory manner, and provide notice and severance payments in line with award/statutory requirements.

Forsyth (2008) has also argued that the IR Reform Act enabled workers to obtain orders from the AIRC, requiring employers to inform and consult with them about large-scale redundancies (that is, those affecting 15 or more employees). In addition, employers were also required to notify the CES of

mass redundancies and employees could seek orders from the AIRC for the making of severance payments in certain circumstances.

The last decision of an Australian industrial tribunal to influence the outcome of the environment facing workers made redundant in 2004 was another redundancy test case (AIRC 2004). The test case was brought on by unions arguing, among other things, that severance pay was inadequate, especially given the eight-week severance pay cap for long-serving workers and that the average period of unemployment after redundancy was 22 weeks. The ACTU was also concerned about the casualisation of the workforce, claiming that since 1982, casual employment had doubled as a proportion of the workforce to over 25 per cent or about two million employees who, due to the exclusion of casual employees from the 1984 TCR case determination, were without any redundancy entitlements.

The AIRC noted evidence submitted by the Australian Council of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) claiming that the annual rate of retrenchment was relatively stable at five per cent and that ABS data appeared to indicate that if anything job mobility had declined not increased, that job changing can take place for negative and positive reasons and consequently job mobility was a relatively crude indicator of changes in job insecurity. It observed that there was little evidence to support claims that job instability had been rising. The ACCI also claimed there was no evidence that the average duration of jobs was decreasing. It claimed that just because job stability in Australia was not declining, on average, it did not mean that job insecurity was not increasing. Whereas the 1984 test case submissions highlighted the implications for workers from unplanned technological change, in the 2004 test case, submissions were instead focused more on stressing the implications for employment emerging from adverse or challenging economic factors. The Commission noted the submission by the ACCI regarding the need for businesses to restructure to remain competitive in the face of globalisation and the subsequent need for the Commission to be cognisant of the cost of severance pay in the long term.

The ACCI contended that globalisation and increased exposure to foreign competition will produce an increased imperative on Australian business to restructure and adapt to survive and this in turn highlights the need to have an award redundancy safety net that facilitates rather than hinders essential restructuring. Severance represents a cost and potential barrier to businesses engaging in restructuring, where retrenchments form part of the plan. Severance pay soaks up funds that may be available for other purposes as part of the restructure. Ultimately, high levels of severance pay can have a paralysing effect on businesses, especially those in financial difficulties, by making a restructure that might otherwise save a business too expensive.

The Commission noted another submission by the ACCI associated with changed circumstances since 1984, that is, changes in the structure of labour markets and the nature of career progression. The ACCI argued that the 1984 decision was based on a notion of 'employee attachment' where career progression was largely shaped by employment tenure and this had warranted protection against dismissal and redundancy:

Now, however, individuals conceive of careers as progressing across rather than within firms, and firms seek services to be delivered in a more flexible way than the traditional norm of full-time, long-term employment. Labour mobility does not necessarily create the negative consequences it may once have, and not in the manner that was considered to warrant compensation in 1984. The idea of a severance pay scale in which severance payments increase based on years of service was to compensate for an employee's exclusion from seniority-based pay systems. Those systems are less widespread today.

The AIRC rejected the argument to extend severance pay to casual employees; however, it did increase the severance pay scale from four to 10 years of service in large part to ensure that workers would receive non-transferable credits, such as long-service leave, which ordinarily is not available before 10 years of continuous service. The Commission determined that employers with fewer than 15 employees should pay severance in line

with the 1984 TCR award rather than in line with the new award, as detailed in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: 2004 AIRC Test Case Severance Pay Decision

Period of continuous service	Severance pay
Less than 1 year	Nil
1 year and less than 2 years	4 weeks' pay
2 years and less than 3 years	6 weeks' pay
3 years and less than 4 years	7 weeks' pay
4 years and less than 5 years	8 weeks' pay
5 years and less than 6 years	10 weeks' pay
6 years and less than 7 years	11 weeks' pay
7 years and less than 8 years	13 weeks' pay
8 years and less than 9 years	14 weeks' pay
9 years and less than 10 years	16 weeks' pay
10 years and over	12 weeks' pay

2.1.1 Summary

This section has traced the evolution of the regulation of retrenchment in Australia during the period 1984 to 2004 and provides the context for the MMAL retrenchments discussed in this thesis. In the earlier years of this period, the main 'cause' of retrenchments was perceived to be the introduction of technological change; however, in the later period, it appeared that globalisation of the economy and attendant economic downturns were to 'blame'. Nevertheless, the AIRC rejected arguments that the cause of retrenchments should be a factor in determining retrenchment severance pay or any other retrenchment provisions. It also confirmed the view that while employees should accept some responsibility for the impact of termination of employment, there were also important social/public policy issues that required the engagement of a broader group of stakeholders.

2.2 Retrenchment in Australia: National Statistics

This section provides an analysis of the prevalence and incidence of retrenchment in Australia in the period 1994–2004 through the lens of labour force and labour mobility statistics. The overview establishes the scale, drivers and outcomes of retrenchment in Australia in that period. The primary descriptive tool is the concept of *retrenchment ratio* and is used to discuss the likelihood of being retrenched in relation to variables such as age, occupation, industry and location. The overview also considers other important including factors such as the main causes of retrenchment, periods of notice regarding retrenchment and labour force outcomes.

The overview is based entirely on data collected and reported by the ABS. The reports are based on two retrenchment and redundancy surveys conducted in 1997 and 2001 respectively, an overview report on the same data included in a section on underutilised labour in the 2000 edition of *Australian Social Trends* and a quarterly labour mobility survey in 2004. The 1997 survey on retrenchment and redundancy was the first time national data on these issues had been collected. No further surveys of this nature were conducted after 2001. Both retrenchment and redundancy surveys collected core data on people who were retrenched at least once in the three years preceding the survey. Data included details about the job from which they were retrenched, including industry and occupation; personal characteristics such as job tenure; some employer details such as reason for retrenchment; and the subsequent labour market experience of persons retrenched. The 1997 report contains retrenchment ratios that were not calculated in the 2001 report and consequently the overview preferences the 1997 data. The labour mobility survey (2004) collected information about employment changes of people during the reference period. Data was collected on the number of retrenchments in the process of asking why a job ceased—it is essentially a survey regarding job mobility and job tenure.

This section of the chapter commences by contrasting unemployment and retrenchment rates during the period 1979 to 1998, which contained two recessions: 1982/3 and 1991/2. The overview then turns to the retrenchment ratios—rates of retrenchment by key factors such as industry, occupation and age. The overview concludes with data on retrenchments in 2004 and implications of the overview for the thesis case study.

2.2.1 Retrenchment as a Contributor to National Unemployment Trends

Retrenchment contributed approximately half the unemployment in Australia between 1979 and 1998 with over six per cent of workers retrenched in times of economic downturn and over four per cent retrenched in the relatively more prosperous times. In 1998, 58 per cent of job losers were retrenched (408,600) while 32 per cent lost temporary or seasonal jobs and 10 per cent lost jobs due to ill health. However, during this period, total employment grew from 6.0 million to 8.5 million, laying the foundation for possible re-employment of retrenched workers in different industries and occupations.
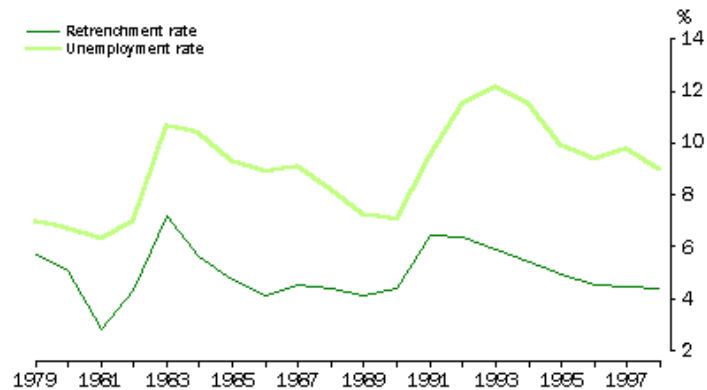
Figure 2.1: Retrenchment and Unemployment Rates, 1979–1998 (ABS 2000)

Source: ABS (2000)

The likelihood of being retrenched can be expressed as a *rate*—the percentage of all retrenchments due to retrenchments in a particular industry, and as a *ratio*—risk of retrenchment within a particular industry. The ABS calculated retrenchment rates and ratios for the three years to July 1997 when over 680,000 people were retrenched in Australia (see Table 2.3). Of workers retrenched in this period, 24 per cent were in the manufacturing sector while the actual risk of retrenchment within that industry was 16 per cent. Workers retrenched from the energy sector made up 2.8 per cent of all those retrenched during this period but this sector had the highest rate of retrenchments (25 per

36

cent) possibly an outcome of the privatisation that occurred within the energy sector during this period.

Table 2.3: Industries: Retrenchment Ratios and Contribution to Total Retrenchment, Three Years to July 1997

Industry division	Number of persons retrenched '000	Share of all employees retrenched %	Retrench ment ratio %
Manufacturing	166.9	24.3	16
Retail Trade	82.0	12.0	10
Construction	59.1	8.6	18
Property and Business Services	47.6	6.9	8
Wholesale Trade	46.4	6.8	11
Government Administration and Defence	39.5	5.8	12
Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants	37.0	5.4	12
Health and Community Services	33.9	4.9	5
Transport and Storage	30.6	4.5	10
Finance and Insurance	23.1	3.4	8
Education	21.5	3.1	4
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	19.3	2.8	25
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	18.0	2.6	13
Personal and Other Services	17.6	2.6	7
Communication Services	17.5	2.6	14
Cultural and Recreational Services	14.6	2.1	10
Mining	10.9	1.6	14
Total	**685.5**	**100**	**11**

Source: ABS 2000

Occupation also had an independent impact on retrenchment ratios (see Table 2.4). Occupations with the lowest skill levels such as labouring had the highest retrenchment ratios although people working in trades, generally considered secure employment, were just as likely to be retrenched (retrenchment ratio 15 per cent) as intermediate production and transport workers (retrenchment ratio 15 per cent).

Table 2.4: Occupation: Retrenchment ratios and contribution to total retrenchment, three years to July 1997

Occupation (skill level(a))	Number of persons retrenched	Share of all employees retrenched	Retrenchment ratio
	'000s	%	%
Labourers and related workers (5)	128	18.7	19
Tradespersons and related workers (3)	122.1	17.8	15
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers (4)	113.6	16.6	9
Intermediate production and transport workers (4)	91.6	13.4	15
Professionals (1)	68.8	10	6
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers (5)	59.9	8.7	10
Associate professionals (2)	50.8	7.4	8
Managers and administrators (1)	26.6	3.9	7
Advanced clerical and service workers (3)	24	3.5	7
Total	**685.4**	**100**	**11**

(a) Occupation groups are based on Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, 2nd Edition, which classifies occupations by skill level ranked from 1 (the highest) to 5 (the lowest) (cat. no. 1220.0).

Source: ABS 2000

Demographic factors also showed independent effects on retrenchment likelihood (see Table 2.5). Workers in the 55–64 year old age group had the highest retrenchment ratio (16 per cent). This persisted even for workers in this age group who had vocational qualifications or diplomas suggesting that workers in this age group should be considering on the job training and other forms of keeping up to date with technological change or risk losing jobs to younger more recently qualified workers.

Table 2.5: Retrenchment Ratios by Age and Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics, Three Years to July 1997

Selected characteristics	18–24 years %	25–34 years %	35–44 years %	45–54 years %	55–64 years %	18–64 years %
Men	15	13	11	13	18	13
Women	7	8	6	8	11	8
No post-school qualification	13	12	10	11	14	12
Vocational qualification or diploma(a)	9	12	9	12	19	11
Bachelor degree or higher	4	5	6	8	9	6
Born in Australia	11	11	9	11	15	11
Born in mainly English-speaking countries	9	10	9	11	20	11
Born in other countries	15	9	8	9	18	10
Total	**11**	**11**	**9**	**11**	**16**	**11**

(a) Includes those nurses for whom level of qualification is not known.

Source: ABS 2000

Table 2.6 shows that of the workers who were retrenched one or more times the majority were only retrenched once (85 per cent). However, nearly 10 per cent of workers who had been retrenched one or more times had been retrenched twice in the three-year period. The most disconcerting statistic was that the likelihood of being retrenched three or more times was marginally higher for workers in the 25–34 year old group, a period when family formation is at its peak.

Table 2.6: Number of Times Retrenched by Age, Three Years to July 1997

	Retrenched once	Retrenched twice	Retrenched three or more times	Total
Age	%	%	%	%
18–24	79.2	15.6	5.2	100
25–34	83.5	9.7	6.8	100
35–44	86	9.1	5	100
45–54	90.2	7.6	2.3	100
55–64	92.2	3.6	4.2	100
Total	**85.5**	**9.6**	**4.9**	**100**

Source: ABS 2000

The percentage of retrenched workers employed was higher the longer ago the retrenchment occurred (see Table 2.7). Of those whose retrenchment occurred within six months of the survey, 45 per cent were unemployed while just under six per cent of those who were retrenched between two and half to three years prior to the survey remained unemployed. Finding a new job involved the exercise of considerable agency: 30 per cent of workers changed industry, 23 per cent changed occupation, 13 per cent changed full-time/part-time status with hours of work and 16 per cent changed between permanent and casual status. Of workers who changed hours of work, 67 per cent changed from full to part time and of those who changed their full-/part-time status 70 per cent moved from permanent to casual status. All of these changes have implications for the home/work relationship.

Table 2.7: Labour Force Status of Persons Who Had Been Retrenched in the Three Years to July 1997

	Date last retrenched				
Labour force status in July 1997	**July to December 1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**January to June 1997**	**Total**
	%	%	%	%	%
Employed	80.3	66.7	52.7	39.6	54.7
Changed industry	50.3	37.2	28.2	20.1	30.1
Changed occupation	40.6	32	21.2	12.7	23.1
Changed full-time/part-time status	15.3	16.1	13.2	8.9	12.8
Changed permanent/casual status	21.9	17.9	15.2	11.8	15.5
Unemployed	5.7	14.3	31.5	45.4	29.3
Not in the labour force	14	19	15.8	15	16.1
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: ABS 2000

The likelihood of being retrenched was also influenced by geography (see Figure 2.2) The Adelaide metropolitan area showed the highest proportion of retrenchment (10 per cent) and Northern Territory the lowest (four per cent).

RETRENCHMENT BY AREA OF USUAL RESIDENCE, JULY 1997

(a) The Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory are not split into Capital City and Balance of State/Territory regions.
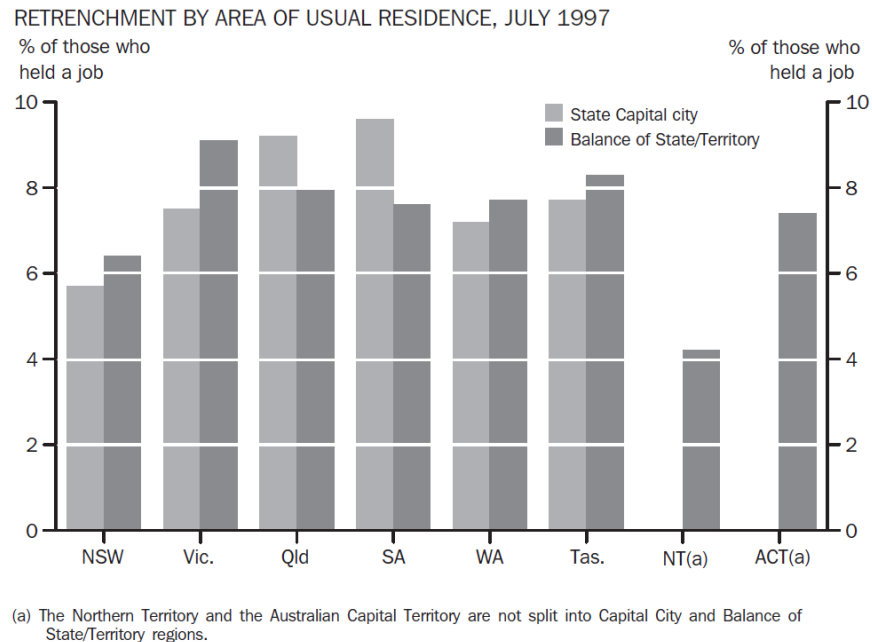
Figure 2.2: Retrenchment by Area of Usual Residence

Source: ABS (2000)

Despite the popular belief that the introduction of new technology is the main driver of retrenchments, more than 45 per cent of workers who had experienced at least one round of retrenchment in the survey of July 1997 stated that 'not enough work' and 'job cuts' were the main reason for their retrenchment (see Table 2.8). New technology represented just over four per cent of causes. Over three-quarters of the reasons for retrenchment could be characterised as being related to economic restructuring. A similar range of reasons was reported in the July 200 ABS publication.

Table 2.8: Main Reason for Retrenchment, Three Years to July 1997

Reasoning	Permanent	Casual	All persons retrenched
	%	%	%
Not enough work/job cuts	42.9	52.2	45.6
Business closed	16	11.1	14.6
Change of management	9	7	8.4
Other business problems	3.4	4.1	3.6
Ill health or physical disability	3.4	2.5	3.1
Nature of job changed/new technology	5.3	1.5	4.2
Other	19.3	20	19.5
Don't know	0.7	1.6	1
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: ABS 2000

The Retrenchment and Redundancy Report released in 2001 showed that in the previous three years, 596,400 workers or six per cent of those who had held a job in that period had been retrenched. This compares with seven per cent in the 1997 survey, which covered the three years prior to July 1997 and reflects the lagged effect of the 1991/92 recession. Of those persons retrenched in the three years prior to July 2001, some 400,500 (67 per cent) were employed compared with 200,500 (55 per cent) of those retrenched in the three years prior to July 2001 (see Figure 2.3).

PERSONS RETRENCHED OR MADE REDUNDANT IN THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS,
By labour force status
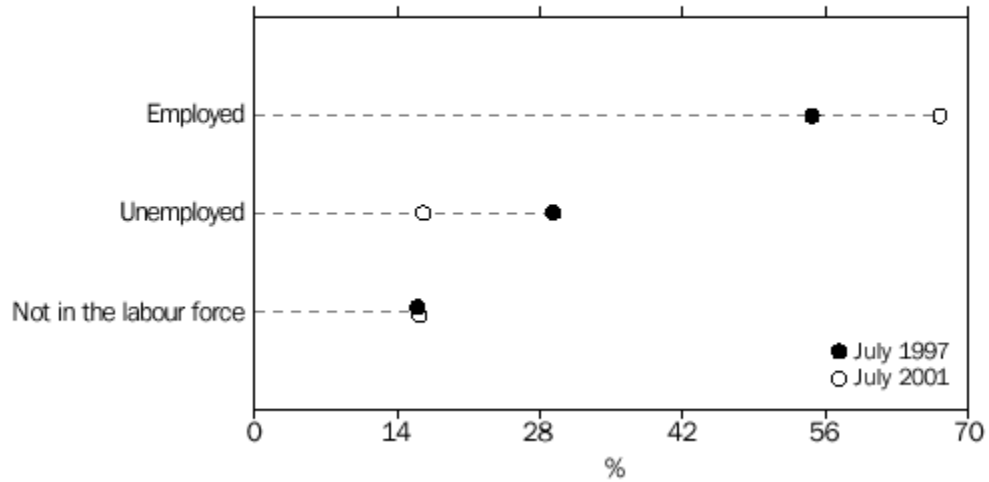
Figure 2.3: Persons Retrenched or Made Redundant, Three Years to July 2001

Source: ABS (2001)

The main difficulties in finding work reported by workers who were unemployed in July 1997 were: too many applicants (18 per cent), considered too young or too old (16 per cent), no vacancies in line of work (14.5 per cent) and no vacancies at all (13 per cent).

Over 77 per cent of those retrenched in the period were given prior notice of less than five weeks, with 149,500 (25 per cent) given prior notice of less than one day. It is possible that severance payments to these workers included payment in lieu of notice as prescribed following the 1984 TCR case. This may have tempered the financial impact of short or no notice, but may not have prevented workers from experiencing stress associated with separation from the workplace without adequate emotional preparation.

Of those persons who had worked at some time during the year ending February 2004, 14 per cent (1,455,600) were job mobile (that is, they changed their employer and/or their locality at least once within the previous year). This compares with 15 per cent in 2002. There were 2,202,600 persons who

were working at February 2004 and who had been in their current job for 10 years or more, including over 800,000 who had been in their job for more than 20 years. In 2004, of the more than 10,000,000 who had worked during some period in the year ending February 2004 over 2,000,000 (21 per cent) ceased a job during that period. Of these persons, 1,455, 200 (69 per cent) were job leavers (ceased their job voluntarily/changed locality but still working for the same employer) and 657,600 people (31 per cent) were job losers (ceased their job involuntarily). Nearly half of all job losers lost jobs that were temporary or seasonal and 270,700 (40 per cent) were retrenched from permanent positions. Approximately 55 per cent of job losers had been in that job for less than one year.

2.2.2 Summary

The likelihood of retrenchment in Australia during the period 1994 to 2004 was influenced by factors such as industry, years of job tenure, occupation and age. The retrenchment rate remained at around four per cent and was influenced by periods of recession. Of those retrenched, approximately five per cent were retrenched three or more times in the three-year period leading up to a survey. People who were retrenched in the three years prior to July 2001 experienced a considerably shorter period of unemployment compared with people retrenched in the three years up to June 1997. Over one fifth of people who worked in 2004 stopped working for a period of time and more than a third (657,000) of those people left their job involuntarily.

2.3 Planning for Labour Market 'Adjustment' in the Automotive Industry in Australia

The automotive industry in Australia has been subject to numerous protectionist policy prescriptions since the first complete car produced in Australia, 'Australia's own car: the first Holden', left the GMH Fisherman's Bend assembly line in 1948. The modern era of the Australian auto industry commenced with the Button Plan of 1984, which was designed to wind back

aspects of the protectionist era and increase pressure from import competition on local producers. The plan saw the abolition of local content schemes, reduction in tariff protection and introduction of an export facilitation scheme. The last decade of the twentieth century and the first of the twenty-first century saw further policy development, largely driven by a very negative cost benefit analyses of the assistance afforded to the industry, which included the following:

1. Modelling Economy-wide Effects of Future Automotive Assistance— Productivity Commission Research Report (2008)
2. Brack's Review of Australia's Automotive Industry (2008)
3. Report of the South Australian High level Automotive Group (2007)
4. House of Representatives Employment, Workplace Relations and Workforce Participation Committee Inquiry into Employment in Automotive Component Manufacturing (February 2006)
5. Review of Automotive Assistance —Productivity Commission Inquiry Report (12/2002)
6. The Automotive Industry—Industry Commission Inquiry Report (05/1997)
7. The Automotive Industry—Industry Commission Inquiry Report (10/1990)

The major issue for the automotive industry was that the industry was considered inefficient and lacked competiveness in a globalised automotive industry. As indicated in the Button Plan, a contraction of the number of vehicle manufacturers and models was seen as inevitable. Hand in glove with this scenario was the inevitable and necessary loss of jobs. This scenario would prevail even if a reduced number of manufacturers were able to compete in the international market through increasing car exports and improved competiveness.

The 1990 Industry Commission Inquiry was given the task of developing a new assistance plan for the automotive industry for the period 1993–2000 and addressing any factors affecting the competitiveness of the industry. The Commission noted the high level of assistance provided to the automotive

industry, some seven times the assistance provided to the manufacturing industry in general, and the cost of that assistance to the taxpayer:

> However, maintaining domestic passenger vehicle production—the dominant part of the Australian automotive industry—has required substantial government assistance. If assistance currently provided to the passenger vehicle industry by the current complex package of measures were instead provided by direct subsidies, the cost to taxpayers would be some $1.6 billion each year. This is equivalent to around $25 000 for each job in the industry and $4000 for each vehicle produced. Inflated prices for cars have been an important factor underlying stagnant demand and an ageing vehicle population over the last 15 years.

The interest in the automotive industry by governments, unions and employers reflected the importance of the industry in relation to employment and export earnings, as acknowledged in the 2002 Productivity Commission Report (p 19):

> Turnover in Australian automotive manufacturing activities exceeds $17 billion a year. Also, while significant improvements in productivity have led to labour shedding in the industry over the last decade, it still employs some 54 000 people—around 17 000 in vehicle assembly, nearly 30 000 in component production and the rest in tooling and automotive service provision.

The union movement's concern with automotive industry restructuring had been on two interrelated fronts: the casualisation of employment following retrenchment and the absolute loss of high wage, high skill jobs. In its submission to the House of Representatives Employment, Workplace Relations and Workforce Participation Committee Inquiry into Employment in Automotive Component Manufacturing (2006) the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union (AMWU) argued that the strategy of outsourcing by component manufacturers to low-cost countries in order to reduce costs had led to a series of factory closures and/or mass redundancies. In its submission, it highlighted the severity of the impact of job losses on workers, as evidenced by a survey of workers made redundant at two component producers in Albury and Sydney in 2005. The union stated that:

- The unemployment rate amongst these people up to six months after they were made redundant is 48.2 per cent.
- Only 41.4 per cent of the workers who had managed to find jobs were able to secure employment in the manufacturing sector.
- 31 per cent of the workers who found jobs had to accept casual jobs.
- Of those lucky enough to find employment, 89.7 per cent suffered a reduction in wages with the average reduction being 28.3 per cent.
- Exactly half of those who were made redundant believe that their long-term financial security has suffered significantly from this redundancy.

In their submission to the House of Representatives inquiry, the AMWU argued that jobs in the automotive industry were above average in skills and wages and often located in economically depressed areas.

In attempting to plan for and improve the competitiveness of the Australian automotive industry, between 1990 and 2002, the government gave consideration to the impact of policy prescriptions for improving productivity on individuals and workers as reported in three major automotive industry inquiries held between 1990 and 2002. Key aspects of the measures recommended to support adjustment to change are outlined below.

2.3.1 The 1990 Industries Assistance Commission Inquiry

The 1990 Industry Commission Inquiry, which recommended a gradual reduction in tariff protection from 35 per cent to 15 per cent by the year 2000, acknowledged that while measures could be put in place to address regional and individual worker adjustment, jobs would inevitably be lost:

> Any microeconomic reform will entail adjustment pressures for those industries and individuals who benefited from the inefficiencies targeted by that reform. Such pressures cannot be avoided altogether if the longer term benefits of reform to the economy are to be realised.

The Commission also noted that labour turnover in the passenger motor vehicle sector was very high—running at around 30 per cent or 20,000 workers in 1989 although declining in 1990—and that therefore job losses

might be absorbed through natural attrition. The major recommendation by the Commission regarding adjustment was a continuation of the Labour Adjustment Training Arrangements (LATA) program, a scheme that provided an additional subsidy to unemployment benefits while participants undertook full-time vocational training to upgrade and improve skills. In doing so, the Commission noted that the scheme had not been very successful based on the take up of the scheme between 1984 and 1986 when some 2,415 persons retrenched from the industry were eligible for retraining under LATA. The Commission noted that of those eligible, 561 nominated to undertake retraining and of those, 426 actually commenced LATA courses. It was submitted to the Commission that the divergence in numbers eligible to numbers of actual commencements could be due to alternative forms of employment being found, or that people remained unemployed in preference to seeking retraining under LATA.

2.3.2 The 1997 Industries Assistance Commission Inquiry

The 1997 Inquiry was required by the Australian Government to present a plan for assistance to the automotive industry from January 2000 and in doing so to take into consideration, among other things, the government's desire to encourage the development of a 'sustainable, prosperous and internationally competitive automotive manufacturing industry in Australia' and its desire to 'improve the overall economic performance of the Australian automotive industry'. The Commission ultimately recommended that tariffs on motor vehicle and components be reduced to five per cent by 2004 through a reduction of 2.5 per cent per annum. In making this recommendation, the Commission suggested that any net employment loss from the industry would, based on its modelling, be compensated by growth in employment in other areas of the economy and that this would also apply in South Australia:

> In all states, including South Australia, any automotive employment losses are projected to be more than offset by gains in employment arising from growth in GDP over the period 2000–2010 (p 338).

The Commission argued that regional effects of further tariff reductions would be limited by general economic growth and structural capacity within the labour market to absorb employment shifts. In reaching these conclusions, the Commission acknowledged that there would be impacts on individuals and communities from major industry adjustment (for example, a plant closure) and believed that special arrangements would need to be put in place to ensure that affected people had sufficient access to government and community services. This recommendation was, in part, an acknowledgement that historically mechanisms had been developed to ensure that *'adjustment costs are not borne by individuals alone'* (p 339). The Commission's report contained a chapter on adjustment and regional issues that followed on from its conclusions chapter. The chapter on adjustment and regional issues discussed adjustment for individuals and communities within the following themes:

- the context of adjustment pressures for the automotive industry emerging from the market

- the history of adjustment in the sector over the last 40 years
- examples of recent adjustment strategies with the sector from such as Toyota, Ford and Nissan
- the implications of the regional concentration of the automotive industry in Dandenong, Adelaide and Geelong
- labour market adjustment issues such as lack of workplace flexibility and
- restrictions on the geographical mobility of the labour force and the range and effectiveness of labour market adjustment programs.

The Commission argued that impediments to geographic mobility were associated with three factors: the cost of moving; government impediments to moving, such as stamp duty on housing; and emotional attachments to a particular location—'people dislike moving away from friends, family and the familiar environment'. The Commission noted:

> The emotional difficulty of moving is particularly significant for families, especially if children are at school. In addition, moving can increase the cost and burden of child care, which may previously have been shared with friends and family members. These costs are additional to the costs involved in finding new accommodation, schools and services, and the physical costs of relocation. The burden of these costs can also be increased if property prices fall, due to the contraction of industry in the region and the subsequent reduction in job opportunities. This type of market response can form a significant barrier to the mobility of workers away from an affected region (p 376).

To make its point about relocation, the Commission tabled an analysis of ABS Labour Force Mobility between Localities Data for 1992 and 1996 that showed that people are far more likely to relocate—approximately 10 times more likely—if they remain with the same employer. The Commission noted evidence from Toyota personnel that when moving production from the Dandenong plant to Altona in 1989, they offered incentives, equivalent to redundancy packages, to Dandenong employees to relocate to Altona. Approximately 20 per cent accepted the offer:

So then when it came to actually closing the plant of course everyone was now looking forward to their redundancy. But internally we thought that what we wanted to do in fact was promote the opportunity for people to move to our new operation, so in fact we provided incentives similar to the sort of levels that you'd talk about in redundancy for people to actually transfer their livelihoods to Altona to assist us at the Altona plant (p 362).

In relation to labour market programs, the Commission noted that they fell into four categories: job broking and job search assistance; training programs; wage subsidies to private employers; and direct job creation. Programs were available in Australia in a mainstream or targeted approach. A Passenger Motor Vehicle Adjustment Package had been introduced in 1991 although it had been discontinued. The program provided formal vocational training, wage subsidies and relocation assistance. A major advantage of the program was immediate access to programs usually only available to the long-term unemployed. The Commission concluded that the introduction of case management services and the provision of sufficient notice of a substantial restructure would assist employees and service providers in coping with adjustment. The Commission recommended that the Commonwealth Government review the effectiveness of its labour market programs and take into consideration that the state of the local labour market is influenced by the economic cycle.

2.3.3 The 2002 Productivity Commission Inquiry

In 2002, the Australian Government referred the planning for automotive industry assistance, post-2005, back to the Productivity Commission. The reference required the Commission to evaluate the Automotive Competitiveness and Investment Scheme (ACIS) (its most recent program of export facilitation) and the need for tariffs beyond 2005, which were already due to be decreased from 15 per cent to 10 per cent in 2005. The Commission noted that the majority of firms in the sector were subsidiaries of overseas-owned corporations and that decisions about investments and the identification of potential export markets made were made on the basis of

their global operations rather than simply in the interest of maximising returns on their Australian operations. The Commission examined a complex array of issues including:

- the status of the global automotive industry
- the Australian automotive industry
- the outlook for the automotive sector
- workplace arrangements and skilling issues
- taxation and microeconomic reform
- safety and environmental issues
- market access
- the impacts of automotive assistance
- issues in formulating post-2005 assistance options
- tariff and ACIS options
- other assistance matters and broader adjustment issues.

Having considered the submissions, the Commission recommended a further reduction in tariffs to be phased in through one of three options and some adjustments to the ACIS. In coming to this conclusion, the Commission noted that total employment in the industry had fallen by more than 25,000 vehicles or some 38 per cent over the last decade and that:

> Moreover, irrespective of what assistance arrangements are in place after 2005, the possibility of potentially disruptive firm and regional level adjustments cannot be ruled out. Indeed, further rationalisation in the component sector in particular is required to facilitate greater realisation of economies of scale (p xxxix).

The Commission's modelling suggested that their preferred tariff reduction phase in option would result in a loss of 400 jobs per year from the industry between 2005 and 2016. The Commission found that were a vehicle manufacturer or one of the major component producers to exit, the 'knock-on effects for other producers as well for employees, their families and the regional economies concerned, would most likely be significant' (p xxxix). Under these circumstances, the Commission suggested that specific government responses could be required including firm-level labour market

programs and specific regional employment assistance. The package of measures could include early profiling to identify employees at risk of becoming long-term unemployed, locally derived implementation of assistance, industry-specific labour market programs targeting older, low-skilled and ethnic background workers and specific regional employment assistance. However, any package of assistance should meet the following criteria:

- facilitate, not hinder, necessary change
- target individuals for whom adjustment pressures are most acute and who are unlikely to be able to cope without additional assistance
- be of limited duration so as to encourage transition
- be as simple as possible to administer
- be compatible with general 'safety net' arrangements.

In developing its position, the Commission sought to explore the likely national economic consequences of a major withdrawal from the market and selected the scenario of Mitsubishi ceasing production in Adelaide (see Appendix) Based on the Commission's modelling and assumptions, the likely adjustment task would involve relocation of some automotive activity to Victoria rather than shrinkage in the overall size of the industry. However, the Commission took the view that there was 'little likelihood of Mitsubishi exiting in the foreseeable future'.

Mitsubishi closed its engine foundry plant and reduced the workforce at the assembly plant in 2004, and closed all passenger motor vehicle assembly in 2008.

2.3.4 Summary

The adjustment that auto industry workers would need to make and how that could be supported, following organisation restructures in response to shifts in government assistance, was considered in all three of the major inquiries into

the automotive industry in Australia between 1990 and 2002. There was no attempt to walk away from the simple calculus that productivity improvements would involve retrenchments unless alternatives to retrenchment were considered—and this was not a major focus in any of the inquiries. It was accepted that jobs would have to go and that planning for industry restructuring would have to incorporate planning to support workers who lost their jobs. However, the reports made it clear that no one expected workers to carry the burden of the adjustment on their own and that industry and government had a role to play in assisting people back into the workforce and supporting the transition to a post-retrenchment environment. The reports acknowledged the short and longer term negative financial consequences of involuntary retrenchment and that re-employment would be harder for some groups such as older workers, people from migrant backgrounds and low-skilled workers. Personal and emotional costs were also noted but played a smaller role in the formulation of adjustment policies, which became increasingly targeted over the period in question. Support for retrenched automotive industry workers included modest relocation costs and there was a recognition that home would be a strong pull factor when it came to decisions about relocation as would falls in property values due to falling job opportunities in regions affected by plant closure.

2.4 Organisational Restructure and Retrenchment at MMAL in 2004

The purpose of this section is to briefly recount the key events, as established in the public record, leading up to and including the retrenchments at MMAL in 2004. As discussed in the previous three sections, there are legal, labour market and industry policy dimensions that can be highlighted to establish a rounded perspective on the retrenchments at MMAL in 2004. The retrenchments at MMAL in 2004 were not the first that had occurred at MMAL and would not be the last.

MMAL was established in 1980 when Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (MMC) of Japan bought the Adelaide-based Chrysler business as a going concern. The very foundation of the MMAL enterprise in Adelaide was based in the ongoing restructuring/adjustment that had been occurring in the global automotive industry since the 1970s. During the next two decades, MMAL experienced considerable financial health and employed over 5000 people across its two sites: Lonsdale (engine foundry) and Tonsley Part (motor vehicle assembly). The volatility of the automotive industry labour market in South Australia between 1985 and 2005 is evident in Figure 2.4.
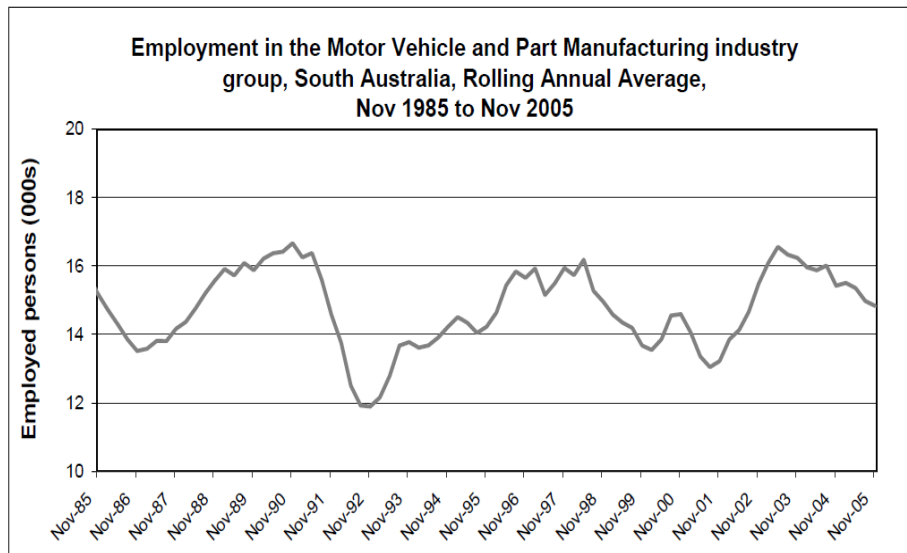
Figure 2.4: Labour Market Volatility in the Automotive Industry

Source: Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee Inquiry into Employment in Automotive Component Manufacturing (2006)

In 1999, MMAL offered 300 voluntary redundancies and issued statements saying that rumours that it would cease vehicle production were unfounded. In 2000, it appointed former Toyota executive Tom Phillips as President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and MMC injected $180 million dollars into the Australian operations. Now, MMAL was competing against Toyota, Ford and General Motors Holden and had the smallest share of the Australian passenger motor vehicle market. In 2001, the MMC president told a press conference in Japan that the performance of the Australian operation was not promising. A review of its operations led to a reprieve and promises of further investment. In 2002, MMAL accepted a joint Commonwealth–state investment package of $85 million to shore up its contribution to the South Australian economy in general and to the southern metropolitan region in particular. This investment led to a further $900 million investment by MMC. In 2004, following a global restructuring, MMC announced that it would build a new car at the Tonsley Plant but would close its Lonsdale facility, with the involuntary retrenchment 667 people and the voluntary retrenchment of 450 people at Tonsley Park.

Between 1991 and 2004, there were five EBAs struck between MMAL and unions regarding full-time employees. However, in addition to agreements between unions representing full- and part-time employees of MMAL, the company also negotiated agreements with the unions to hire hourly or weekly tenured casuals. According to Lansbury (2006), this arrangement was secured with the unions in the early 1990s with the threat that unless it occurred, MMC might close the Australian operations. The 1998 EBA provided for a 15 per cent ratio of the total workforce to be 'variable temporary labour'. This was increased to 20 per cent in the 2001 Agreement. Any worker under this agreement was not protected by retrenchment arrangements a topic, as discussed above, the AMWU strongly brought to the attention of the AIRC 2004 Redundancy Test Case hearings. The 2004 Agreement put in place shortly before the retrenchments at MMAL included a clause regarding voluntary retrenchments that provided for three weeks' pay for every year of service. This agreement specifically allowed for its 'no extra claims clause' to be set aside in the case of forced redundancies. Consequently, a new agreement had to be negotiated specifically to deal with the involuntary retrenchments at the Lonsdale plant. A new agreement was negotiated and ratified in AIRC on 4 August (see Appendix) The main elements of the agreement were five weeks' notice, severance pay at the rate of 4.5 weeks per completed year of service, notice and severance pay to be capped at 100 weeks, a loyalty payment of one week per year of service uncapped and a shift premium. Some of these conditions were to become contentious with some workers who took voluntary retrenchment packages and/or who did not work shifts. These severance pay arrangements were far in excess of the minimum provisions established in the AIRC 2004 Redundancy Test Case. In ratifying the agreement, Justice Foggo commented on the outcomes for workers: 'The Commission believes that the outcome of the negotiations provide a comprehensive and beneficial package for employees and urges employees to accept the Recommendation'. The Commission also legitimated the retrenchment package and the relationship between the company and the employees:

> The Commission recognises the difficulties and constraints placed on the
> management and employee representatives who have been involved in

negotiation of the Redundancy Agreement. In the situation of the closure of the Lonsdale plant, it is a mark of the integrity of the company that its employees state it has been a good employer. In any redundancy situation, employees will have different needs. The manner in which the unions and company negotiators have addressed the myriad of issues, and their participation in the negotiations before the Commission does them great credit.

Some workers at the Lonsdale plant were offered the option of relocating to the Tonsley Park plant; however, according to Lansbury (2006), this option was generally not preferred even in the face of involuntary retrenchment. Workers at the Lonsdale plant left progressively over a 15-month period whereas workers at Tonsley Park left within one to two weeks of accepting a package. In addition to the severance pay, retrenched workers were eligible for services through a labour adjustment package. This package, comprising resources such as wage subsidies, case managers, funds for training and equipment, résumé writing assistance and skills recognition, was also available to contracted workers whose contracts ceased as a direct consequence of the Mitsubishi downsizing decisions and to any workers from Mitsubishi suppliers who we were able to confirm they were made redundant as a direct consequence of Mitsubishi downsizing. Workers who were purchasing company vehicles at concessional prices were able to arrange on good terms to continue with the purchase.

2.5 Conclusions

This chapter discussed three key forces that shape the way in which retrenchment manifests and is experienced, and highlighted how those factors contributed to the retrenchments that occurred at MMAL in 2004. Regulatory frameworks have sought to balance the interests of employees for job security with the interests of employers in managing their enterprises profitably and responsibly. Industrial regulators have arbitrated between unions and employers to establish appropriate compensation and support for workers who are retrenched as the result of legitimate workplace change independent of the

drivers of that change. Financial compensation is at the heart of these agreements. Labour market data has demonstrated the broader parameters of vulnerability to retrenchment that has geographic and personal dimensions and to unemployment that is also mediated by personal characteristics. Automotive industry assistance policy has been shown to be very sensitive to the consequences of change, particularly retrenchment within companies, sparked by national policy directions taken in the interests of ensuring value for money for taxpayers. Workers in the auto industry have not been asked to bear the burden of adjustment on their own. The retrenchments that occurred at Mitsubishi in 2004 were neither the first nor the last to occur with this company. Workers were supported in their adjustment to restructuring by the company. This support and ultimately the outcome of the retrenchment have legal, structural and policy dimensions. The next chapter will consider the literature on the role of the home in mediating adjustment to retrenchment.

Chapter 3: Understanding the Links between Home and Adjustment to Retrenchment – macro and micro perspectives

Until the 1970's life long and full time employment constituted the basis for predicting the utilization of labour in the factory as well as for planning individual life biographies. The system of full employment is now disintegrating. The hazards of unemployment have re-emerged as generalised underemployment….

(Butz and Leslie 2001)

The previous chapter considered the industrial regulation framework, scale and drivers of job loss in Australia and nature of government and firm responses. It identified the industry dynamics that framed the particular retrenchment scenario in the automotive industry in Adelaide 2004. This chapter reviews the academic literature on the role of the home in adjustment to retrenchment. It draws upon research within and across the disciplines of labour market economics, psychology, environmental psychology, sociology and geography and housing studies. The focus of the literature review was on three categories of research: studies on the effect of variables, including home and housing, on the likelihood of satisfactory labour market *outcomes* following retrenchment or following a period outside of the labour market; studies on factors, including home and housing, which moderated or mediated *processes* of adjustment with an emphasis on the personal and social well-being of retrenched workers; and studies or theoretical discussion regarding the importance/role of the home and place in the contemporary risk era and from which propositions regarding adjustment to retrenchment might be developed.

This chapter develops a conceptual model of the adjustment journey and related housing decisions/attitudes using four core propositions:

- Adjustment may start well before formal announcements of retrenchment due to the circulation of rumours about retrenchment years in advance of announcements

- Loss of a job may restrict access to the latent and manifest benefits of work and that a need to restore both is an important driver for decisions about job choice and how to utilise any retrenchment package

- How the home is experienced and imagined over stages in the life course is informed by a sense of home and that the meaning of home reflects cultural, financial and biographical factors

- Achieving a preferred home/work balance is an important factor in making decisions about residential and work location.

Consequently, retrenchment adjustment may involve a reinforcing, retardation or potentially a transformation of the imagined home through the redirection of resources and/or choices about new workplaces.

There are no studies reported in the English language literature that focus solely on how adjustment to retrenchment was or could be mediated by the home. A small but important group of studies exists, which refer to, explore and/or describe linkages between the home and the process of adjustment. Much of this literature reports findings from case studies of plant closures in Australia and internationally. A related body of literature examines the impact of housing tenure on regional employment levels overseas and in Australia. Section 3.1 discusses these studies and reports the key constructs and/or themes that are relevant to the thesis research question. Section 3.2 reviews studies concerned with the individual and social dynamics that influence the process of adjustment to unemployment or retrenchment. It draws on a very large body of literature on the psychology and sociology of work, its loss and adjustment. These studies are reviewed in order to identify potential linkages between adjustment and the home. Section 3.3 reviews the literature on the role of the home and place in the contemporary era drawing on sociological, geographical, cultural studies, environmental psychology and housing studies

paradigms. Key ideas and/or constructs include the importance of home and homeownership, the meaning of home, the sense of home, place attachment, the home in the contemporary era and the home/work relationship. Section 3.4 elaborates a conceptual model that is used to inform the research design, data analysis and discussion chapters of the thesis.

3.1 Labour Market Outcomes Following Retrenchment: The Role of Home

This section draws on the three main types of studies within the labour market economics paradigm to explore the linkages between the home and adjustment to retrenchment: national time series describing characteristics of aggregate displacement; studies on displacement from particular plants or industries; and microeconomic analysis of the incidence and consequences of displacement (Green & Leeves 2003). The section spans literature published over the last 30 years with an emphasis on the last 15 years. A key theme raised in these studies is that of the push and pull factors affecting relocation to another city or country for employment and the idea that some unemployed workers are 'locked in place'.

3.1.1 Problematising Retrenchment

> Labour market flexibility' has become a political mantra. The orthodox defensive strategies, then, are themselves thrown onto the defensive. Calls are made everywhere for greater flexibility—or, in other words, that employers should be able to fire employees with less difficulty. Flexibility also means a redistribution of risks away from the state and the economy towards the individual. The jobs on offer become short term and easily terminable (i.e. 'renewable') And finally, flexibility means ' Cheer up, your skills and knowledge are obsolete, and no one can say what you must learn in order to be needed in the future.
>
> The Brave New World of Work (Beck 2000, p 3)

How job losses are framed in policy discourses and problematised in research influences the nature and range of preventative and mitigation strategies available to governments and consequently the relative burden of adjustment to be shared with job losers. In reviewing research on job loss in Australia over the last 40 years, Weller (2007) characterised the period as having two distinct phases. In the period between 1973 and 1993, job loss research could be characterised as focusing on the very negative outcomes of retrenchment and that job loss was not the fault of job losers. The onus was on society as a whole to intervene and create 'more equitable outcomes'. By the early 1990s, the social and public policy environment supported intervention through labour market adjustment measures to mitigate the poor labour market outcomes of retrenched workers. In the mid-1990s, under neoliberal policy prescriptions, the focus for job loss was shifted to the characteristics of individual workers and their lack of competiveness in the labour market rather than 'the dearth of jobs in some places'. Discourses emerged that normalised job loss as 'necessary components of the flexible labour markets of modern capitalism'. Weller (2007, p 3) argued that this shift was accompanied by a tendency to attribute poor adjustment experiences of some workers to psychological processes rather than labour market factors:

> The problem, as it is now understood is that some people just can't handle risk. Workers who suffer permanent and irretrievable damage after retrenchment are now characterised as people who fail to perceive their misfortune as an opportunity. Thus, the predicament of retrenched workers has been recast as an illness to be treated by psychologists rather than a skill mismatch to be addressed by labour market policy.

In drawing attention, somewhat provocatively, to this shift in emphasis, Weller (2007) was primarily concerned that research on retrenchment be conducted in such a way that there is a recognition of the mutually constitutive nature of the emotional, career and financial impacts of retrenchment and their essential inseparability. The adjustment model that Weller (2007) developed and its findings in relation to the links between the home and adjustment to retrenchment will be discussed below. The need to

make explicit the theoretical frameworks informing research on job loss informs this chapter.

Wood and Dey (1983) conducted five case studies of retrenchment in Britain during the 1970s, a period of considerable retrenchment-related unemployment and industrial militancy. Their theoretical framework, informed by a political economy perspective, included a critique of what they saw as the key themes informing academic research on retrenchment at that time. Their criticism of these themes was, in part, that the research was not adequately informed by how redundancy was actually constituted as an issue by those whom it affected. The first theme was a focus on the problem of achieving labour mobility in the interests of the economy while simultaneously seeking to mitigate the social costs of retrenchment. Within this theme, resistance to retrenchment was considered to reflect strong attachment to the current job, attachment to place and costs of relocation:

> Moreover, an employee's life might be enmeshed in a whole set of occupational and social relationships, making the opportunities for mobility supposedly opened up by redundancy a rather unattractive prospect even apart from the problems traditionally associated with mobility such as the costs of removal and finding another home (Wood & Dey 1983, p 7).

The second theme was on management of redundancies through joint regulation by employers and trade unions. The third theme revolved around issues of power and control embedded in the conflicting interests of the key stakeholders, particularly unions and employer groups. Wood and Dey (1983) argued that their case studies showed that workers' interests could not be defined *a priori* as job security and job stability—often it was more about control and choice. In support of this claim, they cited examples of female workers at one factory who rated marriage as a more important source of security than job stability or employment and skilled male workers who defined security in terms of skill and the benefit of their apprenticeship training.

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3.1.2 Evidence from Plant Closure Studies

Wooden (1988) conducted an extensive review of the case study evidence on redundancies in Australia and overseas. The purpose of the research was to identify the variables that promote or militate against the severity of the post-redundancy labour market outcome. His focus on subsequent labour market experience as opposed to a focus on loss of latent benefits of work was based on his reading of the literature on psychological consequences of unemployment, which he argued showed relatively mild effects from work role deprivation. Wooden (1988) argued that the relatively inconsequential connection between work role deprivation and psychological consequences of redundancy was to do with the nature of the declining industries that had high burdens of retrenchment. Jobs in these plants were not designed with job satisfaction in mind and were 'inherently dull and monotonous' and their loss created, financial considerations aside 'little stress for the workers' (Wooden 1988:4). Wooden (1988:4) further stated that:

> The implication for policy, therefore, is that the effects of redundancy can
> be most effectively mediated by the provision of direct financial assistance
> and compensation.

Wooden (1988) studied the diversity in the severity of the displacement experience as represented in the data from 15 studies published between 1931 and 1985. He found that unemployment at the time of the survey ranged from 11 per cent to 62 per cent and the extent to which workers had experienced a period of employment between the redundancy and the time of the survey ranged from 22 per cent to 89 per cent. Wooden (1988) argued that the variation in employment outcomes must in part be due to the state of labour market, the numbers made redundant relevant to the size of the local labour force and length of time that workers had been able to be look for work.

Wooden (1988) then reviewed the results of studies that had used multiple regression techniques to explore the impact of variables on the probability of re-employment. His focus on multiple regression studies reflected a greater confidence in this technique compared to two variable correlations in cross-

tabulated data, which, he believed, did not take into account the interaction between explanatory variables. Wooden (1988) examined the evidence in relation to age, sex, marital status and family status, skill level and education, the availability of jobs involving the utilisation of similar skills, timing and intensity of job search and the impact of severance payments and unemployment benefits. In relation to these variables, Wooden (1988) concluded that age is negatively related to the likelihood and speed of re-employment, women are more likely to spend longer periods in search of another job, and that married men spend less time unemployed than single men. In making this comment, Wooden (1988, p 9) noted that:

> A lack of geographic mobility, however, may work against the re-employment success of married persons. Married persons tend to be tied more closely to the area of residence. Many may own or are in the process of paying off a home. Another relevant factor is the problem of disrupting the education of school-age dependants.

Wooden (1988) argued that the studies showed that less skilled and less educated workers did not fare well; however, highly skilled workers may also accept longer periods of unemployment in areas with a narrow industrial base rather than take up less skilled jobs and/or relocate. The length of tenure in the current job appeared to work against positive employment outcomes— perhaps because the longer the worker is exposed to only firm-specific jobs, the greater the chance of the skills being low value in the market place. Length of tenure is also likely to be correlated with a lack of job search experience. Conversely, a very brief service period may be seen as indicative of a lack of experience. Wooden (1988) argued that non-wage private income such as income from a working spouse, may enable workers to spend more time looking for the right job and therefore extend the unemployment period. Promptness in job search was associated with greater success in re-employment and in particular, job search prior to redundancy was strongly related to re-employment. Less skilled workers were less likely to commence job search early since they had less confidence that there were jobs available. The number of employers contacted per week was positively correlated with success in job outcomes; unwillingness to relocate was associated with poorer

job search effort, which in turn leads to poorer employment outcomes. However, age and willingness to relocate were negatively correlated, leading Wooden (1988, p 13) to conclude that:

> Again, labour market perceptions of older workers are relatively poor, and moreover redundancy payments are likely to figure much larger in the calculations of older workers because of the weight given to age in the calculation of such payments. Thus the concern given to getting one's hands on the 'payout cheque' may push concern with job searching into the background. Finally, the mere fact that older workers are nearing retirement may cause them to be less concerned with finding a job in any case and consequently to be prepared to accept a forced early retirement if necessary.

Wooden (1988, p 14) also drew attention to place attachment and kinship ties mediating job search:

> As noted before, older workers are more likely to have lived in the region for a relatively long time, developing a complex network of social, and economic ties in the area. Moreover, the potential benefits for older workers of moving are likely to be low because they are near the end of their working lives.

Wooden (1988) also argued that the case studies showed that informal methods of job search such as networks of friends and relatives and applying to a firm on speculation were more effective than formal methods such as responding to newspaper advertisements. He also found that there was little evidence of a relationship between the size of the redundancy payments and length of unemployment, which he argued might be due to the payment being made irrespective of whether the person experiences unemployment. He also suggested that redundancy payments attract older workers who find the greatest difficulty in regaining employment and who may therefore take early retirement. The impact of retrenchment packages has been the subject of research by Leana et al. (1998) who found that contrary to the expectation that severance pay would act as a buffer allowing people to continue the job search, it actually has a negative effect on job search perhaps due to it reducing the sense of urgency. A qualitative study on job loss by Ezzy (2000)

found that workers with high retrenchment payments reported better adjustment processes than workers with low or no retrenchment payouts.

The question of retrenchment payout should also be seen in the context of the support available to retrenched workers to make important financial decisions. Anthes and Lee (2002) have argued that involuntary job loss, suddenly becoming single, a financial windfall and remarriage can be considered life changing events which can trigger strong emotions and compromise the ability of those affected to actively participate in decision making – considered by financial planners as the corner stone in a successful relationship between planners and their clients. In the case of involuntary retrenchment Anthes and Lee (2000:80) warn that there are particular psychological barriers that can arise

> These barriers can include the clients inability (usually temporary) to adequately process information, the need to re-evaluate and re-examine values, the reframing of financial and life goals and the need to have closure with a former job and employer,

Anthes and Lee (2000) believe that a key financial planning strategy in cases of sudden involuntary retrenchment is to ask clients to consider which lifestyle changes might enrich their lives, reduce stress and save money. Basic steps include developing an inventory of assets and a contingency plan during job search and to advise clients to avoid "going on a spending binge"

Wooden's (1988) research also considered the impact of retrenchment on earnings loss, occupational mobility, industrial mobility and employment instability. In relation to earnings loss, Wooden (1988) cited a study by Jacobsen (1975) based on a longitudinal employee–employer data file in the US that showed that earnings losses are considerable and vary by industry sector but diminish over time. Earnings losses were highest in the manufacturing sector industries of automobiles and steel with average loss of income for the first two years of over 43 per cent and over 46 per cent respectively. Earnings losses fell to 15 and 12 per cent in the subsequent four years.

Wooden (1988) concluded that the research indicated that downward income movements were likely following retrenchment; that an implication was that level of satisfaction with a new job when it involved considerable deskilling would be very low; and that adjustment in these cases may not be any better than for those who remain unemployed. This observation seems to be at odds with his earlier declaration that jobs in these declining industries were monotonous. In terms of industrial mobility, Wooden (1988) argued that workers seek to return to the same industry to make best use of their skills. However, the evidence from the studies was that half the people in the samples end up taking work in unrelated industries. In relation to the impact of retrenchment on employment stability, he concluded that workers retrenched once are likely to be retrenched again, especially if they continue to work in the same industry.

Westergaard et al.'s (1989) study of a factory closure in Sheffield, UK was one of the few retrenchment studies that has specifically included housing tenure. The authors conducted research on a sample of 400 of the first wave of approximately 600 voluntary redundancies at a steel plant. The plant eventually closed in 1983 by which time, 3,700 workers had lost or given up their jobs. The majority of workers in the sample were men, one fifth were in management or supervisory positions and of the one in eight of the sample who were women most were in clerical and routine-grade office work. Interviews were conducted in 1982 and 1983; some three years after workers took voluntary redundancy packages. The authors reported that just under half of the sample was home occupiers and the remainder was in social housing. However, owner-occupiers were a small proportion of the non-skilled workers (29 per cent) and of those still unemployed for one to three years after redundancy (31 per cent). The authors were circumspect about this finding, arguing that the impact of homeownership tenure was complex:

> To note this is not to regard owner occupation as an unmixed benefit; home owners could and quite often did get into difficulties after redundancy in keeping up still outstanding mortgage payments if they were out of work for any length of time. Yet even their incomplete and

now risky ownership constituted something of an asset to carry with them into harder circumstances; both a small deposit, and a sign, of past savings which had been less within the reach of the people whom redundancy was to hit the hardest (Westergaard et al. 1989, p 45).

Strangleman's (2001) study of retrenchment in coal mining communities in Britain during the 1980s used in-depth interviews with 20 former coal miners in the North East of Britain to explore how networks based on occupation, place and class influenced adjustment processes and outcomes. Strangleman (2001) argued that housing tenure through its effect on housing affordability also played an important role in the impact of retrenchment in coal mining communities. Firstly many workers were 'tied to place' by the cheap housing provided as low-cost rental and in some cases, purchased on very favourable terms from the Coal Board during the productive years of the mines. The availability of this cheap housing was maintained for the second generation of coal mining families (the children of the retrenched workers) due to the depressed economies in these areas suppressing housing markets. However, by being 'tied to place' for the purposes of housing affordability, they were dependent on family networks, especially for cheap childcare provided by other retrenched members of the kinship network and then less able to relocate to stronger labour markets in other regions.

Webber and Campbell (1997) published a similar review of retrenchment research nearly a decade after the study by Wooden (1988). This study was published in the *Journal of Sociology* and reflected the greater emphasis of the study on the role of the social domain in mediating the impact of retrenchment. Webber and Campbell argue that while there is a link between structural change in Western economies and the rise of unemployment, there is no necessary link logically between structural change and retrenchment. As examples, they cite US retrenchment policy, which tends to be based on a moral equation that ends up with one group becoming obsolete and another replacing them. In Europe and Japan, there is a much greater tendency for the state to support retrenched workers and/or for private firms to absorb the cost of change through retraining and deployment. A range of preventative and

remedial measures, informed by appropriate standards as expected by the ILO, are discussed by Evans-Klock et al. (1999). Webber and Campbell (1997) argue that the personal costs of retrenchment can be high and can include: shock, particularly associated with disbelief; anger and loss of self-esteem; loss of income and need to rationalise expenditure; change in household relations and increased rate of marriage failure; distress associated with unstructured time and lack of routine; reduced social interaction; the need to search for a new job; and the abandonment of a reservation wage. These impacts reflect financial and work role-related impacts.

Webber and Campbell (1997) confirm the findings cited by Wooden (1988) regarding variables that might predict the probability of re-employment and add another—ethnicity—which is a barrier to re-employment due to the racist attitudes of some employers. They also cite evidence that suggests that duration of unemployment has an effect on the likelihood of re-employment, arguing that either long-term unemployment actually reduces the chance of finding a job, or that all the jobs are taken up by workers deemed more desirable by employers.

Webber and Campbell (1997) recount the general form of labour market studies and suggest that there are three main problems with their design. The designs generally involve taking a sample of workers, often from a plant closure, who are interviewed once or twice after retrenchment. Worker characteristics (for example, age) and behaviour (for example, job search) are then related to labour market status (i.e. employed, unemployed, not is the labour force at the time of the survey). The authors argue that the results of these studies are not directly comparable to the larger pool of unemployed people generally and those made redundant through plant closures are different from the population of those retrenched from other forms of organisational structures. They also suggested that a narrow and static model of labour market status masks the dynamic situation for workers that may involve periods of unemployment and employment between survey points. For example, a person counted as unemployed at a particular time (as captured at the time of the case study survey) may have has a history of

largely continuous employment. The third criticism raised by Webber and Campbell (1997) is to do with the focus of supply-side variables in these studies such as age and sex, which ignore the exchange dynamic that fuels labour markets. This recognition involves placing variables in context:

> However, exchange in a labour market is a two-sided process, *in which workers select jobs and employers select workers*. For proper understanding we have to put both sides together, recognising interactions between the two sides within a labour market structure. For example, age correlates with labour market outcomes. Why? It has little to do with age as a biological phenomenon or even as a social phenomenon constituted through supply-side pressures. When workers are hired age becomes salient only as a result of specific social processes in certain places and times, with respect to certain groups of workers-perhaps because employers can be selective and prefer employees who can repay training costs over a long period or be resilient when work is intensified (Webber & Campbell 1997, p 193).

In concluding their review, Webber and Campbell (1997) argue that longitudinal studies are more powerful than cross-sectional designs at identifying patterns of cause and effect. They also argue that the labour market is much more complex than the current conceptualisation of people being either *in or outside* of employment and employment histories after retrenchment are a better representation of outcome than labour market status at a single point in time. They also argued that the structure of labour markets in terms of skills, i.e. unstructured, internal and occupational (Bosch 1992), the mix of small and medium enterprises, age and health restrictions in employer recruitment strategies and impact of government policy is what determines how standard variables such as age, gender and education levels influence post-retrenchment outcomes. Specifically, they argue that:

> This list of factors points to the variable social processes in labour markets, the interaction of which determines the personal attributes and forms of behaviour of retrenched workers that influence re-employment opportunities. These social processes and the forms of their interaction can vary widely, contributing to highly variable outcomes for different groups of retrenched workers (Webber & Campbell 1997, p 198).

Weller et al. (1999) adopted the basic principles of the research design proposed by Webber and Campbell (1997) in a study of retrenchments in the TCF industry in Australia when employment, strongly influenced by a regime of tariff reductions, fell by 26,000 jobs or 22 per cent of the workforce. Nearly 70 per cent of the TCF workforce was women. Using the discrete-time event history analytic method, which involved tracking workers' labour market status month by month over a four-year period, the researchers demonstrated the variability in employment histories with workers moving in and out of employment, the labour force and training at different times. Just over 50 per cent of workers were in paid work four years after the retrenchments began. In their regression analysis, the researchers introduced labour market demand variables where the event was the probability that a retrenched worker will make a transition to a full-time job or a part-time job of 20 hours per week or more. The authors concluded that improvements in national labour force participation were associated with improved chances of employment; the impacts of local labour market conditions were significant with large differences in outcomes between regions of the study; gender, age and ethnicity were significant factors in reduced chances of re-employment, as men with dependent children were more likely to have found a job but the opposite was true for women; women who reported higher literacy standards were more likely to have made the transition into employment; length of service (the tenure duration effect—the longer the duration of employment within an industry or firm the worse the post-retrenchment outcome) was as predicted for women but the opposite for men; every additional month of unemployment significantly decreased the log odds of making a transition into work; and retraining under the labour market adjustment package was associated with a *decrease* in the likelihood of finding a job. Overall, the authors concluded that older workers with low skills at retrenchment and those in depressed areas had very poor re-employment prospects and many retrenched workers did not find employment because they lacked the personal attributes that employers were looking desire:

> Skills at retrenchment are less significant predictors of re-employment prospects than the characteristics of the workers and their local labour markets (Weller et al. 1999, p 124).

Weller et al. (1999, p 120) found that very few retrenched workers relocated despite the relocation assistance provided under the TCF Labour Adjustment Package:

> Those who did relocate tended to be younger people with no dependants who were at the higher end of the skill profile of the retrenched worker group. Most retrenched workers had no desire to sever their hometown links, but those who did consider moving founds the cost of moving too great, given that a move to an areas with better employment prospects almost always implies a move to more expensive housing. As Hoover (1971) observes relocation assistance programs work to encourage the most able workers to leave depressed areas, and so increase regional disadvantage.

Borland (1998) also analysed case study evidence of retrenchment in Australia between 1977 and 1997. Borland noted that displaced workers often live in regions with poor employment opportunities and noted that policy prescriptions for this situation generally involved incentives for regional mobility or targeting of employment creation programs at a regional level. He also noted arguments that taxes on home purchases provide a significant disincentive for regional mobility and that case study evidence showed that workers who own a home are much less likely to shift regions to find new jobs. In relation to employment outcomes generally, Borland (1998) concluded that the main determinants of whether a worker was in employment at the time of the case study were gender, age, skill, family status, country of birth, length of unemployment spell following retrenchment, perceptions of degree of permanence of plant closure, the number of displaced worker as a proportion of total workforce and rate of employment growth in the region where retrenchment takes place. Duration of unemployment was associated with age (older workers are unemployed longer), length of job tenure, state of local labour market, size and industry composition of local labour market and total number of displaced workers as a proportion of total regional workforce.

Borland (1998) noted that caution had to be exercised with case study approaches to adjustment to retrenchment citing issues such as lack of representativeness of the data regarding gender and occupational group, sample selection from within the case study, different methodologies, limited range of variables, limited time series information and restrictions on accessibility to data by other researchers. These comments go to a broader question of methodology and in particular whether or not the term 'case study' should apply to these studies at all given that they are often little more than cross-sectional designs with data from many 'cases' and where little or no attempt is made to test theoretical propositions relevant to the context of the retrenchments or to provide a 'thick' description of processes (Geertz 1973; Yin 1991).

3.1.3 Overseas Studies

Using quantitative and qualitative methods, Milkman (1997) in the US conducted research on close to 1,000 workers who took attractive voluntary redundancy packages—'accepted the buyout'—and those 3,000 who remained behind (the survivors) at the modernised General Motors automobile assembly plant in Linden, New Jersey, US working under 'lean production' principles. General Motors (GM) had decided to modernise the Linden plant. The 905 workers who eventually took a separation package did so after being given just 48 hours to decide. Another 99 opted for early retirement and 300 voluntarily transferred to other GM plants. Milkman's (1997) research highlighted the chronic stress and humiliation of factory work experienced by many workers who stayed on for the high pay and good benefits as 'prisoners of prosperity' Milkman's (1997) study found that those who relocated to other parts of the state or interstate did not perform as well as those who remained in New Jersey. However, Rubin and Smith (2001) using US Displaced Workers Survey data from 1992, found that workers who relocated were re-employed 19 per cent more rapidly than those who did not.

The Lake Elliot Tracking and Adjustment study in Ontario, Canada (Leadbeater & Robinson 1991) represents one of the most thorough attempts

to assess the impacts of mass layoffs on individuals and the community. The study was established shortly after the announcement of proposed layoffs—2,100 out of 4,000 workers—by uranium mining companies in the town of Lake Elliot in Northern Ontario (population 16,000). The research set out to monitor, over three years, impacts on work and education, household income, budget and assets, relocation, family structure, and community and neighbourhood attachment. This is one of the few displacement impact studies reported in the literature to gather base data on housing tenure and the authors concluded that:

> Among the miners in our sample, *owning a house was highly correlated with not moving.* There was a drastic fall in housing prices and individuals had to choose either to lose the money they had invested or to remain in the community (Leadbeater & Robinson 1991, p 136).

Tomaney et al. (1999) in their study of the impacts of the closure of a large shipyard in the UK found that nearly 20 per cent of those still employed or self-employed at the time of the survey were no longer living in the region. Those who stayed in the region experienced an eight per cent drop in salary while those who moved gained salary increases of over 50 per cent. However, workers in the latter category incurred travel costs, had to endure the insecurity of being on contracts and missed the emotional benefits of family.

While retrenchments are often associated with urban and industrial environments, they can also occur in agriculture and forestry industries (Carroll et al. 2000; Kusel et al. 2000). A longitudinal study of the adaption strategies of displaced Idaho Woods (US) forestry workers by Carroll et al. (2000) found that displaced workers were very reluctant to move out of the area and this strongly influenced their adaption strategies. By the time of the second interview with 84 original panellists, only two had left their home area in search of employment in other locations:

> The one reason for respondents considering leaving the area was the availability of work. As long as work was available, most stated they would stay in the area. Some loggers were offered jobs in other states, but they refused. The attachment to place, family, and friends was so strong

that many of those interviewed would be willing to take a lower paying job or even to change occupations in order to remain (Carroll et al. 2000, p 103).

The seven main retrenchment 'adaption strategies' were to take up logging through self-employment, work in logging but move out of the area, self-employment non-logging, non-logging job and moving out of the area, voluntary unemployment, retirement and retraining.

3.1.4 Retrenchment at Ansett Airlines

The focus on place attachment, relocation and ties to the neighbourhood reported in the US and UK studies was also a focus on research by Weller and Webber (2004), who conducted research on the post-retrenchment outcomes of a stratified random sample of 649 workers retrenched following the Ansett Airlines collapse in 2001. The retrenchment resulted in the direct loss of approximately 16,000 jobs. Using dual labour market theory as their theoretical framework, the authors analysed data on attachment to Ansett Airlines, aspirations and household circumstances, re-employment and post-retrenchment jobs. The authors concluded the experience of the internal labour market at Ansett influenced subsequent performance of workers in the external labour market. They argued that the capacity to relocate is related to household issues that in turn restricted Ansett employees' capacity to remain in the aviation industry:

> In effect, former Ansett workers often had to choose between remaining in the aviation industry, which implied a broad geographical search and the likelihood of relocation, or continuing to live in a local community, which implied broadening the occupational scope of the search within a journey-to-work area and relinquishing aviation-related aspirations. These were contradictory desires. Between 10 percent and 20 percent of the sample were comfortable with the idea of moving house to find work, and about 50 percent would agree reluctantly to move. At the same time, just over half the sample (55 percent) regarded staying at the same address as either 'very important' or 'important', and almost a quarter (22.5 percent) of the

sample felt that their options were 'very much' restricted by lack of jobs 'nearby' (Weller & Webber 2004, p 318).

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, Weller (2007) revisited the Ansett study data in a working paper entitled 'The other side of precariousness—the cost of job loss'. This study focused on what Weller (2007) argued were three interrelated constructs—well-being, career aspiration and financial health—following retrenchment. Just over 25 per cent of respondent reported being better off in the long term or had been unaffected by the collapse. Nearly 20 per cent reported that they had not recovered their sense of well-being. The role of housing tenure was not directly assessed in this analysis; however, nearly 20 per cent of respondents reported financial costs associated with either relocation or asset sales. More than a third shifted to more modest life styles in lower paid jobs. Based on correlation analysis, Weller (2007) concluded that well-being recovered more quickly than careers and finances and that, contrary to literature that suggests negative impacts of retrenchment are associated with a lack of meaningful work (latent benefits of work) rather than financial stress or outright poverty, her data suggested that financial difficulties were more important source of personal stress than career progress. Weller (2007) argued that results of multivariate analysis and logistic regression showed that men has more severe impacts than women in relation to moving on, emotional distress, financial problems, family breakdown, relocation, loss of social networks and retirement issues. It is not clear from Weller's (2007) analysis whether the failure of the wind up process of the company to deliver retrenchment packages on time or even at all explained the higher relevance of financial stress to outcomes.

In 2009, Weller (2009) published the outcomes of further research on the Ansett retrenchments, this time using the labour market concepts of migration and labour mobility as the theoretical framework. She found that of the 411 people who provided information in their survey returns on geographic mobility, 145 (35 per cent) relocated their residence more than once during the period 2001–2006. The likelihood of relocation was influenced by gender

and age with women and those aged over 45 less likely to move. Households that experienced higher levels of self-reported scores of personal, household and career impacts were less likely to relocate. The author concluded that career, financial and personal outcomes were more favourable for those who relocated but that this can be explained by the impact of a segmented, sectoral labour market 'dominated by employer prerogative' (Weller 2009). Local relocations within metropolitan Melbourne were suggested to reflect three influences—moves from moderately affluent areas to more affluent suburbs, 'mortgage stress'; moves from home ownership into lower cost private rental suburbs closer to the city; and moves from the semi-rural fringe to new homes nearby—all designated as life style moves. The authors concluded that if their study could be seen as emblematic of more general processes in Australia regarding reduction in job security then the likelihood is that people will be 'locked in place' rather than be inclined to make speculative migration.

3.1.5 A Housing Tenure Effect?

The extent to which households might be 'locked in place' vis-à-vis labour markets as a result of homeownership has been researched in Australia and overseas. The debate was launched by Oswald (1996) arguing, based on European and US data, that a 10 per cent increase in the rate of homeownership was associated with two per cent increase in unemployment in these regions. Oswald (1996) suggested that there were two main reasons for his homeownership tenure effect: higher transactions costs associated with moving house; and the political power of large numbers of homeowners to enforce restrictive planning and land development laws curtailing local employment opportunities. Two parameters of unemployment are important in this debate: the incidence of unemployment and duration of unemployment. His findings have generated further research over the last decade in Australia and overseas that has helped to unpack the strands of the moderating role of housing tenure on unemployment. There is reason to be cautious about Oswald's (1996) finding. Nickel and Layard's (1999) research found that there was no correlation between share of homeownership and regional mobility in their study of OECD countries. Green and Hendershott's study

(2001) found, based on US data, that unemployment for the household head does not impede moves to another region but the situation is reversed when the household head's partner is unemployed. Flatau et al. (2003), based on Australian data, found that leveraged homeowners have significantly shorter unemployment durations than private tenants. Munch et al. (2006), based on Danish data and confirmed by Van Vuuren (2008) in the Netherlands, found that homeowners are more likely to be successful compared to tenants in finding jobs in local labour markets. Gruber (1998) found that 90 per cent of US workers who become unemployed remain in the same house until they find another job. Research by Rouwendal and Nijkamp (2009) on search models and using data in the Netherlands found that homeowners are likely to have a higher intensity of job search and subsequent shorter period of unemployment when their housing expenses are higher than those of tenants.

3.1.6 Summary

Most retrenched workers do not relocate to find a new job. There is a theme within the literature that suggests that any tendency to stay *in place* is recalcitrant—linked to the assumption that the location of jobs is the primary determinant of residential location. The tendency to stay 'in place' is contrasted with the higher wages forgone through not taking up non-local jobs and/or the sacrifice of not working in the previous industry. There is less emphasis in the literature on how staying 'in place' might be a determinant of well-being in the context of job loss. The efforts of researchers to find a housing tenure effect have also had a mixed outcome partly because these studies attempt to treat tenure as if it could be studied out of the context of the meaning of home. The focus within the literature on being locked in place and the search for a housing tenure effect obscures the potential for identifying the complexity of the role of home in mediating processes of adjustment and this will be explored in the next sections.

3.2 The Psychology and Sociology of Adjustment to Unemployment

This section reviews the literature on the impacts of and adjustment to retrenchment from two key social science disciplines. The first is psychology, which has had a long-standing interest in research on the factors that reduce the negative emotional consequences of job loss, through constructs such as stress and coping (Kinicki and Latack,1990). It has also been interested in understanding the emotional and behavioural aspects of adjustment to the challenges of major life events such as loss of work and divorce. The second discipline is sociology, which focuses on issues such as the cultural significance and social construction of the experiences of work and unemployment.

3.2.1 The Psychology of Employment and Unemployment

In a wide ranging review of the international psychological literature on employment and unemployment, Winefield (1995) outlined the key debates on four important dimensions of research on the impact of unemployment on mental health/psychological well-being: methodology, theoretical perspectives, empirical evidence and policy/future research. The methodological issues will be considered in Chapter 4. Theoretical concerns addressed in the paper by Winefield (1995) revolved around the relative merits of four specific and six general theories regarding the psychological significance of unemployment. Specific theories include 'stage' models of adjustment (Hayes & Nutman 1981), deprivation of the manifest and latent benefits of work (Jahoda 1982), agency restriction theory (Fryer 1986) and Warr's (1987) vitamin theory. General psychological theories included the frustration-aggression hypothesis, life-span developmental theory, learned helplessness theory, Weiner's attribution theory, expectancy value theory and stress and coping models. Winefield (1995) argued that the key empirical issue was whether the observed correlation between unemployment and

mental health was due to unemployment having a detrimental effect on mental health (social causation) or whether people with poor mental health were more likely to experience periods of unemployment or both.

Winefield (1995) examined the evidence for direct effects of unemployment on psychological well-being mediated by financial status, unemployment duration, causal attribution, stress of previous job, social support, age, gender, ethnic origin, employment commitment, personality factors and time use. He also considered the evidence for indirect effects on the family, layoff survivors and on other people within the community. Winefield (1995, p 196) concluded his overview of the policy and research implications with a focus on the need to ascertain which individuals are most vulnerable to job loss and what steps can be taken to assist them to cope:

> What is an effective strategy for coping with job loss must depend in part on whether a job loser has a realistic prospect of re-employment and this in turn will depend on whether national governments, and those who elect them, are committed to ensuring that all citizens who are willing and able to work are given the opportunity to do so.

Winefield's (1995) thorough overview does not refer to the role of the home in the psychology of unemployment. Psychologists working in this field may simply consider that the home/housing is unimportant generally or specifically in this field based on the argument that most people who lose a job are in some form of housing tenure so it can be eliminated as an independent variable mediating psychological health. However, this is at odds with the fact that there is a very large body of literature developed by environmental psychologists on the experience of home (Korosec-Serfaty 1984; Altman & Werner 1985; Marcus 1995; Moore 2000), that there is literature on the experience of home in unemployment (Sixsmith & Sixsmith 1990; Gurney 1997) and there is literature on the meaning of home in relation to major life events such as divorce (Anthony 1997).

Adjusting to retrenchment, from a psychological perspective, means facing a major life event within the unfolding of the life course. Research by Moos and

Schaefer (1986) has shown that depending on the level of stress experienced, major life challenges such as retrenchment are integrated into life histories: as people establish the meaning and understand the personal significance of the situation, confront reality and respond to requirements of the external situation, sustain relationships with family members, friends and other helpful individuals, maintain reasonable emotional balance by managing feelings and preserve a satisfactory self-image. This approach stresses agency in the process of adjustment, exposes the complexity of the undertaking and the importance of the temporal dimension of adjustment. It does not mention the home.

The problem of adjustment by an individual to the specific life challenge of involuntary job loss involves processes and outcomes. The two process are: maintaining well-being during and after job loss; and maximising job seeking behaviour. The outcome issue is achievement of employment that is satisfactory on dimensions important to the retrenched worker (Hoare 2007). Waters's (2000) model of coping with the stress of unemployment (see Figure 3.1) demonstrates how different sources of stress are mediated by individual processes such as coping efforts, which can be problem focused or emotion focused. This model suggests that maintaining well-being during and after job loss can be modelled as the interaction of cognitive appraisal—how bad or good is this situation?—and coping efforts—is this a problem to be solved or an emotion to be managed? The home and what it means may be an important component in the dynamics of coping—for example, considering the merits of relocation may be a problem-focused coping effort while withdrawing into the home may be an emotion focused coping effort.
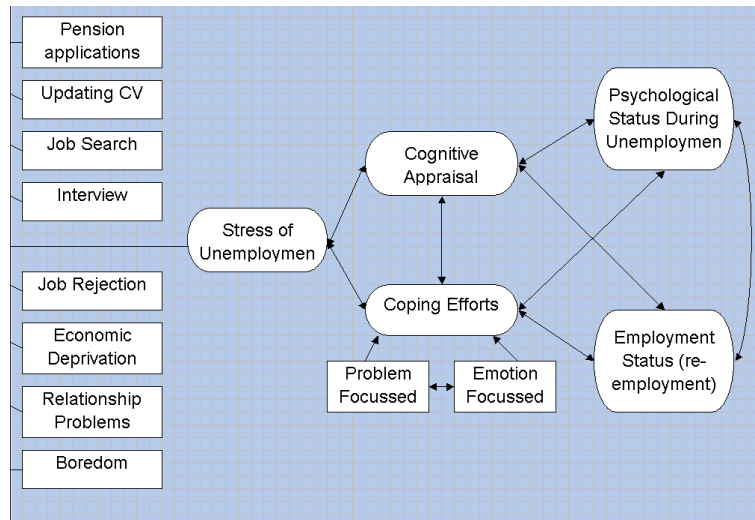
Figure 3.1: Coping, Psychological Status and Employment Model
(CoPES)

Source: Waters (2000, p 177)

There are six important variables that may influence cognitive appraisal in the case of retrenchment. Firstly, people electing to take voluntary retrenchment are assumed to be acting confidently. However, voluntary retrenchment is stressful because it places individuals in situations that are uncertain, potentially threatening and disruptive to their daily routines (Leana & Feldman 1994; Clarke 2007). Secondly, the previous experience of retrenchment could be presumed to have a protective function, as experience equips the worker with coping strategies. However, research evidence does not support this assumption unequivocally (Kinicki & Latack 1990). Thirdly, not everyone is happy in their work so the level of satisfaction with the previous job is a factor in cognitive appraisal (Clarke 2007). Fourthly, there is an implicit contract between employers and employees—'the psychological contract'—that assumes workers will be loyal to employers in return for job security (Robinson 1996). A perception of a breach of this implied contract may add to the stress of retrenchment. This could be mitigated by advance notice. However, despite industrial relations legislation mandating advance notice, it does not always happen. The perception of a breach of trust may also be mitigated by a retrenchment package. The fifth issue is that management practices in some work environments, especially industries

working under lean production principles, which includes the Australian automotive industry (Kochan & Lansbury 1997; Lansbury, Wright & Baird 2006), encourage employees to identify strongly with their employer (Perrucci & Stohl 1997) fostering a spirit of 'shared destiny' (Graham 1995). Under these circumstances, being retrenched or even leaving voluntarily may cause considerable stress through feelings of rejection or even disloyalty (taking a payment to leave 'the family'). The last and perhaps the most important factor is the level of uncertainty that accompanies the period prior to formal announcement. Research has suggested that the worst aspect of retrenchment is not knowing whether it will happen (Winefield 1995). The problem of uncertainty about future events is, of course, not just something unique to the industrial relations/human resource management environment of retrenchment. Nevertheless, as discussed in Chapter 2, uncertainty about the future of the automotive industry in Australia has been around for the last 20 years if not longer. Efforts to mitigate the uncertainty have been made by workers through their unions, in the form of representations in the AIRC regarding the regulation of retrenchment and in direct bargaining with employees at the enterprise level.

There is a debate in the literature on the psychology of adjustment to job loss about whether the latent or the manifest benefits of work should be the focus of adjustment to retrenchment research. Jahoda (1982) has argued that while people primarily went to work to enjoy the manifest benefit, i.e. money, there were also unintended consequences/benefits. Workers were being provided with opportunities for meeting deeper, universal, psychological needs. The unintended consequences were compelled contact and shared experience outside the family, demonstrated goals and purposes beyond the scope of the individual, imposed status and identity, enforced activity and a time structure imposed on the working day and week (Fryer & Mc Kenna 1987). Fryer and McKenna (1987) suggest that the financial impact is as important, if not more important, than loss of latent benefits because income is strongly related to the ability to 'plan a meaningful future'. Hassel et al. (2004) have shown that research that combines both the latent and manifest benefits dimensions has the best chance of helping to understand the impact of unemployment on

psychological health, especially when the out-of-date distinction between unemployment and employment is reconceptualised to reflect the contemporary reality that there are economically adequate jobs, economically inadequate jobs and periods of unemployment. The authors investigated the psychological well-being of 193 unemployed people and 206 employed low-wage earners between the ages of 18 and 64 years. They found that for the unemployed people, the latent benefits of employment, life satisfaction and job satisfaction predicted psychological well-being. For employed low-wage earners, life satisfaction and financial strain were important predictors of psychological health. Research has also shown the extent to which spirituality (Muller, Creed & Francis 2004) and meaningful leisure activity (Waters & Moore 2002) can substitute for the loss of latent benefits of work

3.2.2 Sociological Perspectives

Sociological perspectives on unemployment highlight the social forces, as opposed to the individual cognitive and behavioural processes, involved in how employment and unemployment is framed, understood, experienced and integrated. Just like psychological perspectives, sociological perspectives have implicit or explicit theoretical frameworks and related assumptions, and to some extent imply different methodological approaches. Sociological perspectives tend to rely more on qualitative data; however, this distinction and its significance for the thesis will be discussed in Chapter 4. Sociological theory suggest that while consumption rather than production has become the sphere in which people define their identities, work nevertheless remains an important basis for identity, through its capacity to influence self-development, social ties, status and consciousness (Leidner 2006). Further, even if labour process theorists such as Braverman (1974) are correct and intensive division of labour alienates people from their work and its products and work is 'drained' of meaning (not according to the rhetoric of lean production), workers, as well as managers, are now urged to approach work as another arena of 'self-development, self-expression and identity construction' (Du Gay 1996). This raises the stakes regarding loss of work for those who were influenced by an earlier era regarding the binaries of consumption and

production as reflecting the binaries of home and work and private and public. Five research studies are reviewed to illustrate the utility of a sociological perspective regarding adjustment to job loss. They illustrate the role of status and identity, hegemony, household, social capital and risk

Ezzy's (2001) account of the unemployment experience of 33 people is based on the assumption that unemployment is not a static situation or a status—it is a process or more particularly a *status passage* defined as a 'movement into a different part of a social structure, or a loss or gain of privilege, influence, or power, and a changed identity and sense of self, as well as changed behaviour' (Glaser & Strauss 1971). Job loss can be conceptualised within this framework as part of a divestment passage and in so far as individuals pursue strategies or life plans in order to legitimate identity and where identity as a worker is a central component of these activities, then failure to find alternative routes to the performance of valued identities and the development of positive self-evaluations can lead to psychological ill health (Ezzy 1993). Combining this perspective with narrative identity theory and the use of qualitative research techniques, Ezzy (2001) identified three key narratives of job loss: romantic, tragic and more complex experiences. Romantic narratives portray job loss as a moment of liberation from an oppressive occupation. Within this category, he identified two sub-types. Strong romances provided a long-term plan for the future through the development of an alternative career. Weak romances portrayed unemployment as a holiday. Tragic narratives were based on the undermining of social relationships and of life plans. The discrepancy between the ideal life plan and the fear about what might happen because of job loss was the main source of depression and anxiety described in these narratives. Complex narratives referred to the consequences of job loss being determined by events such as marital breakdown or serious illness.

Sharone's (2007) research focused on why most unemployed Americans reproduced the prevailing ideology that unemployment is an individual and private challenge, rather than a public issue with structural causes and political solutions. Her concern was with the depoliticisation of unemployment. Drawing in part on labour process theory as developed by

Burawoy (1979), ethnographic research and 65 in-depth interviews with members of a single Job Search Club in the US, Sharone (2007, p 127) demonstrated that:

> Engagement in the work of job searching, as structured by self-help discourses and practices, temporarily absorbs unemployed job seekers in a highly professionalized work–game. Playing the game depolitizes unemployment by channelling the players' practical energies towards strategic decision-making and individual level manoeuvres and away from larger structural contexts.

Clark (1987) was concerned with establishing a theoretical basis for retrenchment research. He argued that the household response to retrenchment should be the basis for understanding the individual worker's response to retrenchment. This approach was designed to be a middle ground between a traditional community where workmates are normally friends, if not neighbours, and the 'isolated' individual reacting to market forces and psychological stress. Clark (1987) argued that the analysis of adjustment at the household level should be based on a system model with inputs and outputs. Specifically, inputs would comprise the state of the local labour market, stage in life cycle, type of social network maintained by the household and the resources that household members bring into the unit. The outputs would include decisions about the domestic division of labour, participation in the labour market and in leisure activities. A balance in the system is maintained by the application of household rules and family codes about decision making and other domains including distributive justice and maximum joint profit. Clark interviewed 27 redundant shift workers from a much larger group previously recruited for a study on shift work. He identified different responses to redundancy based on stage in the family life cycle, the availability of social networks, wealth and family resources, domestic labour division, domesticity and ethnicity.

Garrett-Peters (2009) examined how unemployed workers repair damage to self-concepts. Through participant observation and intensive interviews with 22 members of job search groups, Garrett-Peters (2009) found that workers

achieved positive self-concepts through five main strategies: redefining the meaning of unemployment, realising accomplishment, restructuring time, forming accountability partnerships and helping others. The author concluded that while social capital has been shown to be important for finding jobs, it is also important for surviving the loss of a job.

The contemporary era has been characterised as moving from the constellation of Fordist era concerns with scarcity to a post Fordist or reflexive modernization era dominated by concern about risk (Beck 1992) This thesis holds that we are in 'world risk society' era and the former security found in traditional domains of family and religion have been overtaken by a process of individualisation which generates personal insecurity and reflexive decision. 'Class positions' become superseded by 'risk positions' Concurrent with and informing of these processes is the contraction of the role of the nation state as symptomatic of globalisation and a contraction of the welfare state – at least in the west. Citizens, of necessity, are argued to become more informed and create their own life biographies. Beck (2000) elaborated on the impact of risk in relation to work in his thesis on a 'brave new world of work' in which he outlined the concept of 'the risk regime of work'. This concept is based on Aglietta's notion of *regimes of accumulation* and *modes of regulation* as a model for understanding social and economic transformation within late capitalism. Beck argues that the *risk regime* of employment, which characterises the second modernity, comprises the dimensions of globalisation, ecologization, digitalisation, individualization and the politicisation of work. These entire processes combine to establish a 'generalization of employment insecurity' underpinned by deregulation of labour relations. The corollary of this argument is that current labour market inequalities transcend traditional forms of stratification. As Allan and Henry (1997) note

> For Beck, risk is not defined narrowly in legal or entrepreneurial terms but more broadly in a social sense. Risk and uncertainty in social life are related to the customs, practices, traditions and habits which act as some form of social regulation to filter out anxiety and to frame

expectations. Thus as certain traditions and expectations, such as a 'job for life' or full-time employment, lose their legitimacy – as decentralization takes hold – the outcome for men and women is a mixture of opportunities and anxieties depending upon the skills and resources at their disposal. Employment risk here, then, is as much a social construction as it is the outcome of wider political and economic

institutional forces.

A number of authors however have challenged the idea of the *generalisation of employment insecurity* arguing for the need for more nuanced approaches. Tulloch and Lupton (2003) have argued that the concept of 'risk cultures' is more accurate than the concept of 'risk society' as it takes into account cultural processes surrounding age, gender, occupation, nationality and sexuality. Quilgars and Abbot (2000) have shown that people can feel "work secure" even in a flexible labour market in the knowledge that while the security of tenure in the current job might be low, security in the marketability of their skills in general might be high. Allen and Henry (1997) have argued that Beck's thesis lacks a general sensitivity to national differences in regulatory regimes and Reimer (1998) has suggested that the geographic insensitivity extends to way risk is manifest at scales below the national, arguing that different local labour markets contexts may well act to 'shape workers' experiences of employment risk'. Similarly Mythen (2005) argues that both the perception and experience of risk/individualisation will be mediated through class, geographic location and cultures.

In a less critical vein Butz and Leslie (2001) conducted research on the changing geographies of employment in the automotive industry, drawing on events surrounding the closure of a GM foundry plant in St Catherine's, Ontario, Canada. The researchers used a risk society perspective (Beck 1992) to understand the reactions of workers to retrenchment. Their conceptualisation of employment risk revolved around four interlocking themes: contracturalisation as experienced in the manufacturing sector,

growing prevalence of internal displacement within the firm (rather than outright retrenchment) and disembedding of social relationships, the risk of bodily injury and subjectification—the ways in which employees may characterise themselves as subjects 'whose share of the productive process is, increasingly, its risks and not its wealth'. The researchers established that workers experiences of risk at GM were most closely associated with three spatial scales: the macro-scale of the corporation, geographies of displacement within a locale and the micro-level individualisation of risk.

Gardiner et al (2009) have suggested that theories of reflexive modernisation and individualisation highlight the role of individual action and responsibility in the context of problematic or 'critical life events' and that these theories prompt critical debate around identity, agency and access to resources in the context of redundancy and occupational restructuring. They acknowledge however that Strangelman's (2001) research on the role of networks in the exercise of agency in a post- industrial mining community in the UK showed that, contrary to Beck's individualisation thesis, globalisation does not necessarily lead to a disempowerment of the working class. The miners in Strangleman's study, whether by 'getting on' or 'getting by', exercised agency through networks of support based on work, place, class, family and kin and the access to resources these networks provided. Distinctions between 'getting by' and 'making out' or 'survivalist' and 'strategic' modes of adjustment to retrenchment were also noted by Gardiner et al (2009)

3.2.3 Summary

The models developed within psychology to explain how people react to and manage employment loss understandably run parallel with the models developed within sociology to explain how retrenchment is socially and culturally embedded even as the burden of adjustment may be increasingly falling on the shoulders of individuals outside of corporatist or collectivist strategies.. Redundancy is stress to be managed by the individual as much as it is a risk to be managed at the household level There is no mention of home

within these approaches and yet as the next section highlights home is very much a potential source of security in the very world of employment insecurity described above..

3.3 The Role of the Home in the Contemporary Era

> Our identities are always entwined with where we live or where we feel a sense of connection and belonging, with our way of life, wherever that may be. But in today's consumer culture our way of life has become, first and foremost, lifestyle. As one of the main areas in which everyday life is conducted, the home has emerged as a key site for identity, for personal expression, and for a sense of belonging and social participation.
>
> Renovation Nation: Our Obsession with Home (Allon 2008, p 29)

In everyday life, people make a distinction between house and home through expressions such as 'a house is not a home', 'home is where the heart is', 'home is where you belong' and 'you make a home—it can't be bought'. This section responds to a difficult question—how does a house become a home and is it really an important distinction when you lose your job? It is framed by a discussion of the literature on the importance and role of the home in the contemporary era, which has been characterised as a 'risk' society and one requiring actors to take responsibility for their own careers and reflexively 'adapt to changing circumstances in order to create a coherent and durable social identity'. The review of the literature suggests there are five relevant research 'problems'. Firstly, are renters in the public or private sectors able to access the same kind of sense of security in 'their home' as do homebuyers or homeowners? Secondly, do people feel that they need a stronger 'sense of home' to cope with globalisation and if so how do you get a stronger sense of home? Thirdly, what is the difference between the meaning of home and the meaning of housing? Fourthly, do the terms 'place attachment', 'belonging' and 'home' imply the same experience and processes? Finally, how does the location of the house where people live influence the meaning of home and the meaning of housing? Common meanings of home include security, comfort, privacy, autonomy and status. Meanings of housing seem to be more

oriented to 'the home' as an asset and as shelter yet these two dimensions could increase or decrease feelings of security depending on the circumstances—i.e. the home may be *experienced* as less than an ideal or *imagined* home. The discussion of the literature is concerned with empirical and theoretical work on how we should understand 'home' and how it is made, experienced and imagined. The discussion on the role of the home in the contemporary era draws on sociological, philosophical, feminist, environmental psychology, gerontological and geographical paradigms. The review is guided by six interrelated themes: housing studies, the life course perspective, the importance of home and homeownership, the meaning of home, place attachment and home; and home/work coordination.

3.3.1 Housing Studies

Housing studies provided the initial framework for understanding the home and has had four main strands: housing policy, economics of housing provision, housing design and the experience and meaning of home (Blunt & Dowling 2006). The economics of housing provision and housing design are not included in the scope of this research. Housing studies as an academic field has generally been associated with the housing policy concerns of governments (Kemeny 1992). The term 'housing', understood as a noun and verb, came into use as a policy term that implies a top down problem solving approach to accommodation at a spatial scale relevant to the appropriate administrative functions within any given state. One of the earliest and most insightful conceptualisations regarding housing was the work by Harvey (1973) in distinguishing between use value, exchange value and urban land use theory. Harvey (1973) developed a list of what housing provides to its occupants. His analysis has proved to be remarkably resilient with the elements appearing in much of the subsequent work on the importance of housing. Harvey (1973:159) argued that a house 'can be used in many different ways simultaneously'. He argued that a house provides:

1. shelter

2. a quantity of space for exclusive use by the occupants

3. privacy

4. a relative location which is accessible to workplaces, retail opportunities, social services, family and friends, and so on (this includes the possibility for place of work etc to be actually in the house)

5. a relative location which is proximate to sources of pollution, areas of congestion, sources of crime and hazard, people viewed with distaste and so on

6. a neighbourhood location which has physical, social and symbolic (status) characteristics; and

7. a means for storing and enhancing wealth (Harvey 1973:159).

Contemporary theorising regarding the significance of housing in social policy terms (Carter and Polevychok 2004) distinguishes between the physical, financial, locational spatial and psychological characteristics of

housing important to people's lives. This categorisation draws attention to the elements that can inform what home means to its occupants.
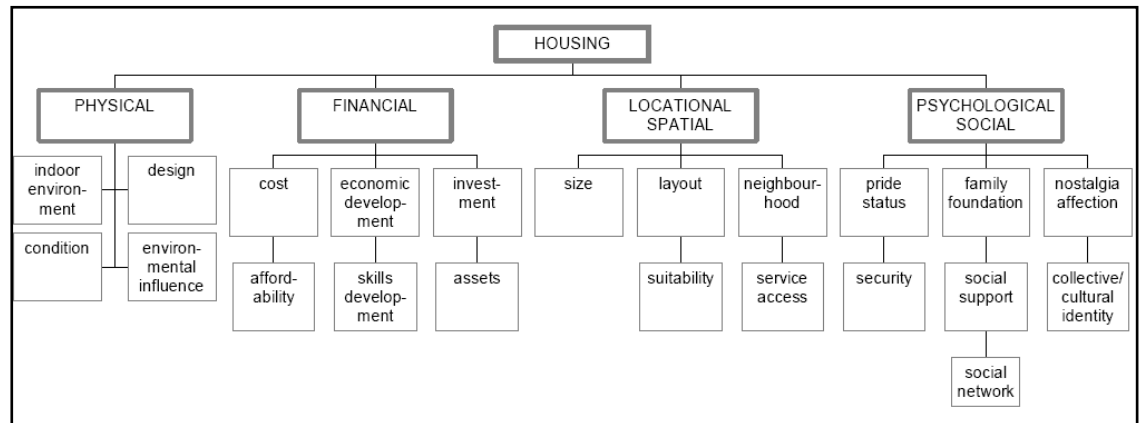
Figure 3.2: Characteristics of Housing Important to People's Lives

Source: Carter and Polevychok (2004:13)

In Australia, the evolution of housing policy was driven by the housing shortages that emerged during the depression. A central component of policy was the Commonwealth Government's direct funding for housing construction through successive Commonwealth/State Housing Agreements (Hayward 1996). Housing studies as a research form and focus has been used to inform decisions about the efficiency and effectiveness of housing markets and of housing assistance in the delivery of affordable and appropriate housing. A concern with equity has been a dominant theme.

The focus within housing studies on the experience and meaning of home marked a paradigm shift in the use of research designs associated with 'the problem of housing'. This shift witnessed the introduction of constructionist eg Jacobs et al (2003) interpretivist and/or environmental psychology frameworks to housing problems and these research designs inform much of the work discussed in the next four sections.

3.3.2 The Sense of Home and the Life Course Perspective

The idea that accommodation decisions after leaving the parental home followed a linear path was first articulated by Kendig (1981). The 'housing

career ladder model' linked shifts in housing tenure with stages of the life course—work, marriage, children, ageing. The move from the parental home into private rental and subsequently into home purchase and owner occupation/homeownership (the 'Great Australian Dream') via a deposit and mortgage underpinned by income from work was a core feature of the model. The model was the mainstay of housing studies for over 30 years but has been revised in recent years. Flatau et al. (2003), based on data from the Housing, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia survey found that younger people are taking longer to obtain independent accommodation and the impact of separation and divorce on accommodation affordability has been underestimated. Clapham (2005) critiqued the 'housing career ladder' as being insufficiently sensitive to choice, consumption patterns, lifestyle planning and intra-household heterogeneity in the contemporary era. Housing for Clapham should be seen as a means to an end and an end in itself. Clapham (2005: 28) did not propose a rejection of the 'housing career ladder' model but suggested it should be expanded to 'capture the social meanings and relationships associated with this consumption at different locales'. Clapham (2005:30) also sought to strengthen the relational aspect of the 'housing career ladder' model through his concept of 'housing pathways':

> Housing is not consumed in isolation from other aspects of life, moving house may be triggered by employment or family issues. The meaning attached to house may be part of a personal identity and lifestyle that included type of employment, choice of clothing, type of care owned and so on. All of these elements need to be considered together as it may be impossible to disentangle them satisfactorily. Therefore a housing pathway will run alongside and be closely associated with other types of pathway such as employment. Here the concept of life planning can be used as an integrating device for these different elements.

Beer and Faulkner (2009), informed by the housing pathways analytical model developed by Clapham, conducted a large survey of households in Australia and found that housing and the realisation of preferences within the housing system reflect five dimensions: life cycle, labour market and household wealth, health, housing tenure and lifestyle aspirations (see Figure

3.3). Beer and Faulkner (2009) argue that the term housing 'transitions' more accurately accounts for housing decisions across the life course than housing 'careers' because 'the term housing transitions implies change but does not suggest a single source or destination'.
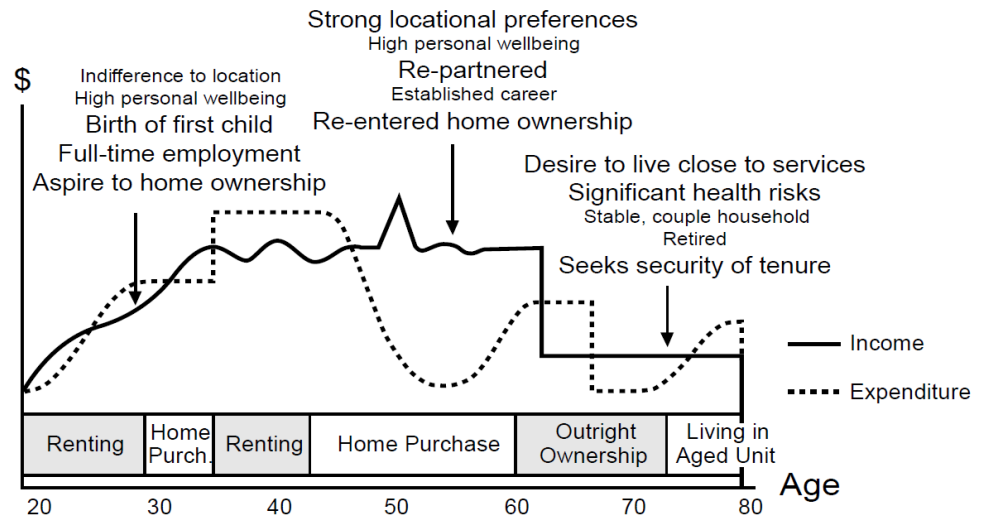
Figure 3.3: Housing Decision Making Over Time, the Variable Influence of Life Cycle, Labour Market, Well-being, Tenure and Lifestyle Aspirations

Source: Beer et al. (2009)

The housing transitions approach to understanding housing decisions over the life course can usefully be compared with a model developed by Watkins and Hosier (2005) that provides an indirect approach to gaining insight into how and why accommodation decisions are made. Watkins and Hosier (2005) developed a model of how individuals develop and maintain a sense of home across the life course. Their model suggests a sense of home is shaped by different spheres of influence over the life course, which assists individuals in preparation for future 'life transitions' and challenges (Watkins & Hosier 2005). A key difference between the two models is that for Watkins and Hosier (2005), the analysis commences at childhood when the individual starts developing a sense of home that is dynamic but with a stable core adapting to an ongoing tension between how the home is *experienced* and

how it is *imagined*. Key influence spheres are early life dependence, independence, co-dependence and later life dependence (see Figure 3.4).
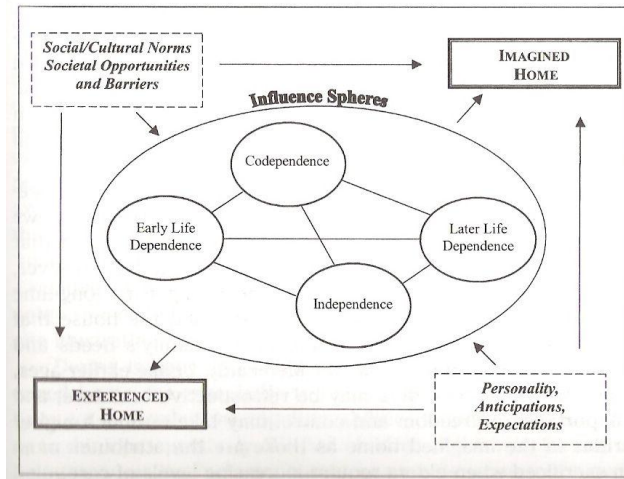
Figure 3.4: The Experienced and Imagined Home over the Life Course

Source: Watkins and Hosier (2005, p 203)

Individuals may have different trajectories in the processes of developing and maintaining a sense of home across the life course. Different trajectories can be represented visually based on the proposition as developed by Watkins and Hosier (2005) that people move between feeling a high level of congruence between the experienced and imagined home—feeling *at home*, and a low level of congruence—feeling *homeless* (not to be confused with being without a house) The degree of conformity between the experienced and imagined home places the person on a continuum of home where home and homelessness are not discrete and exclusive states of existence. For example, the various points on the graph in Figure 3.5 represent stages in the life cycle from childhood at point 1 through adolescence at point 2, marriage at point 3, fulfilment in marriage at point 4, possibly divorce at point 5 and three scenarios of levels of dependency as the person ages. Throughout all stages, people move closer to or further away from the imagined home through the experienced home and in that sense they may be more or less 'homeless'.
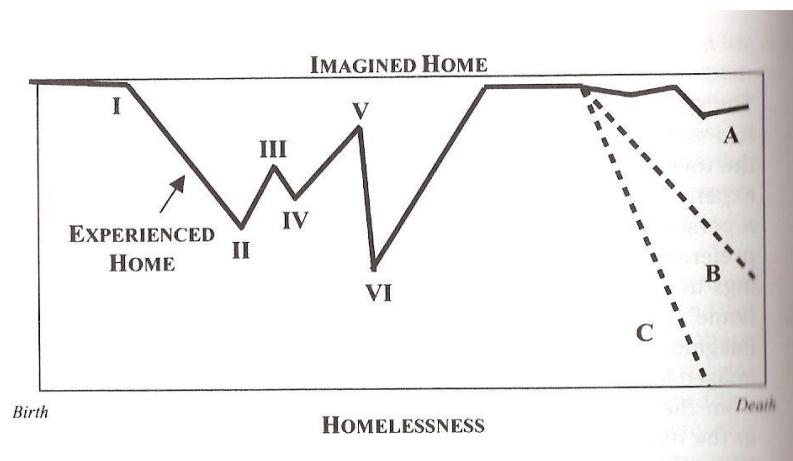
Figure 3.5: An Experienced Life Course Trajectory

Source: Watkins and Hosier (2005, p 207)

However, this life course model lacks sensitivity to the importance of home as an asset, strength of the 'housing transitions' model. For example, Dupuis and Thorns (1996:500) have argued that the meaning of home reflects 'a complex interweaving of the quest for security and identity with the accumulation of assets and other markers of achievement and transfer of these to subsequent generations'. Gurney and Means (1993) acknowledge the importance of home as an asset and postulate a hierarchical relationship between three levels of meanings of home within an experiential framework:

- cultural: home as the subject of political rhetoric, ideologies and popular images
- intermediate: home is produced and consumed as a commodity
- personal: home in the formation of personal biographies.

3.3.3 The Importance of Home and Homeownership

Home ownership as a cultural value and source of self-esteem and identity is strongly expressed in Australia. Underpinning home ownership, in addition to generous taxation provisions, is the social and cultural ideal owning a house on a suburban block (although referred to as *home*ownership) expressed as the 'Great Australian Dream'. This dream has become more difficult to realise in

recent years (Flood & Baker 2010) and the benefits of home ownership are contested, particularly as a source of security in an era of uncertainty and housing stress (Berry & Dalton 2000; Colic-Peisker & Johnson 2010).

As Dietz and Haurin (2003) argue, the experience of owning a home may have an effect on the perception that an individual possesses about self, home and community, on life satisfaction and on the dwelling itself. To consider the relationship between housing tenure and evaluations about the importance of the home, Dockery and Milsom (2005) analysed data from the Wave 1 Survey of the Household and Labour Dynamics in Australia Project, which draws on data from three questionnaire instruments administered to 7,682 households. With respect to the relative importance of key life domains, the authors concluded (see Table 3.1) that individuals rate their families first, followed by health and then home, noting that 37 per cent of people rated the importance of home as 10—the most important thing in their life—although this compared to 76 per cent for one's family and 48 per cent for one's health.

Table 3.1: Importance of Factors in Individuals' Lives

	Females	Males	All
The home in which you live	8.4	8.2	8.3
Your employment and work situation	6.3	7.1	6.7
Your financial situation	8.0	7.9	7.9
Your involvement in local community	5.8	5.5	5.6
Your health	9.0	8.8	8.9
Your family	9.7	9.4	9.5
Your leisure activities	8.0	7.8	7.9
Religion	5.2	4.2	4.7

Mean Ratings from 0 (No Importance At All) to 10 (the Most Important Thing in My Life)

Source: Dockery and Milsom (2005, p 10)

Using factor analysis, the authors found that community orientation and career orientation explained the highest proportion of variation in the eight factors. The home was only a small component of the career factor (correlation +0.17) and a more significant component of the community orientation factor (correlation+0.54). The authors found that those who own

or are purchasing a house place a significantly higher importance upon the home in which they live than did those who rent from a private landlord. Interestingly, public renters placed a higher importance on the home in which they lived than did private renters.

The authors concluded that the home was of greatest importance to people aged over 65, groups who are least likely to become homeowners, i.e. public tenants, people in poor health, people with low employment prospects and people with low education levels. The research also showed that more educated people care significantly less about the home in which they live, are less satisfied, and that residing in an area of disadvantage—as measured by the Socio-Economic Index of Financial Advantage—increases the importance placed on the home as does residing in an area of relative advantage as measured with the index of economic resources.

3.3.4 The Meaning of Home

Acknowledging the general interest in 'the meaning of home', Mallett (2004:62) in an often-quoted article reviewed theoretical and empirical literature from across sociology, anthropology, psychology, human geography, history, architecture and philosophy on 'home research' as a contribution to 'understanding home' and in an effort to facilitate interdisciplinary conversations about 'the meaning and experience of home'. Mallett's (2004:62) structure for the analysis of the literature reported in her article assisted in teasing out the various strands of thought regarding the meaning of home:

> It raises the question whether or not home is (a) place(s), (a) space(s), feeling(s), practices, and/or an active state of state of being in the world? Home is variously described in the literature as conflated with or related to house, family, haven, self, gender, and journeying. Many authors also consider notions of being at home, creating or making home and the ideal home.

Such complexity appears daunting and supports Mallet's (2004) observation that, with some exceptions, researchers have largely restricted their perspectives to aspects that 'routinely fall within their own disciplinary orbit'. The possibility that home may be simultaneously all of these things makes operationalising *home* as an independent or dependent variable difficult, to say the least. What is required, according to Mallett (2004), is more interdisciplinary work. However, Dovey (2005) has suggested that home is not an empirical variable whose meaning we might define in advance— methodology should not be directed to produce cause effect relationships but instead to deepen our understanding of an intrinsically intangible phenomenon. Nevertheless six pertinent conceptualisations do provide grounds for establishing the parameters of the meaning of home. Hayward (1975) provided the earliest list of meanings which became a benchmark for much of what followed. According to Hayward, meanings of home could be grouped under the following headings: home as physical structure; home as a territory; home as locus in space; home as self and self identity; home as social and cultural unit. Case (1996:1) an environmental psychologist, has suggested that for Hayward home as territory refers to the psychological ties to the region or vicinity around a dwelling, home as locus in space is the idea of a central point of reference in the world – "a geographical lens"; and home as self and self identity is about investment in place where place represents the self or home becomes a symbol for self – "a place from which one gains identity". Tognoli (1987) identified five attributes of home: centrality; continuity; privacy; self expression and personal identity; and social relationships; and suggested these attributes differentiated a home from a house. Putnam and Newton (1990) commenting on meaning of home research concluded that the same basic terms were common across the studies: home as privacy; security; family; intimacy; comfort and control. Somerville (1992:533) identifies 7 key signifiers of home: shelter, hearth, heart, privacy, roots, abode and paradise; with each of these corresponding to senses of security – physical, physiological, emotional, territorial, ontological, spatial and spiritual; respectively. Notwithstanding the different theoretical or disciplinary underpinnings for these concepts it is clear that home plays a critical role in the lives of individuals. Gregson and Low (1995:225) writing

from a geographical perspective argued that geographers tend to eschew the idea of home as house seeing home as either a constellation of sets of social relations or as a place from which to build a politics of resistance. Since then Blunt and Dowling (2005:89) have identified and provided a critical geographical analysis of the processes through which houses become home 'residence: house as home" . This analysis is based around three themes – the economic importance of home and interrelationships between spheres of home and work; the notion of "ideal' homes drawing in part on work by Dovey (1994) and finally houses and experience of dwelling considered "unhomely" Blunt and Dowling's analysis is situated within their broader critical geography of home based on three themes: home as simultaneously material and imaginative, the nexus between home, power and identity and home as multiscalar. Central to their analysis is the concept of home making

> Home is a process of creating and understanding forms of dwelling and belonging . Home is lived, what home means and how it is materially manifest are continually created and recreated through everyday practices.(p 23)

Gurney (1996) studied the meaning of home through a postal survey of 600 homeowners in Britain. The survey asked 'Some people say that the words "house" and "home" mean quite different things—what does your home mean to you?' Gurney derived discourses of home through patterns in response to the survey question and these are summarised in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Discourses of Home in Responses to the Question 'What Does Your Home Mean To You?'

Discourse	Words used by respondent
Emotions	Family, relatives
Back region	Return to, private, refuge
Negative /instrumental	Debt, worry, roof over head
Relaxation	Relax, unwind
Comfort	Comfort, comfortable
Safety	Feel safe, physical security
Ownership	Pride, achievement , invest for future
Personalisation	Place to design, own tastes
Autonomy	Your own rules, freedom,
Front region	Invite people in , entertain, neighbours
What you make it	Home is what you make it
Other	Words like everything, base, garden

Source: Clapham (2005, p 141) adapted from Gurney (1996)

Also using a postal survey, Kearns et al. (2000) surveyed residents in eight local authority districts in West Central Scotland and found that the psycho-social benefits of the home as a *haven*, as a *locus of autonomy* and as a *source of status* were less able to be predicted by housing tenure than by context—the stronger predictors being attitude towards the neighbourhood and incidence of problems with the home.

3.3.5 Home, Mobility and Belonging

A consistent theme within the home literature spanning sociology, geography, environmental psychology, gerontology and the community work disciplines is the contingent nature of the association of a 'sense of home' with a house. One of the earliest but nevertheless highly cited studies involving research on the sense of home by sociologists (Cuba & Hummon 1993) questioned the

assumption that a sense of homelessness is a necessary consequence of mobility/migration. The research examined place identification among mobile Americans arguing that 'place affiliation must be understood by situating it within the process of life-cycle change and place mobility' (Cuba & Hummon 1993:549). The central theoretical frame for the research was the concept of place identity, which may involve self-conceptions and affiliations of self with place. In the latter case, these produce a sense of belonging—of feeling at home in one place, out of place in another. The authors argued that:

> Such self interpretation and affiliation frequently incorporates multiple locales, ranging in scale from rooms and dwelling places to neighbourhoods, communities, and even regions (Cuba & Hummon 1993, p 549).

The interpretation of place identity for the research by Cuba and Hummon (1993) drew on three observations from the literature. The first was that conceptualisation and measurement of affiliation with place drew on two sources. Quantitative studies were concerned with emotional attachment and typically asked questions about willingness to move from a specific locale and qualitative studies focusing on the experience of being 'at home' in place. For the latter case, the authors noted Hayward's study of Americans' connections with home that found themes such as a sense of situated local relationships with others, shared values, a place of refuge, a place of continuity, stability and familiarity; of personalised space; of childhood memories; and of the built environment. The second observation from the literature was that the evidence for the effect of mobility on place affiliation is ambiguous—some research suggests that mobility severely disrupts attachment, other research suggests objects can be relocated to transform a new house into a new home and yet other research indicates that mobility between communities or regions may actually enhance affiliation and increase regional consciousness. The third observation from the literature was evidence in favour of a link between place affiliation, life stages and transitions:

> Growing up and leaving home, getting married and buying a house, and retiring and selling a family home all mark significant transitions in the life

cycle, relevant to defining and transforming the self. As such, feeling at home in a place may well require place mobility across the life cycle, as place and identity are mutually reconstructed to meet the expectations of different life stages (Cuba & Hummon 1993, p 551).

Using data from a five-year comparative investigation of migrants and non-migrants residing in three communities in the Cape Cod district of Massachusetts (US), the researchers defined both the existence of place identity and its affiliations as expressions *of at-homeness* pointing out that *at-homeness* had been used in previous qualitative research on place identification and quantitative research of community attachment. The existence of a place identity was measured by a positive response to the question 'do you feel at home here?' To measure place affiliation, those who answered positively to the question 'do you feel at home here?' were asked 'why do you feel at home here?' Responses were grouped into eight dichotomous variables: friend-related, dwelling-related (including home ownership) self-related, family-related, organisation-related (including work) amenity-related, community-related and prior experience-related. Reasons for moving to the area were incorporated into the research design: amenity, local economic conditions, proximity, job opportunities, property ownership and size of community. The top three responses—interpersonal attachment, attachment to dwellings and self-related i.e. comfort and contentment—accounted for nearly 60 per cent of the reasons for feeling at home.

Terkenli (1995), a geographer, suggests that the sense of home emerges out of the process through which a place becomes home, an argument analogous to 'house-as-home' by Blunt and Dowling (2005) described above. She argues that in order to clarify the concept of home, it must be seen as a spatial context responding to and informing the home versus non-home dialectic and argues that the association of home with house in the US is misleading and restrictive. While the scale of home depends on the actual or expressed power, control or personal investment in place, home also connotes social and habitual conditions. Terkenli (1995, p 326) acknowledges that repetition is an essential element in the transformation of place into home and that:

> The essence of home lies in the recurrent, regular investment of meaning in a context with which people personalize and identify through some measure of control.

She argues that the strongest sense of home commonly coincides geographically with a dwelling. Nevertheless, industrialisation and urbanisation have led to a modernisation that has resulted:

> In the loss of the physical community or region as home. The social worlds of neighborhood and village are now less important as transitional zones between home and non-home settings. Instead of physical communities, ones of interest cultivate and nurture personal ways of being, the habitual routines of their constituent members' geographies of home (Terkenli 1995, p 328).

However, according to Terkenli (1995), home as an expression of personal or group identity is geographically transportable in the quest for a place in the world.

Reimer (2000:214) in a study on the stress of relocation following retrenchment argues that a vibrant sense of home can serve as an anchor for people who relocate to other regions in pursuit of employment. Reimer (2000) interviewed 60 retrenched adults and found two categories of stress associated with relocation in pursuit of work: operational stress that generally dissipated over time and emotional stress linked to the relationship needs and demands. Homesickness was a factor in emotional stress. Based on the analysis of his interview data, Reimer (2000, p 214) concluded that:

> 'Home' is not necessarily a house, or piece of property; home is a layer of valued emotional experiences and memories, accumulated over a period of time and grounded in social relationships with family and friends. Most people have some 'sense of home', stronger for some, less for others. A 'sense of home' can be a comforting, safe place to be, where the stressful encroachments of daily life are held at bay. This emotionally based zone of comfort can support and strengthen a person in difficult times. A 'sense of home' is a feeling of belonging, of having a history of important and valued experiences that give purpose and direction to life. Persons or

families who relocate may not realize at the time the emotional bonds they may have fractured or severed. Employers, too, may lose sight of, or ignore, a person's 'sense of home' when they request the relocation of their workers.

Dufty's (2006) study of public housing tenants in regional Australia demonstrates the way a sense of belonging can occur in the context of this housing tenure. Dufty (2006) in a study of subjectification through neoliberal ideology – particularly the willingness to be locationally flexible - using a Foucaltian governmentality theoretical framework, conducted surveys and in depth interviews with up to 121 public housing tenants in rural NSW. She found that tenants' sense of home was not confined to what she referred to as the traditional home-space. Tenants placed importance on access to strong communities and neighbourhoods within what Dufty refers to as discourses confirmatory of a counter subjectivity of "countrymindness". Dufty (2006:2) argued that through these discourses many tenants

> .. identify a sense of home and belonging to place that has produced a reluctance to relocate. Such active ways of making home for regional public housing tenants point to a breakdown in the production of the locationally flexible neoliberal subject. This finding trouble hegemonic understandings of the subjectification capacities of neoliberalism by demonstrating that those being subjectified are capable of, and actively chose, alternative subject positions which are informed by an attachment to place

Whatever security there may be in belonging in a place may be enhanced by an increase in ontological security sourced through home. Insecurity associated with globalisation may cause a loss of sense of purpose and incline people to seek security in the private sphere of the home in order to re-establish a sense of ontological security that Giddens (1991, p 54) defines as:

> The confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self identity and the constancy of their social and material environments. Basic to a feeling of ontological security is a sense of the reliability of persons and things.

Saunders (1990, p 361) has suggested that home is a potential source of ontological security claiming that home is:

> Where people feel in control of the environment, free from surveillance, free to be themselves and at ease, in the deepest psychological sense, in a world that might at time be experienced as threatening and uncontrollable.

Kearns et al. (2000), using data from households in the west of Scotland, indirectly tested the extent to which housing tenure influenced ontological security through the home. They showed that home as haven, as a locus of autonomy and as a source of status have less to do with housing tenure than with neighbourhood context and incidence of problems with the home. Using the same data source, Hiscock et al. (2001) found that owner occupation was considered more prestigious than social renting, and that the home as a site of constancy was important but that it also conflicted with the social desirability of moving up the housing ladder. The authors concluded that:

> Our research shows how ontological security derives in part from the avoidance both of risk and of the appearance of failure. More so than the bypassing of shame, owner occupation offers the benefits of ontological security due partly to a rosy association of the tenure with stability (something which is often not true), and due to a strong desire to enter the mainstream and demonstrate personal progress—something which renting (private or public) is largely incapable of doing... , there is a paradoxical tension at the heart of the ideology of owner occupation in contemporary society. This is the tension between the attraction of the comforts of stability in home and place offered by owner occupation, especially in its suburban form, and the pressure to progress and 'get on' within the tenure itself by moving up the housing and neighbourhood ladder to bigger houses and 'better' areas (Hiscock et al. 2001, p 63).

3.3.6 Workplace: A Special Kind of Home?

The term 'place' in everyday language is often used to refer to the home or house, as in 'come over to our place'. The expression connotes territory and belonging. The expression 'let's meet at my workplace' utilises the term 'place' in a different sense even though, to some extent, 'my workplace' also

connotes territory and belonging. This section of the chapter reviews relevant literature on meanings of place and establishes a framework for a deeper appreciation of how home, place and workplace are distinct yet related concepts.

Place involves three core components: a physical setting, activities and meanings (Relph 1976). Within the social sciences, the concept of place has three complementary major elements that help to understand how meaningful places are formed: *locale,* as the settings within which social relations take place; *location,* as the geographical location encompassing the settings and defined by social and economic processes at a wider scale' and *sense of place,* as 'the local structure of feeling' (Agnew 1987). However, this framework has been criticised by Massey (1994) as static and out of touch with the era of time space compression and globalisation, which requires that places be seen not as essences or bounded forms but as processes—places are not isolated but should be seen in relation to the outside world (Gustafson 2001). This framework, in part, informed Smaldone et al.'s (2005) study of place as a process. The researchers analysed data from interviews with residents of and visitors to Jackson, Wyoming in the US regarding their descriptions of places and why and how the places were important to them. The researchers found three core themes within the data. The first theme was *life stage/course* where respondents identified places that were important because of their experience of respondents' critical life stages. The second theme was *searching for a feeling*, where emotional needs and feelings informed place connections and place identity. This theme included sub-themes of finding places for emotional regulation and identity formation, the dialectic of discovery and comfort, the importance of home and feelings of discovery and exploration. The third theme was commitment *to a place* reflecting sentiments about willingness to preserve a place. Commitment to a place was reflected in talk about attachment, commitment and length of association with place, with commitment and sacrifice and with talk about sacrifice and negative place feelings. This framework is supported through an earlier study of sense of place in Toronto by Shamai (1991) who argued that sense of place should be seen as a continuum with the following seven levels: not having any sense of

place, knowledge of being located in a place, belonging to a place, attachment to a place, identifying with the place goals, involvement with the place, and sacrifice for a place.

Antonsich (2009) conducted a mixed methods study of the relationship between place and self through analysis of the narratives of place produced by research participants in four European regions. He found that meanings of place have personal referents (for example, family, memories and ordinary practices such as working) and social referents (for example, history, traditions, culture, language and economic conditions) that exist independently from the subject that experiences them and that can shape the specific identity of a given geographic space. These referents that can lead to discursive construction of place as home, which for most of Antonsich's (2009) participants was a symbolic space resonating with feelings of attachment and familiarity rather than home as a material domestic(ated) space associated with both security and violence, the latter construction being stressed by feminist geographers such as Blunt and Dowling (2006).
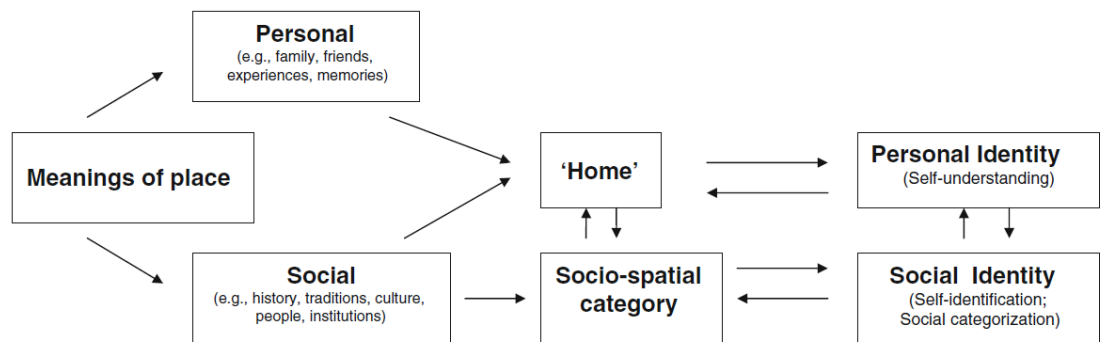
Figure 3.6: Meanings of Place and the Process of Personal and Social Identification

Source: Antonisch (2009:125)

Antonsich (2009) argued that the strong personal links that his respondents discussed regarding their stages of life course and place—'autobiographical

insidedness'—was more than just people identifying with a place; it was a manifestation of human existence as ineluctably *emplaced.*

While human existence may be emplaced, places are socially constructed and Easthope (2004, p 135) has suggested, following Massey (1992), that the home should be seen as a particular kind of place:

> One's home, then, can be understood as a particularly significant kind of place with which, and within, we experience strong social, psychological and emotive attachments. The home is also understood as an open place, maintained and developed through the social relations that stretch beyond it.

Easthope (2004) suggests this formulation corrects the previous false dichotomy of house as a physical structure and home as social, cultural and emotive construct. Further, it supports Lawrence's (1985) conception that 'the analysis of homes should include a study of continuous processes rather than isolated actions'.

This theorising leads to an interpretation about home and the workplace The construction of place and self as being interwoven is at the basis of the argument by the philosopher Martin Heidegger regarding 'being in the world' where attachment to place is integral and that challenges the notion that mind and body are independent. In relation to home, he extends his conception to incorporate the notion of *dwelling*, which as Harvey (1996) has suggested is to achieve 'a spiritual unity between humans and things'. Heidegger argued that a workshop is a place where practical work is undertaken and Casey (2001), in an interpretation of his work, has suggested that place and self are intimately interlocked in the world of practical work:

> Heidegger is telling us that in a comparatively demanding place such as a workshop, the human beings who labor there are so deeply embroiled that their being-in-the-world, their very self, is part of the scene and not something that hovers above it at a transcendental remove. The purpose of the tools we employ is not exhausted in sheer production or an economic fate outside the workplace but is also closely geared into the circuit of selfhood…In such a circumstance, then, place and self are thoroughly

enmeshed—without, however, being fused into each other in a single monolithic whole (Casey, 2001, p 407).

For Easthope (2004), Heidegger's worker was 'rooted' and 'at home' in an unselfconscious world. Fischer's (1997, p 130) psycho-social study of workspaces argues that in order to better understand the appropriation practices—multiform processes that establish psychological control over a territory in the form of a professional space that is theoretically impersonal— it is important to discard the definition of work as exclusively a place of submission and constraint:

> In reality it is also a place where one puts down roots, and where, by reappropriating time, space and objects, one creates a territory that is liveable and provides freedom.

Fischer (1997) argues that workers enact two modes of place attachment— adaption and control over little events. Adaption is focused on making changes in the workplace that provide more physical comfort and symbolic satisfaction. In this form, place attachment is expressed through the creation of fragile autonomy zones that breaks an organisation's rigidity. It is a form of resistance and engages with the dimension of work that is the fight against negation: 'place attachment reveals the meaning of this dimension. It is both refuge and transgression' (Fischer 1997, p 131).

3.3.7 Work/Home Interaction

The levels and nature of interdependence between home and work are topics of ongoing debate not least of all because housing is a multidimensional concept involving physical, financial, locational and psycho-social aspects. Alongside questions about the boundaries between home and work for achieving gender equality and 'quality time' at home among members of the dual income household, the reality for most people is that the income derived from work pays for the amenity of safe and healthy housing which contributes to the experience of home. In addition to the material reciprocity between home and work domains, there is the overlap of home and work with both as sources of psycho-social benefits such as security, community, privacy, self-expression, self-esteem, routine, social relationships and social status.

The relationship between work and the home in the contemporary era crystallised during the long economic boom in Australia. Work and the home, based on the earlier model, were treated as separate spheres—gendered sites for production and reproduction respectively(Blunt & Dowling 2006). Work helped to finance housing, usually in the form of suburban tracts, and housing helped to access, maintain and perform work. Growth in household formation fuelled demand and demand led to jobs. The so-called 'Great Australian Dream' was promoted as being in the national interest. Along with the housing side of the dream was a well-paid job for life for the male of the nuclear family on construction sites, in offices or in factories of the mass production era. Automotive industry workers helped to produce the vehicles that they used for the commute to work, trips to shopping malls and for weekend recreation for the family.

Research by Hanson and Pratt (1988) has shown how the traditional conceptualisation of the links between home and work within urban geography—i.e. as points in space separated by the journey to work—can be updated to take into account feminist and other scholarship leading to an appreciation of the interdependencies between the two realms and the essentially gendered nature of the earlier construction. Their work suggests

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that what is meant by home needs to be reconceptualised in relationship to work:

> A reconceptualized 'home' would be expanded outward to include the surrounding neighborhood and inward to include intra-household interactions. A spatial aggrandizement of home would recognise the neighborhood as the locus of a set of potential jobs, social networks, and services that bear critically upon the household's work decisions in the ways we have just outlined. Redefining home in this manner would acknowledge the role of the immediate residential context on the decisions of households and individuals (Hanson & Pratt 1988, p 309).

Related to this idea is Jarvis' (1999) suggestion that while attachment to place is important in how couples decide to coordinate home and work and whether or not to relocate, what is more important is social and kin relations; sources of provision and of information, knowledge and learning. A clear school of thought is that work and home are interrelated and you cannot study one without the other (Hanson & Pratt 1988). Pocock (2003) suggests that there is a work/life collision and work is now the basis for community while Hochschild (1997) has suggested we have a 'time bind' and that work now provides all the benefits of home while home has become the place with too much to do.

Connections between problems with contemporary work and or the rise of insecure employment and house and home have been made by two researchers working with the sociological tradition. Clapham (2005), has suggested that the operation of flexible labour markets, causes people to view their homes differently and causes them to change what they want from their homes. Sennet (1997:68) has suggested that given people are moving and losing jobs and careers more frequently and there is a decline in the security of workplace identity there is a stimulation of investment of identity in house and neighbourhood.

> The local place has been called upon to serve as a refuge against the market and there can be a retreat into neo-traditional places of exclusion, intolerance and fantasy or a more vital relationship between local and global, self and other.

If Clapham and Sennet are correct then any tendency to reconceptualise and or reconstruct home, to the extent that the house/current dwelling is a place where people can be 'at home" may be constrained by the extent to which the home can provide a locale in which people can work at attaining a sense of ontological security in a world that at times is experienced as threatening and uncontrollable. As discussed above, the capacity to maintain ontological security through the home is argued to attain when the home is a site of constancy in the social and material environment; the home is a spatial context in which the day to day routines of human existence are performed; the home is a site where people feel free from the surveillance of the modern world; and the home is a secure base around which to construct identities. There are at least two problems associated with this proposition. Firstly the ability to secure key psycho-social benefits of home/meanings of home such as haven, locus of autonomy and as a source of social status – all linked to ontological security - are dependent on the neighbourhood context, the incidence of problems with the home and to some extent on household composition. Secondly research has suggested that greater ontological security is not necessarily to do with tenure itself: it may be to do with having wealth, living in a nice area, living in larger better quality dwellings and being settled in relationships and work. As Sixsmith and Sixsmith (190:20) have argued

> Home is essentially a transaction between person and place where the
> different aspects of home experience, such as privacy or security, all
> reflect the intentions of the dweller within the material context of the home

3.3.8 Summary

This review of the literature points to important findings and constructs that assist in understanding the housing decisions and attitudes of retrenched workers during and as part of the adjustment process. These themes, which overlap to some extent and cut across different disciplines can be summarised as the sense of home over the life course, problematision of retrenchment, loss of latent and or manifest benefits of work, the nature of the new job, and

home/work dynamics, The relevance of these themes for conceptualising the process and testing the efficacy of the model empirically is considered below

Most people do not relocate to find a new job following retrenchment however a number of authors refer to a lack of geographic mobility in the context of weak labour markets as people or households being 'locked in or tied to place'. As discussed in the introduction, it has always been assumed that place attachment is an integral part of human identity (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996), may serve as defence against crisis in periods of transitions between successive developmental stages in the life course (Hay 1998) and is good for the neighbourhood since it facilitates involvement in local affairs (Lewicka 2005). However it has also been shown that place attachment is an active process which can be enacted in any suitable environment potentially stripping relocation, in the context of a new job, of its pejorative load. Nevertheless Reimer's (2000) research shows that relocation for work does still raise the possibility of loss of a sense of home – homesickness – and the consequences this might have for well being and performance at work. Home however is also something that is made rather than given – driven in part by the tension between the *experienced* and *imagined* home. Cuba and Hummon (1993) have shown how inter state mobility is not necessarily associated with a sense of *homelessness*. What is less clear with respect to home and place attachment and their interaction regarding geographic mobility is housing tenure. The Oswald hypothesis has found little support in the Australian context despite some strong support in the US and Europe. Homeownership however is strongly correlated with age. Early retirement, funded by a retrenchment package, seems like a reasonable choice if the only other option for a retrenched homeowner is relocation funded by the sale of the family home. It is also conceivable that retrenchment has both enabling and constraining influences on a housing career or as housing transitions (Beer and Faulkner 2009) depending on the amount of money in the retrenchment package or on the *imagined* home. Consequently retrenchment might involve a reinforcing, retardation or potentially a transformation of the imagined home through the redirection of retrenchment related financial resources and or choices about new workplaces. The process of retrenchment may interact with

the meaning of home on cultural, commodity and personal biographic dimensions and while place attachment may influence decisions about relocation it is just as likely that households will also factor in the benefit of kinship, support and information networks (Jarvis 1999). While home may be a source of ontological security, especially through home ownership, this is not a given and can be mediated by housing quality and or neighbourhood amenity (Kearns et al 2000). How the interaction between home, place attachment and housing tenure play out in the retrenchment context in Australia is something that can be tested empirically

The second issue is the debate in psychology over which is the more important for understanding psychological health and possibly job seeking behaviour in the context of unemployment – loss of the latent or loss of the manifest benefits of work. Fryer's 'agency restriction theory' – that financial health gives individuals the ability to plan a meaningful future – has been supported by Weller's (2007) finding that financial difficulties were a more important predictor of low levels of personal well being than were perceptions about career progress. However Weller did not offer any comment on whether or not the slow to arrive or in some cases ultimate non-existence of retrenchment packages might have influenced the correlation between financial status and sense of well being. This debate however has not appeared to influence the literature on psychological coping in the context of major life challenges – Moos and Schaefer (1988) Research has shown that the type of retrenchment, previous experience of retrenchment, level of satisfaction with the previous job, perception of company loyalty, the degree of subjectification of organisational ethos and the availability of accurate information about retrenchment are all potentially able to influence the level of stress experienced during job loss adjustment. This is critical as the ability to cope with stress and thereby maintain emotional wellbeing during and after job loss and also to maximising job seeking behaviour – two important goals of the adjustment process - may be constrained or enabled by the meaning of home as an asset and as a place of belonging.

The third issue is the need to pay attention to the quality and quantity of work following retrenchment. For the most part large scale retrenchments occur in 'old' economy industries which have enjoyed the benefits of highly skilled workers with, in some cases, 25 to 35 years of job tenure. These workers have not experienced competition in external labour markets since they started work and yet must face the same deregulated, lower paid, contracted, flexible, often non unionised labour markets faced by recent high school or university graduates. This is not to say however that there are no full time jobs available – local conditions will determine how factors such as age, ethnicity and gender play out in competition for jobs. The perceptions of retrenched workers regarding these new jobs are critical however for an understanding of how far the risk society has penetrated the local environment and to what extent factors such as commuting, job tenure, labour processes, management style and OHS compliance mediate job satisfaction. This is all the more important given the potential for considerable variability in employment status on a month by month basis post retrenchment, as demonstrated in the case of former TCF workers (Weller,1999)

The fourth issue is the way retrenchment is problematized and reflects a particular view regarding the extent to which the burden of responsibility for structural change – structural 'adjustment' within industries – should be born by retrenched workers who are, by definition, not to blame for their job loss. The exception to this is arguably the situation of voluntary retrenchment however as has been discussed in the literature voluntary retrenchment is not without its problems not least of all the fact that many workers who take voluntary retrenchment believe that they have little choice. This issue of problematisation should be seen in the broadest context and include how negotiations are conducted regarding plant closures. While it is well known that rumours of retrenchment run sometimes years in advance of the actual decision and the uncertainty engendered by this situation has been suggested to be the most problematic aspect of coping with retrenchment, there is rarely acknowledged and it appears that this aspect of economic restructuring is addressed through subjectification. The issue of rumours goes to the question of how to conceptualise the adjustment process, especially when it starts. This

is particularly important regarding identification of the role of housing. Mitchell (2001) has suggested that the management of new social risks as emerging under the restructuring influence of globalisation could involve workers securing home ownership and working multiple jobs as risk mitigation strategies in the informal/family sector of the economy. Responsibility for risk reduction strategies such as post retrenchment services would lay with the formal/market sectors. Of course not everyone is in the position to embark on homeownership nor is everyone able to work two or more jobs. Nevertheless it is quite possible that adjustment to retrenchment commences well before the actual announcement, especially if as Beck argues an increasing self reflexivity enables people to take control over their working lives (Reimer 1998). One would expect to see evidence of reflexivity in the actions of workers during the rumour phase

The fifth issue is the conceptualisation of the links between home and work in the risk society era. Hanson and Pratt (1988) suggest that the location decision is not necessarily determined by work and that what happens at work can have a bearing on the experience and meaning of home. This is significant because its likely that adjustment to retrenchment is going to involve the re-establishment of a preferred home/work interaction model that takes into account the meaning of home for the whole household. In a manufacturing environment there may be aspects of work which reinforce or hinder the meanings attached to home and if Hoschild (199) and Pocock (2003) are correct and more people seek a sense of home and community in the workplace then retrenchment will cause not only loss of income but a heightened sense of loss in relation to social interaction and security. What becomes critical to know in the context of retrenchment then is the meaning of home before and after retrenchment, particularly in relation to work and the latent benefits of work. This allows research to establish whether the adjustment process involved (re) discovering, securing and or exploiting the meanings of home and whether there are any themes this aspect

It is argued there that the role of home in adjustment to retrenchment, in any given labour market context should be seen to be driven by the interaction

between two processes: the agency expressed by the individual in making work and life choices following retrenchment; and the agency expressed by the individual in maintaining a sense of home during the adjustment where the sense of home has had a trajectory since childhood. This model could be contrasted with what may seem like a more obvious and perhaps parsimonious model – an interruption to or enhanced progress up successive steps on a housing career ladder brought about by the financial costs/opportunities presented in the retrenchment scenario. The interaction may result in friction or acceleration on either dimension ie the imagined home in the same leveraged house may be realised sooner than might otherwise be expected through judicious use of a retrenchment package even if that means forgoing a move to another location to take a higher paying job with more career advancement.

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3.4 Conceptualising the Links between the Home and Adjustment to Retrenchment

. Using the findings and or constructions regarding retrenchment, coping/adjustment and home discussed in the literature it is argued that adjustment to retrenchment involves the interplay of two processes – the agency expressed by the individual in making work and life choices following retrenchment; and the agency expressed by the individual in maintaining a sense of home during the adjustment where the sense of home has had a trajectory since childhood. In order to fully assess how home enables or constrains the process of adjustment to retrenchment it is necessary to acknowledge that (a) adjustment may start well before the formal announcements, (b) adjustment has cognitive and emotional dimensions, (c) the sense of home may be enabled and or constrained by retrenchment, (d) perceived loss of the latent and or manifest benefits of work may inform reactions to job loss (e) the level of job satisfaction will influence adjustment and (f) the need for a satisfactory home/work balance will influence job

search activity and job satisfaction. The conceptual framework assumes that plant closures and redundancies are socially produced, politically and legally regulated and that research should identify structure, agency and contingency in understanding empirical events. This applies to determining how retrenched workers understand, negotiate and deal with individualisation (Tulloch and Lupton 2003:11) in the context of a risk society framework To fully capture the process of adjustment it is argued that the temporal dimension of adjustment should be divided into three periods – the time since rumours about retrenchment were first announced, the time following announcements and the time from when a new job was taken up

AWARE OF RUMOURS OF RETRENCHMENT	FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENTS	A NEW JOB, PSYCHOLOGICALLY HEALTHY AND PLANNING FOR A MEANINGFUL FUTURE
Managing the risks of staying with the company or leaving or waiting for retrenchment package offers	People leave involuntarily or voluntarily	
	How do they feel about leaving?	Level of Job security
	Size of retrenchment package determined	
Any previous experience of retrenchment?	Job search activity informed by if and when a new job is necessary	
The trajectory of the sense of home interrupted?	How to use retrenchment package in relation to mortgage and or existing home?	Trajectory of sense of home enabled or constrained?

Figure 3.7: Maintaining the Sense of Home and Adjusting to Retrenchment over Time – an Experiential Model

To assess how home mediates adjustment to retrenchment data was collected and analysed regarding the following questions:

- do workers act on rumours of retrenchment and if so how?
- which is more significant - loss of the latent or loss of the manifest benefits of work?
- does the meaning of home change over the course of adjustment
- how does home/work balance influence adjustment
- does home act as a source of ontological security

In order to provide answers to these questions the following questions, amongst others arise:

- How closely linked are home and work
- How is home narrated in the course of adjustment to retrenchment
- what proportion of people relocate during adjustment
- how does housing tenure influence employment status
- do workers use some or all of the proceeds of retrenchment on housing and if so why

The friction between how workers adjust to retrenchment over time and maintain a strong sense of home can generate constraining and enabling scenarios. As outlined in Figure 3.7, the model asserts that individuals may start adjusting to the idea of retrenchment as soon as rumours start circulating and this can happen years in advance of the actual announcements. Consequently, workers may take actions through or in support of home and in relation to job search that assists them to feel more secure. One of the first steps, which may not be so explicit, is that individuals and households start to calculate whether it would be better to find another job immediately rumours of retrenchment commence or wait until retrenchment announcements are made formally and there is clarity around whether a package will be offered or will be mandatory and the size of the package. Part of that calculation may be the existing benefits and weaknesses of the current home/work coordination or linkage, the latent and manifest benefits of working at the company and any discrepancy or tension between the experienced and imagined home as conditioned by place and the stage in the life course. Assessment of the importance of the home and of home ownership may also be brought into the foreground as workers become more aware of the cultural, commodity and biographical meanings of home. On notification of involuntary or voluntary retrenchment, workers leave or prepare to leave a workplace where their daily routine has been enacted for, in some cases, up to 35 years. Job search continues for most workers at this stage and may do so for many months; others seek retirement or other forms of non labour market activity. If the retrenchment announcement and subsequent adjustment is

experienced as stressful psychological health may be impacted, which in turn may impact on the ability to undertake effective job search strategies. The need for job search effort will be influenced by the size of the retrenchment package and the uses to which the retrenchment package may be put which may include reducing or paying down the mortgage. Workers make sense of their experience and actions through narrative. The labour market and non-labour outcomes of retrenchment are assessed subjectively and objectively. The meaning of home may change and a home may be experienced differently under a different labour market status and or with a new employer.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The focus of this thesis is the interaction between the processes of adjustment to retrenchment and the processes of maintaining a sense of home over the life course. It seeks to contribute to the testing and development of theory. This chapter describes the longitudinal, mixed methods research methodology adopted for the thesis. It is argued that the adoption of a mixed methods approach allows the greatest possible leeway in utilising and working across the various disciplinary perspectives that are relevant to the research topic. The call for a multidisciplinary approach to be adopted within studies on involuntary job loss was first made by Leana and Ivancevich (1987) in their benchmark theoretical and methodological contribution to the field in the US. They argued that the key conceptual issue for job loss research was 'the commitment and meaning that individuals attach to work' (Leana and Ivancevich 1987:308) independent of whether the research was on voluntary or involuntary retrenchment.

The research design also acknowledges the call by Clapham (2005) for housing researchers to put the subjective experience of individuals at the centre of analysis regarding housing decision making but without abandoning 'objective' perspectives on housing facts. Such an approach acknowledges the need to give full weight to individual agency in housing consumption analysis, which is consistent with the desire to obtain the right balance between agency and structure in conceptualisation of adjustment to retrenchment, considering that much of the literature positions workers as victims. The work on subjectivity and the labour process by Ezzy (1997) and on fate and agency in narratives of unemployment by the same author (Ezzy 2000) goes some way to remedying this situation.

In Section 4.1, the strengths and weaknesses of alternative research approaches to the thesis questions are considered. Section 4.2 discusses the

relevance of a mixed methods approach is outlined. Section 4.3 describes the research design. Section 4.4 outlines the data analysis to be employed.

4.1 Constructing the research approach

The overarching research question is 'How does home mediate the process of adjustment to retrenchment?. The thesis seeks to identify mechanisms which constrain, and or enable the process, directly or indirectly. In particular the thesis asks

•   do workers act on rumours of retrenchment and if so how?

•   which is more significant - loss of the latent or loss of the manifest benefits of work?

•   does the meaning of home change over the course of adjustment

•   how does home/work balance influence adjustment

•   does home act as a source of ontological security

Research strategies to consider these questions include surveys of the general population to identify individuals who are retrenched and their attitudes and actions regarding housing and the meaning of home; comparison between a group of retrenched individuals and a stratified sample of the general population regarding attitudes to housing and the meaning of home; and comparison between two different groups of retrenched workers at different points in time in order compare attitudes to housing and the meaning of home.

The disadvantages of plant closure studies for addressing these kinds of questions is that they assume that all labour processes are the same independent of industry and occupation. It would be more cautious therefore to draw on a sample of retrenched workers from across an entire region or neighbourhood in order to determine linkages with home. The advantage of research on the automotive industry however is that the industry is at the leading edge of changes in manufacturing as framed through globalisation and flexible production systems – badged as lean production - and so auto industry workers could be considered to be emblematic 'risk regime of work' employees. Consequently what holds for them is likely to hold true for all

workers as economic restructuring continues. Nevertheless most auto industry workers are male and consequently the industry is not reflective of the general labour force from a gender perspective. It is also has a wage structure that is higher than for equivalent trades and or skills in other industries consequently so is not representative of the labour force in general which may have implications for the profile of housing tenures applying to retrenched auto industry workers compared to their non auto industry colleagues.

4.1 The Mixed Methods Approach

A mixed methods approach is best suited to understanding the interaction between the process of adjustment and of maintaining the sense of home. The mixed methods approach adopted in this thesis follows the guidelines outlined by Creswell (2003), particularly with respect to a concurrent nested strategy privileging qualitative data (Creswell 2003). Mixed methods approaches collect and analyse both quantitative and qualitative data in the one study and can be used to confirm findings from different data sources and/or expand an understanding from one method to another. Mixed methods approaches in retrenchment studies integrate aggregate level data on labour market outcomes with data on the experience and impacts of retrenchment as narrated by individuals (Westergaard, Noble & Walker 1988; Milkman 1997; Carroll et al. 2000; Weller & Webber 2004; Weller 2007). Mixed methods approaches have been employed to integrate data on meanings and psycho-social benefits of home with aggregate housing status data to better understand the role of the home and housing decisions in the contemporary era (Clapham 2005; Beer & Faulkner 2009).

The adoption of a concurrent nested strategy is consistent with the use of the experiential framework for guiding research on adjustment to retrenchment. The privileging of qualitative data reflects the desire to emulate the strong research findings on mechanisms of adjustment to unemployment and/or retrenchment achieved by researchers within the psychology discipline

(Jahoda 1982; Pernice 1996; Willott & Griffin 2004; Hammarstrom & Janlert 2005; Ranzijn et al. 2006; Hoare 2007; Fowler & Etchegary 2008) sociology (Ezzy 2000, 2001; Strangleman 2001; Parry 2003; Gardiner et al. 2009; Garrett-Peters 2009) and management studies (Clarke 2007). The adoption of qualitative and inductive approaches are in part a response to the criticism that most theories of the psychological impacts of unemployment are found to deal inadequately with the temporal aspects of unemployment and the relationship between subjective experience and objective location (Ezzy 1993:41). As Pernice (1996, p 339) argued:

> Qualitative research is committed to understanding the unique experiences of the individual from his/her perspective of the social world by seeking to develop shared meanings.

Qualitative research methods were used by Sixsmith and Sixsmith (1991) within a mixed methods approach to explore the experience and meaning of home during unemployment and in particular to explore a structure of meaning within the experience of home. Their study used three main approaches to data collection: yesterday diaries of activities, a sorting task on the different places within people's geographical life world and semi-structured interviews on the meaning of home. Data analysis involved content analysis and the construction of case studies, which provided a holistic perspective on individuals' home experience. Similarly, the use of both quantitative and qualitative data in studies on the relationship between housing and labour markets was useful for identifying local factors that determined how and why people moved house in relation to work (Forrest & Murie 1991). By rejecting the use of research methodologies in relation to housing, which presumed a simple link between housing market position and occupational status, the researchers analysed data on housing histories— essentially a qualitative methodology—which allowed the individual research subjects 'to express their views and experiences in their own terms' and for the researchers to uncover links between housing histories and career mobility that might otherwise not have been so pronounced. The adoption of a mixed methods approach is implicit in the work of Gurney and Means (1993) on the

hierarchy of meanings of home using an experiential framework. For each level of meaning, they proposed specific research strategies:

- cultural: home as the subject of political rhetoric, ideologies and popular images; appropriate research tools include discourse/etymological analysis and self completion surveys
- intermediate: home is produced and consumed as a commodity; appropriate research tools include social surveys with closed and open-ended questions and construction of housing histories
- personal: home in the formation of personal biographies; appropriate tools include respondent led, in-depth interviews.

The adoption of a strong qualitative approach within a mixed methods design also reflects the call by Webber and Campbell (1997), working within labour market studies, for researchers to recognise the role of local labour markets in mediating the degree to which variables such as age and ethnicity influence likelihood of re-employment following retrenchment. It therefore becomes even more important to learn about the subjective experience of job loss and the interaction between prospective employers and job hunters, an endeavour well suited to a qualitative approach. In adopting a mixed methods approach and within it a privileging of qualitative data and analysis, there was a strong desire to be open to the possibility that data on the experience of job loss and on the strengths and weaknesses of a new job might reveal insights not resonant with existing theory:

> Qualitative methods explicitly identify a person's understanding of the situation as something to be discovered rather than assumed (Ezzy 2002, p 45).

Given that the research design includes a longitudinal dimension and this is first time that a study on the links between retrenchment adjustment processes and the home has used this approach, the methodology deliberately sought to keep open opportunities for the temporal dimension of adjustment to be expressed in ways that might not be easily explained or indicated through existing theory. An openness to novel findings is also assisted by a

multidisciplinary design within the framework of the relationship between agency and structure.

For practical reasons, individual workers were selected as the unit of analysis for the research; however, a number of researchers have stressed the role of the household in mediating employment decisions of the individual members (Clark 1987; Douglas 1991; Randolph 1991; Jarvis 1999; Dockery 2004) Clapham (2005) has also argued the household should be the unit of analysis for understanding housing decisions and housing pathways. To address this potential deficiency some household level data was included in the analysis particularly in Chapter 9 Adjustment Journeys and the Sense of Home – the role of Household dynamics.

4.2 Research Design

Data was analysed from a sample of voluntary and involuntary retrenched workers (N=372) following a restructure and plant closure within an auto industry company (MMAL) in metropolitan Adelaide, in 2004. The data for the thesis was drawn from data collected through a large research study by Beer et al. (2006) in which this researcher participated by conducting in-depth interviews. This research project for the larger study was designed to answer questions such as:

- What effect does involuntary retrenchment have on the mental and physical health of workers and their children?
- How are housing careers affected by involuntary retrenchment?
- How does the use and perception of housing change with the changed work circumstances, is home ownership a burden, a support or something else?
- Of retrenched workers who do find new jobs, what proportions find full-time employment and what proportion find themselves in precarious employment?

- What percentage of retrenched workers sees their changed employment status as a chance to retrain and enter a new vocation or career?

The design of the research instruments for the larger study was informed by the literature on plant closure case studies and questionnaires used by the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) panel surveys. Data for the larger study was collected on social capital and health, housing, labour market and community/social support phenomena. The data collected through these instruments was then collated and analysed through the theoretical lenses considered appropriate for the thesis. Most of the time this translation was unproblematic however as in the case of data in support of the construct of *preserving a satisfactory self image* the variables able to be utilized provided only a partial window on this phenomenon

The research design comprised three surveys of retrenched workers approximately a year apart (initially N=372), two semi-structured interviews approximately one year apart with a randomly drawn sub-sample (initially N=38) of the workers who participated in the surveys; and a control group of South Australian residents (initially N=250) however this data has not been used for the thesis as it was not a panel study. In addition to quantitative data, the time series survey schedules also encouraged respondents to elaborate on certain questions with qualitative information—this was not done for the control group. The mixed methods design allowed identification of the meanings and feelings of people as they adjusted to leaving MMAL. Of the 38 workers who agreed to in-depth interviews, 12 were still working at Mitsubishi at the time of the interview and of the 26 who had left MMAL, 11 were employed, four people had retired, four were unemployed and looking for work, four were not working due to a disability and three were self-employed. Six out of the 38 participants were women.

The quantitative and qualitative data collected during the larger study included existing changes to housing status, housing decisions throughout the period, regional/place attachment, relocation, changes in tenure, housing

affordability assistance, meanings attached to home, use of retrenchment packages for increasing equity in the home and other housing and wealth creation purposes, attitudes to home ownership and home over time and to a limited extent how the home was experienced during retrenchment (see Appendix 2 for the full list of housing, home and place attachment questions used in the thesis and Appendix 3 for the thesis conceptualisation of the variables used in the surveys). The data allowed triangulation of what job loss meant and what the home meant.

The residential location of the sample of retrenched workers in relation to the worksites is displayed in Figure 4.1.
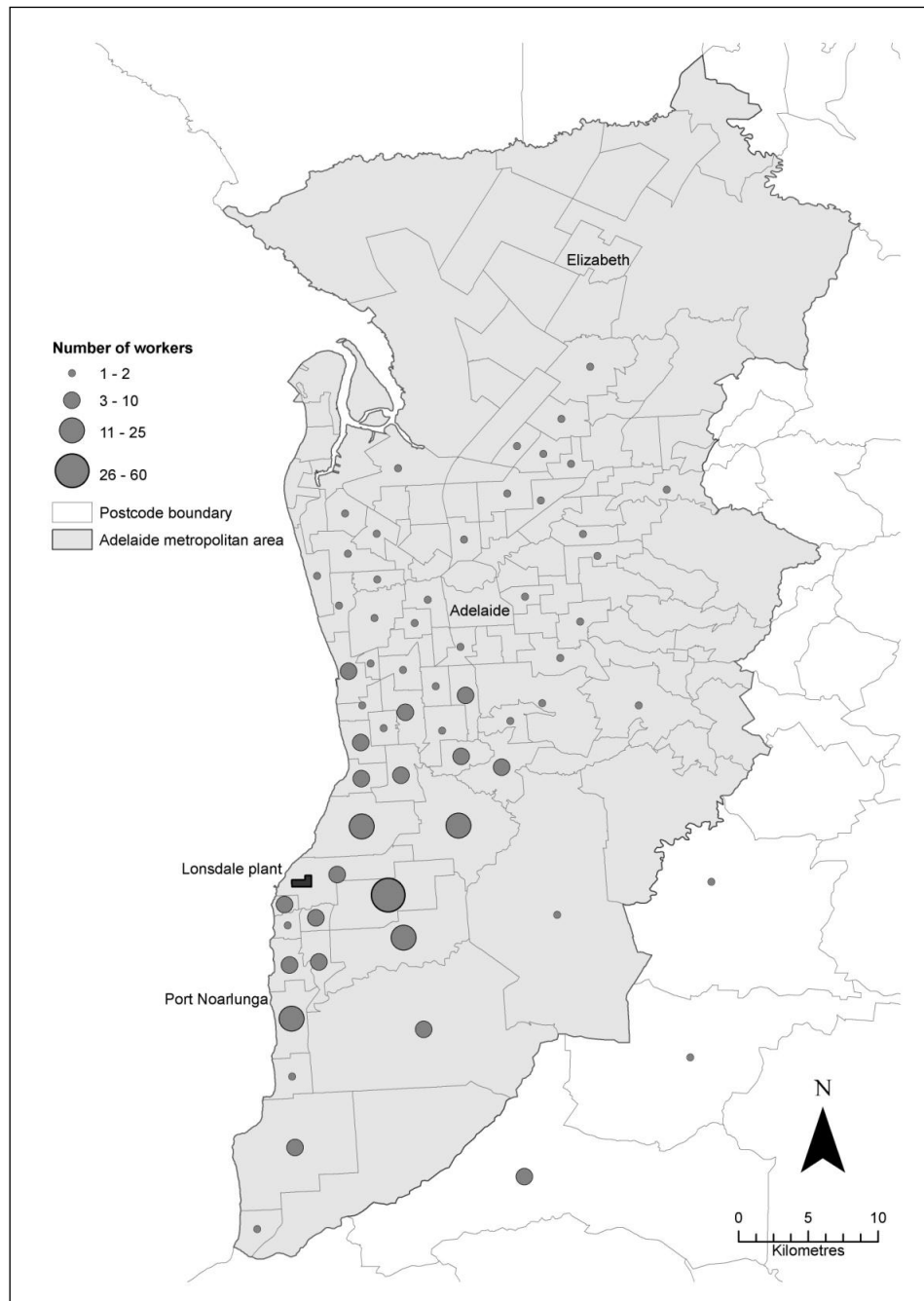
Figure 4.1: Residence of Workers at Wave 1 by Postcode

Source: Beer et al. (2006:63)

Unsurprisingly, MMAL workers were mostly concentrated around the Lonsdale plant and in the southern parts of the Adelaide metropolitan area. The main suburbs where workers lived, such as Morphett Vale, were noted for their environmental amenity despite proximity to industrial areas (see Figures 4.2 and 4.3). This included master planning that exploited natural

bushland, housing designs sympathetic to the variety in topography and overall proximity to beaches. These suburbs were developed in the 1960s and 1970s and the housing styles reflect the prevailing marketing strategies discussed by Dovey (1999, p 140) in his analysis of advertising discourses for display houses and communities in Australia and argues that the house reflects and reproduces the social world of gender, age and class relations:

> The ideal home is a place of safety in a world of danger, a place where certain taken for granted order prevails within a context of chaotic differences. In its architectural manifestations the experience of home constructs an inside/outside dialectic; a private spatial enclosure is protected from the public gaze. And the house as a spatial base inevitably mediates, constructs and reflects one's social identity in a community.

Figure 4.2: Residential Development in the Suburb of Morphett Vale South Australia

Figure 4.3: Residential Development in the Suburb of Morphett Vale Adjacent to Commercial Precinct

Attrition across the three waves of interviews was significant. Over the course of the research, 71 participants withdrew from the study. On the assumption that those who leave a study are likely to be less successful than those who continue, it is possible that the employment patterns are influenced by the attrition factor.

Table 4.1: Numbers of Participants in Each Wave

Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3
N= 372	N= 316	N= 300

4.3 Data Analysis

Plant closure often results in the retrenchment of many people and patterns emerge regarding adjustment decisions and strategies when the research perspective is on aggregate data capturing employment status and other variables. Frequency tables and simple cross tabulations are used in Chapter 5 to capture the significance of theoretically important variables on employment status over time. Central to understanding the role of home in the process of adjustment to retrenchment is the ability to capture the longitudinal dimension. Content and thematic analysis of narratives of retrenchment are the key tools applied to narratives of retrenchment in Chapters 6-8 in order to

highlight the key trends that transcend the domains of home and work as retrenchment looms, arrives and is integrated over a three year period. Content and thematic analysis of qualitative data was based on the framework developed by Ezzy (2002). The approach to counting of codes followed Morgan (1993).

Case study methodology (Yin 1991) is followed in Chapter 9 to theorise how the sense of home is interrupted, positively or negatively, by retrenchment within the context of household dynamics. The construction of case studies followed Winstanley, Thorns and Perkins (2002:820), who argue that the complexity and dynamic nature of residential decisions can be illuminated by analysis of the 'ontological narrative' used by respondents to make sense of 'moving house and creating home'. Analysis of biographical material in the data allows links to life course residential mobility, work, career and relationships to be highlighted 'in order to understand the nature and complexity of individuals' and families' residential histories, present experiences and future aspirations' (Winstanley, Thorns & Perkins 2002, p 820). Five cases were explored in depth: a male who has previously experienced retrenchment; a women who had an ethnic background and had taken up caring for her ageing relative; a male living alone and renting in the private sector; a male who experienced marital separation following retrenchment and now lives in a refurbished shed on his rural property but is closely connected to his children who also live on the property; and a male homeowner looking for work. In each case, the analysis focused on how the retrenchment decision was assessed, made sense of and responded to, how it influenced the ability of the individual to maintain a sense of home including home/work integration and how, in turn, maintaining a sense of home influenced retrenchment decisions, in the context of household dynamics. Data for the construction of these cases was extracted from a survey and in-depth interviews collected at five different points in time over a three-year period. Pseudonyms have been used in referring to participants by name. Analysis across the cases focused on the meaning of home and correspondence between the empirical data on trends and patterns of adjustment and relevant theory as discussed in the literature. The selection of

the constructed case studies was based on the desire to analyse retrenchment situations that were known to include one or more factors suggested in the literature to be important in terms of theorising retrenchment and/or the meaning of home: whether the retrenchment was voluntary or involuntary (Clarke 2007), subjects' gender, housing tenure and neighbourhood amenity (Kearns et al. 2000), previous experience with retrenchment (Kinicki & Latack 1990), post-redundancy employment situation (Waters 2000) and place/distance from the workplace (Hanson & Pratt 1988).

4.4 Conclusion

This Chapter has outlined the mixed methods and longitudinal design required to capture the interaction between processes of adjustment to retrenchment and processes for maintaining a strong sense of home. It has outlined an approach to data analysis that will identify the processes of adjustment to retrenchment in general terms in order to identify how home at the aggregate level and in the narratives of individuals enables and constrains adjustment.

Chapter 5: Retrenchent - One door shuts and another opens?

Webber and Campbell (2007) argued that a labour market is a two sided process in which workers select jobs and employers select workers. The expression of supply side variables such as age and gender is mediated by exchange dynamics that fuel labour markets. The skill structure, mix of businesses, recruitment strategies of employers and government policy are what determines how standard variables influence post retrenchment outcomes. Furthermore employment histories are a better indicator of labour market outcomes than employment status at a single point in time.

Consequently this section provides labour market and employment information about the participants at the commencement of the study and longitudinal data on selected variables argued in the literature to be potentially significant for understanding the retrenchment experience – gender, retrenchment status, previous experience of retrenchment, housing tenure and the journey to work.

5.1 Retrenchment – ready or not

The timing of the commencement of the research allowed for data to be collected from workers who knew they were being retrenched but who were still working at MMAL (N=92) and from people who had already left (N=280). Of the 280 who had already left MMAL, 47 per cent had left voluntarily and 53 per cent had left involuntarily. It is estimated that of the entire study group (N=372), approximately 60 per cent had left involuntarily.

Nearly 78 per cent of workers in the sample were in the lower skilled professions; however, many would have achieved industry-based certificates of competence.

Table 5.1: Occupation at Mitsubishi (Wave 1 Data)

Occupation at Mitsubishi		
	Frequency	**Percentage**
Lower skilled	289	77.9
Professionals	82	22.1
Total	**371**	**100**

Consistent with the relatively high salaries offered in the automotive industry at the time, over 75 per cent of workers had been employed by MMAL for more than 11 years, including the 70 people who had worked for between 16 and 20 years. Long tenures may also be recognition of benefits such as employee discounts on vehicles. On average, MMAL workers earned higher salaries than similarly qualified workers in Adelaide; however, this has to be seen in the context of penalty rates for various work processes, which can cause stress and fatigue such as shift work, working in 'dirty' conditions and working at heights.

Consistent with the work tenure patterns as indicated by the data, the MMAL workforce was comparatively old. Only 15 people in the sample were less than 30 years of age and 59 people were at retirement age at the time of the retrenchments.

Table 5.2: Age of Employees as at 2006

Age in categories as at 2006		
	Frequency	**Percentage**
Less than 30 years of age	15	4.1
30 to 39 years of age	80	22.1
40 to 49 years of age	100	27.6
50 to 59 years of age	107	29.6
60 to 69 years of age	59	16.3
70 or more years of age	1	0.3
Total	**362**	**100**

5.2 Labour and non labour market outcomes over three years

This section provides an overview of the labour market *outcomes* of the sample of retrenched workers over the period of the three surveys, drawing on the quantitative data. It provides a context for the interpretation of the qualitative data on the *processes* of adjustment particularly the subjective experience and meanings attached to retrenchment and home... The overview is structured around two important dimensions of adjustment to unemployment: the diversity in outcomes following retrenchment and the impact of job search effort over time. The scope of the diversity in outcomes includes full-, part-time or casual employment, retirement, training, self-employment, household duties and accessing a disability pension. The role of job search effort is illustrated by transition data that demonstrates the extent to which people move into and out of employment in between pre-determined survey points. This analysis demonstrates how aggregate outcomes at a point in time can obscure the real nature of the labour market for workers (Webber & Campbell 1997). Within these two dimensions, the generally descriptive analysis for this section is deepened by an assessment of the impact of five factors considered in the literature to be particularly important for understanding labour market outcomes following retrenchment. The first factor is gender and the focus of the analysis is on explicating the labour

market pathways of men and women in an industry where less than 10 per cent of employees are female. The second factor is the nature of the retrenchment in terms of its nominal status as either voluntary or involuntary. The third factor is the previous experience of retrenchment, which, in addition to its unresolved status in the literature as an independent variable with some explanatory or predictive power, demands consideration within the present study as nearly 25 per cent of the participants still in the study at Wave 3 had previously been retrenched. The fourth factor is housing tenure status and the fifth factor is the journey to work.

5.2.1 Labour Market Outcomes

For ease of comparison, the labour market status data is presented in two formats. Table 5.3 shows frequency data and Figure 5.1 shows percentages. In order to determine aggregate labour market status at Wave 1 (approximately four months after retrenchments were announced) data from 81 participants who were nominally being retrenched but who were still working at MMAL was excluded. Consequently, the net number of participants included in the study at Wave 2 was higher than at Wave 1, notwithstanding sample attrition of 55 participants. By Wave 2, all study participants had left MMAL. A further 14 participants had withdrawn from the study by Wave 3. All MMAL workers were working full time prior to retrenchment and hence the data suggests that the most significant short- and longer term labour market impacts of the retrenchment decision for workers in the sample (whether voluntary or involuntary retrenchment) were high unemployment and a shift from full-time to casual employment status. The percentage of workers categorised as unemployed reduced by nearly 40 per cent between Waves 1 and 2; however, those in the category of casual employment more than doubled in the same period. The number of persons who classified themselves as retired grew in absolute numbers and as a proportion of all categories over the three-year period. Options following retrenchment also included working without pay for a family member, going on to the disability pension, being a carer, being a full-time student and taking up household duties.

Table 5.3: Aggregate Employment Status at Waves 1, 2 and 3

Employment Status

	Wave		
	1	**2**	**3**
Self-employed	31	38	34
Employed full time	89	107	113
Employed part time	28	10	17
Employed as a casual	25	61	58
Working without pay	0	2	1
Unemployed: looking for work	65	42	16
Retired	20	29	35
Full-time student	5	6	4
Household duties	9	4	5
Not working because of disability	16	13	15
Carer's duties	0	2	2
Total	**288**	**314**	**300**

By Wave 3, 72 participants had dropped out of the study and on the assumption that participants who are not coping well are likely to comprise the majority of an attrition group, then the lower unemployment levels may be due to attrition.
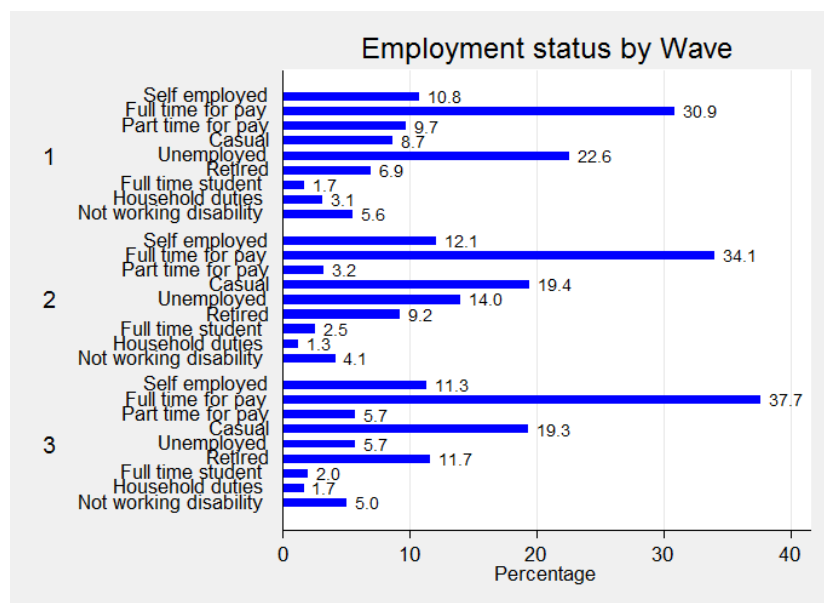
Figure 5.1: Employment Status by Wave

Time series data on labour market status following retrenchment can convey the impression that there is a linear progression from unemployment to some form of employment over time. Transition tables allow for a closer examination of pathways by using the data to identify changes in labour market status for each individual and reporting changes between waves of data. Figure 5.2 shows the transitions between employment statuses at Wave 1 and Wave 2. It shows that of 56 people who were unemployed at Wave 1, 25 per cent were employed full time at Wave 2, approximately 28 per cent were still unemployed at Wave 2 and just fewer than 27 per cent had moved into casual work
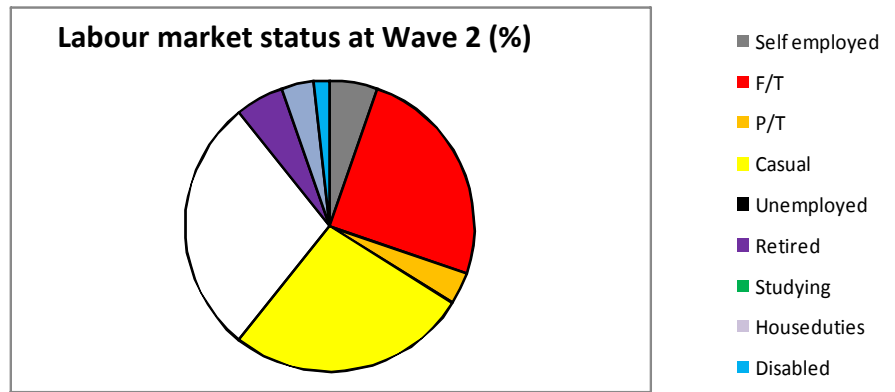
Note: N=56, White Equals No Change

Figure 5.2: Labour Market Status at Wave 2 for those Unemployed at Wave 1

5.3. Impact of Gender, Nature of Retrenchment, Previous Experience of Retrenchment, Housing Status and Journey to Work on labour market outcomes

As discussed in the literature, the labour market outcomes for women experiencing retrenchment are relatively poor compared to the situation for men in the same industry. As shown in Figure 5.3, while just under 36 per cent of male retrenched workers were working full time, only 19.3 per cent of women were working full time at Wave 1. Male and female unemployment

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rates were very similar at Wave 1; however, the gendered nature of household duties is apparent with over 10 times as many women working at household duties compared to men. Women were three times more likely to be working part time and women were much less likely to have retired.
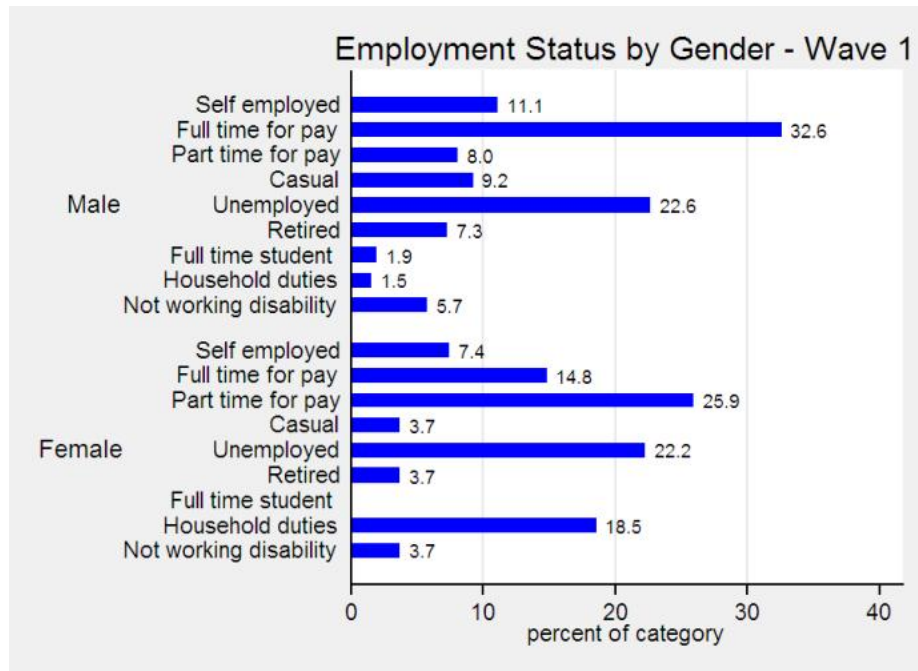
Figure 5.3: Employment Status by Gender at Wave 1

As shown in Figure 5.4, by Wave 3, the difference between men and women regarding employment status was still large. Men had a higher probability of being employed full time, being self-employed and studying full time. Men were also more likely to be unemployed. Women were over four times more likely than men to be working part time and were more likely than men to be working in casual employment. Women were still 10 times more likely to be involved in household duties. Retirement and unemployment rates for men and women were similar by Wave 3.
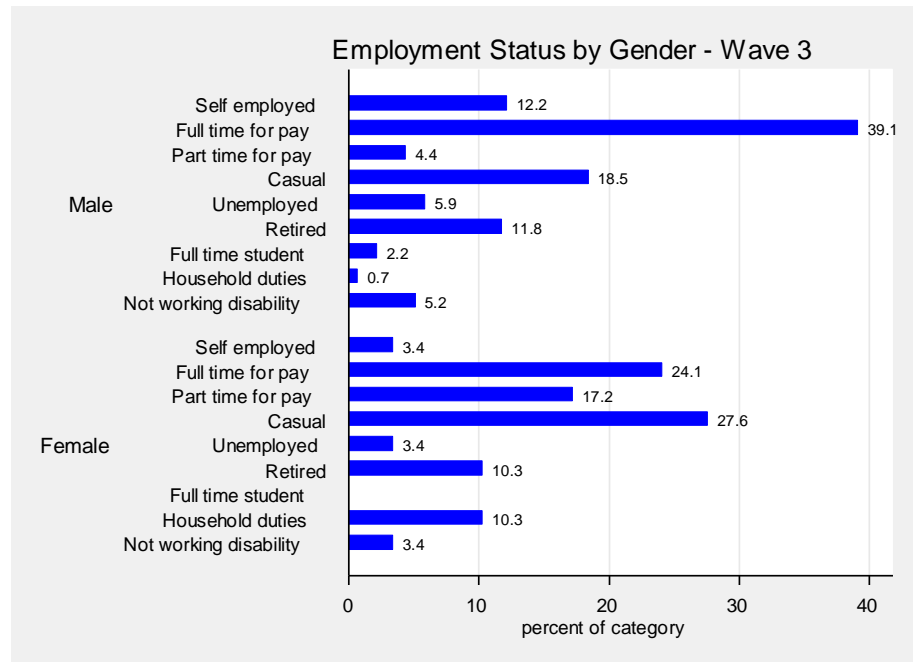
Figure 5.4: Employment Status by Gender at Wave 3

At Wave 1, participants were asked if they were actively seeking employment. As Figure 5.5 shows, women had a significantly shorter mean tenure within MMAL compared to men and they were less likely to be looking for work compared to men, reflecting the gendered nature of the division of labour within the households.

..
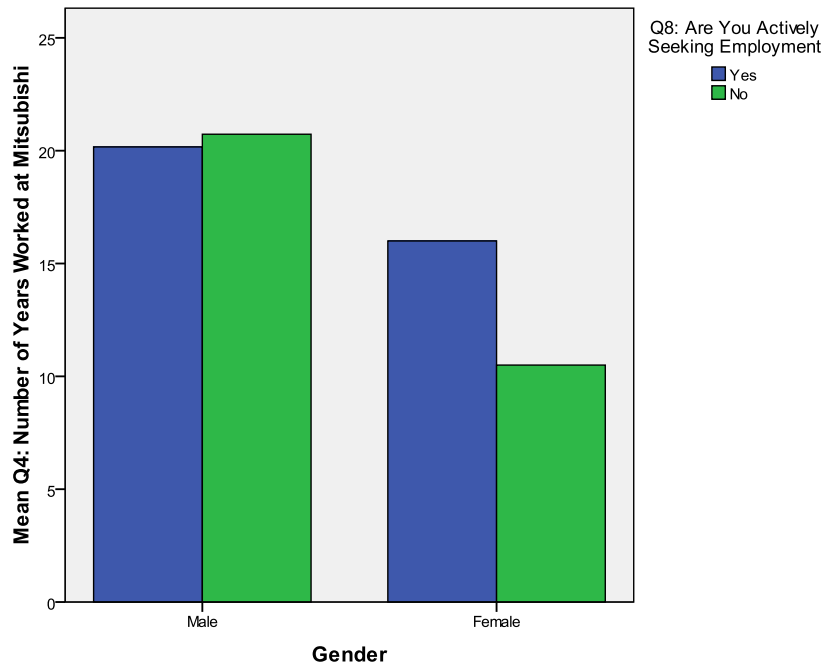
Figure 5.5: Responses to the Question 'Are You Actively Seeking Employment?' (Wave 1) by Number of Years Worked at MMAL and Gender

A test of the economic impact of retrenchment on the household is the need for another household member to take up additional work. At Wave 3, participants were asked whether anyone in their households had found it necessary to seek employment as a result of the participant being retrenched. As shown Figure 5.6, the women in the sample experienced longer durations of unemployment compared to men at Wave 3 and it was twice as likely for the household that comprised a retrenched female to need another family member to take up additional work. This reflects the lower level of income associated with less full-time employment and higher levels of part-time employment for females compared to men.
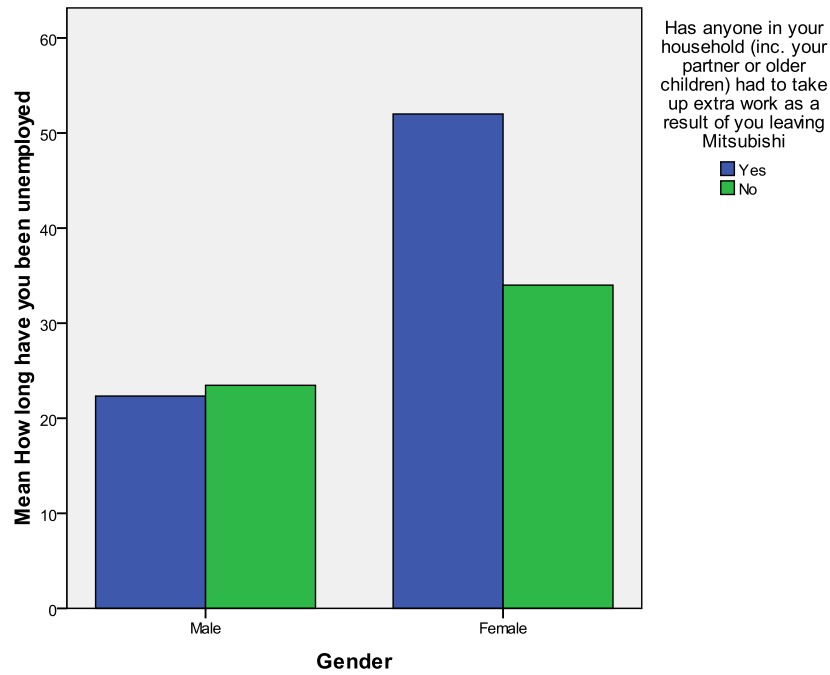
Figure 5.6: The Need for Another Person in the Household to Take Extra Work, by Length of Unemployment in Weeks (Wave 3)

Having the option to leave voluntarily secures greater time to plan re-employment strategies and may provide a higher sense of personal control over the situation, which in turn can lead to less stress and better decision making. As shown in Figure 5.7, workers who left voluntarily were much less likely to be unemployed; however, their interest and success in obtaining full-time work compared to those who left involuntarily was approximately the same. Workers who left voluntarily were nearly twice as likely to have stopped work due to disability and were nearly four times more likely to have retired.
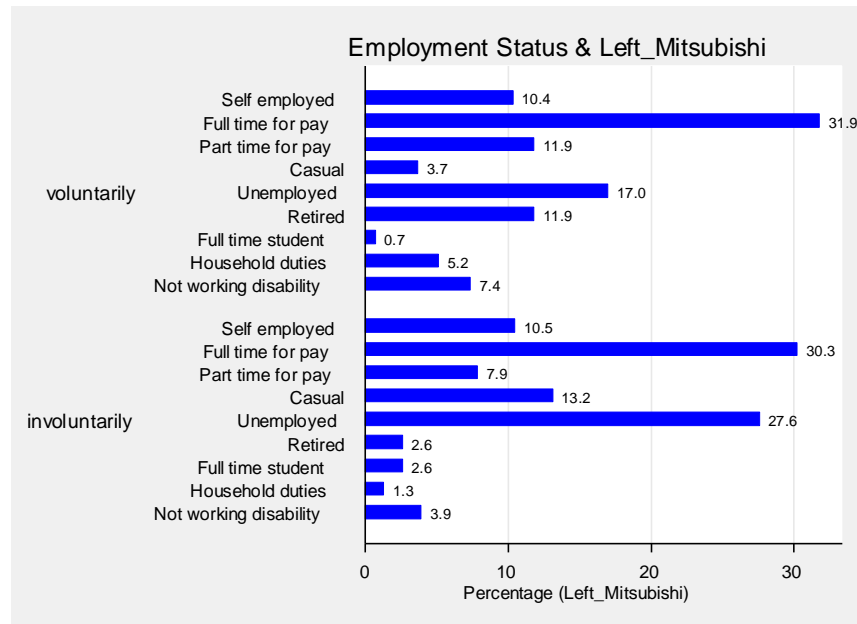
Figure 5.7: Wave 1 Employment Status and Whether Retrenchment Was Voluntary or Involuntary

As shown in Figure 5.8 at Wave 3, the effect of the nominal choice about leaving voluntarily on unemployment had largely diminished; however, leaving involuntarily was associated with higher rates of full-time employment. Leaving voluntarily was still associated with higher rates of retirement.

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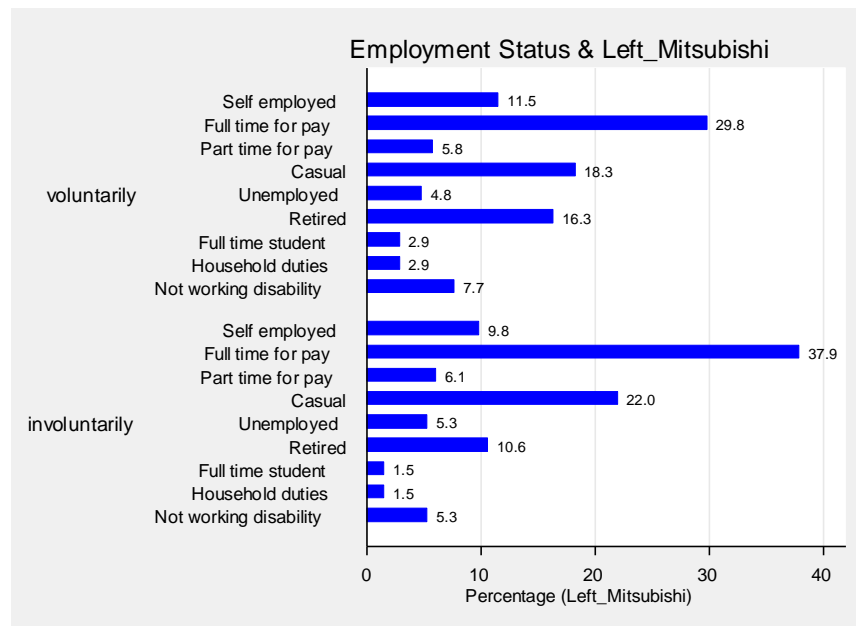
Figure 5.8: Wave 3 Employment Status and Whether Retrenchment was Voluntary

Kinicki and Latack (1990) found limited evidence for a beneficial effect from having previously experienced retrenchment on the ability to deal better with a subsequent episode. At Wave 3, workers were asked whether they had ever been made redundant prior to the current experience. There were 66 workers in this category representing just fewer than 25 per cent of the workers still in the study. This finding is consistent with the high retrenchment ratios for people working in the manufacturing sector although not consistent with the higher employment tenure structure enjoyed by the workers at MMAL, suggesting that these workers were more likely to have had shorter tenure experience at MMAL. As shown in Figure 5.9, the labour market outcomes for workers who had previously experienced retrenchment were similar to those who had not previously been retrenched. However, there were some differences. Previous experience of retrenchment was associated with less self-employment, a much higher rate of casual employment and slightly less unemployment. The lower self-employment figure for those previously retrenched may be an effect of one or more of the following: personal negative experience of the self-employment option by those workers in the previous retrenchment experience, vicarious experience of negative outcomes

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of self-employment by retrenched workers in the earlier cohort or generally increased risk aversion as a result of the previous experience of retrenchment.
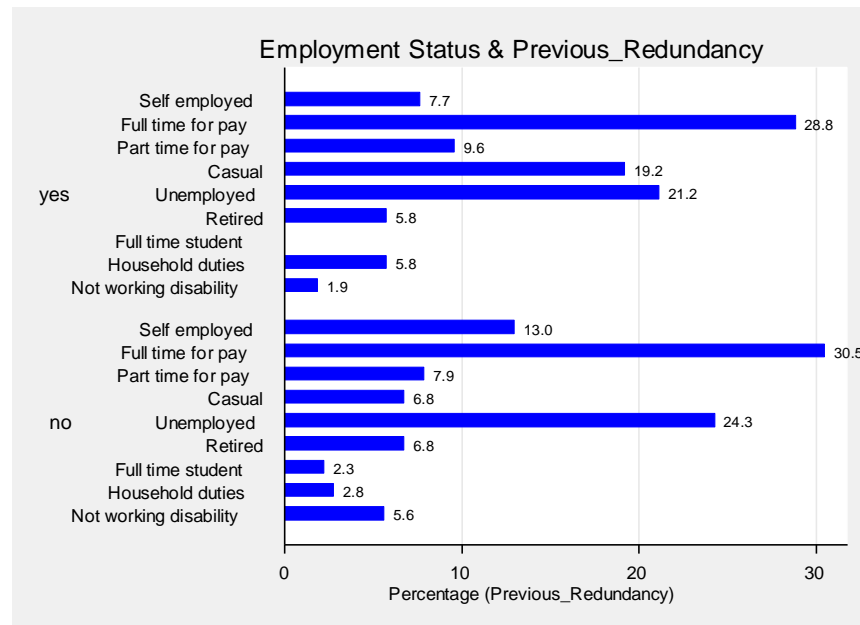
Figure 5.9: Employment Status and Previous Experience of Retrenchment at Wave 1

By Wave 3, the difference regarding percentage of workers in self-employment had remained and those with a previous experience of retrenchment were still less likely to be unemployed (see Figure 5.10).
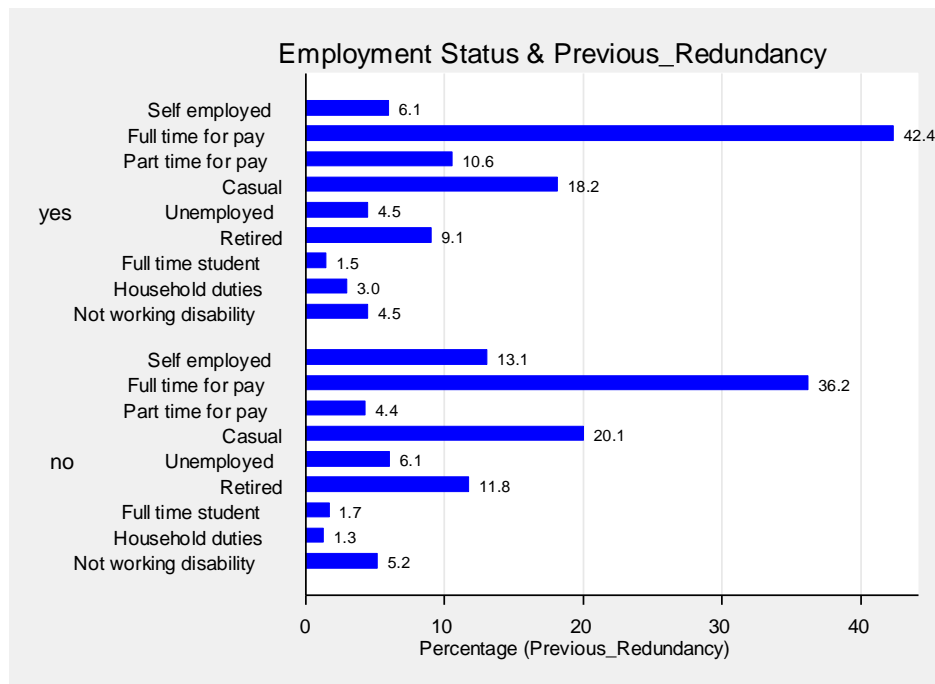
Figure 5.10: Wave 3 Employment Status by Whether the Participants Had Previous Experience of Redundancy

It is argued that the aggregate data on housing tenure (see Table 5.4) over the study period shows the impact of the decision to use the proceeds of retrenchment packages to increase housing equity and or achieve an emotional benefit. Outright homeownership for the study sample increased and the categories of paying of a mortgage and renting privately decreased. For comparison purposes the level of homeownership (outright ownership and owner buyer combined) residents of the Adelaide Statistical Division for 2006 (ABS 2006) which include the study site was 67% and private rental was 20%. The higher degree of homeownership by MMAL study participants compared to the metropolitan housing tenure profile reflects the age structure of the group, influenced as it was by inclusion of older workers with many years of service and consequently large retrenchment packages. Residential mobility was highest between the retrenchments and the time of the first survey with 37 people having moved in that period (12.5%). Twenty nine people were counted as having moved at Wave 2 (9%) and a further 26 people had moved by Wave 3 (9%). At Wave 1 68.5% of participants reported that home was very important and the proportion of people reporting that the importance of home had not changed, as counted at Waves 2 and 3 remained

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constant at 88%. The importance of home was influenced by housing tenure with renters less likely to report that home was important. The exception was female renters who all reported that home was very important. Private renters were less likely to be unemployed than homeowners.

Table 5.4: Housing Tenure across Waves

	Wave		
Tenure	**1**	**2**	**3**
Out right owner	148	142	147
%	40	45.51	49.16
Paying off a mortgage	162	125	115
%	43.78	40.06	38.46
Renting privately	40	32	25
%	10.81	10.26	8.36
Total	**350**	**299**	**287**

Most workers lived within a short commute of either the Lonsdale or Tonsley Park factories. In order to find work following retrenchment, at least 50 per cent of study participants ended up working in a new industry with 30 per cent still working in manufacturing. As shown in Table 5.5 the next largest industry destination was retail (10 per cent). The remainder of the study participants were evenly distributed in finance, construction, transport, public sector and cultural and recreation services. As discussed in Chapter Two, in a large national sample of retrenched workers in 1998, the ABS found that in order to find new work, 30 per cent of workers changed industry. At the very least, it could be said that the retrenched workers at MMAL were able to find work in growing sectors of the economy and it appears that this transition occurred at a level of intensity higher than was the case for workers retrenched across Australia in 1998. Moving from one industry to another may involve adopting new labour processes, commuting patterns and relinquishing aspects of identity and solidarity enjoyed while working at MMAL.

Table 5.5: Industry after Retrenchment

Based on Wave 3 Survey data

Industry	Number	Percentage
Manufacturing	90	30
Retail	31	10
Communication/ Finance/Property	24	8
Construction	22	7.5
Transport/Storage	20	6.2
Public sector admin/ed/health and community/ser	18	6.1
Cultural and recreational	13	4.4
Other (includes 6 people in mining sector)	20	8
Missing data	60	19.8
Total	293	100

Unsurprisingly, given that there were only two factory sites prior to retrenchment, there was a significant shift in the patterns of commuting/journey to work patterns to the new jobs. As shown in Figure 5.11, at Wave 2 the new employment locations were distributed throughout the metropolitan area but with pockets of concentration near the two original factories. However, over 55 per cent of study participants were working outside of the southern metropolitan region and in particular were working in the western and northern suburbs. At the time of the Wave 3 survey, the pattern had not changed significantly; however, there were 18 less employment destinations as mapped by postcodes and an additional nine new employment destinations as mapped by postcodes. This contraction appears to be correlated with the passenger rail infrastructure in the metropolitan area; however, the data is not sufficiently fine grained to draw any definitive conclusions on this matter. What is clear is that in between Waves 2 and 3, many workers changed the location of work even if they may have been

working for the same organisation. This would be consistent with workers employed by labour hire companies or working casually for different organisations. In the Wave 3 survey participants were asked if they were spending more, less or the same amount of time "with your home life". Given that most people in the survey at this point were working the results – 48.5% spent more time, 21.4% spent less time and 30.1% about the same time - presumably reflect, at least in part, different commuting patterns
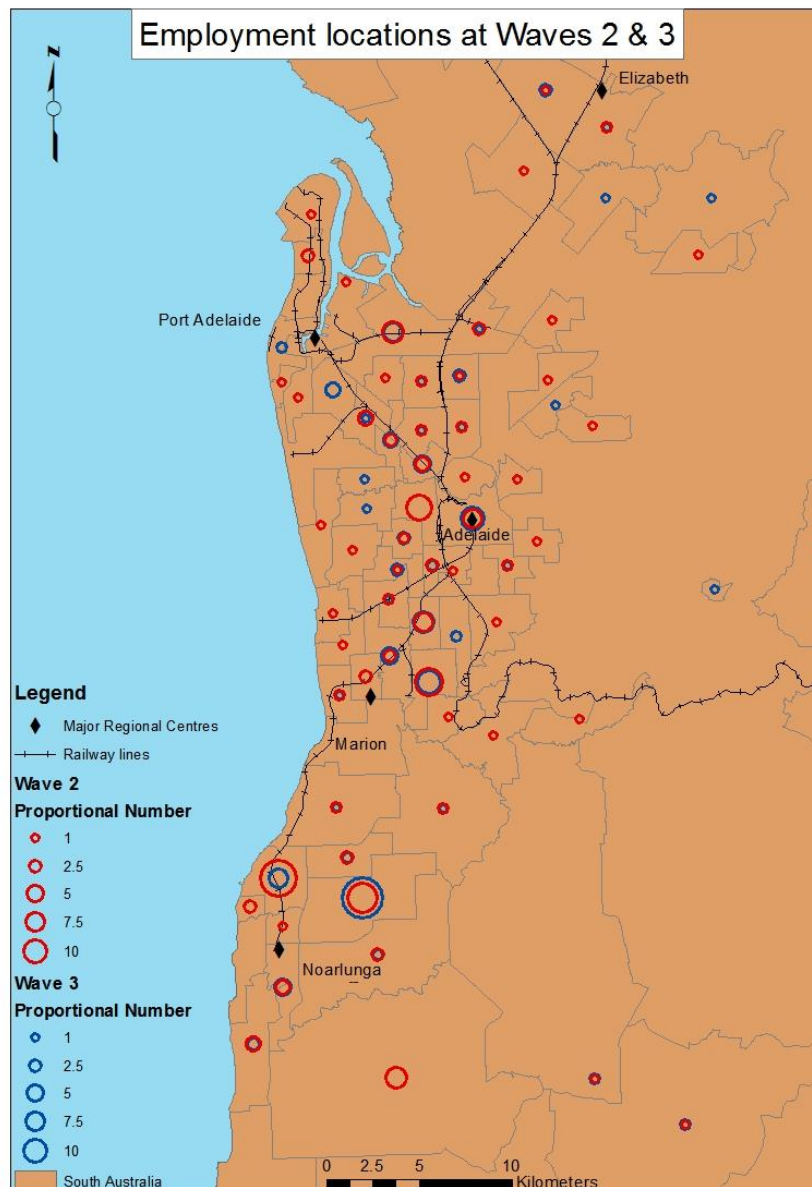
Figure 5.11: Employment Locations at Waves 2 and 3

5.4 Summary

Over the course of three years, the level of unemployment within the study group fell significantly; however, this fall may be partly explained by the attrition within the sample. The most significant shift in employment status was from full-time to casual employment—a shift affecting over 20 per cent of the sample. This is entirely consistent with the national retrenchment data for the period (ABS 2002) and with the general trend to casualization of employment associated with globalisation and flexible accumulation strategies. The finding that over 50% of workers moved into employment in industries outside of manufacturing is actually higher than the level of industry transfer found in the ABS (2002). Furthermore the transition tables show that there is a considerable movement across employment statuses between the annual surveys. All of this demonstrates how in managing the practical exigencies of retrenchment there would have been a considerable exposure to the kinds of issues facing new entrants in to the labour market at that time. Not least of these would have been the change in commuting patterns... Being male, having the nominal option of choosing to leave and to a much lesser extent having previously experienced retrenchment improves labour market outcomes.

Chapter 6: Feeling at Home: The Trajectory of the Sense of Home Prior to Retrenchment

This chapter, largely using content and thematic analysis of qualitative data captured in the initial survey and in-depth interview, identifies patterns in the trajectories of the sense of home for the study participants prior to their formal retrenchments. In particular, it attempts to identify the anchoring and resource dimensions of home that subsequently may emerge or be constructed as enabling and/or constraining mechanisms in the adjustment process. In one sense, the chapter tells the story of housing consumption prior to retrenchment for the study participants drawing on objective and subjective perspectives. The analysis in this chapter is organised under three broad constructs: housing histories, place attachment and the meaning of home.

6.1 Housing Histories

The housing histories pre-employment at MMAL and prior to retrenchment are argued to reflect and be an expression of the sense of home developing over the life course—an established trajectory. This trajectory and the particular form of housing career with which it is associated up to the time of retrenchment may change and/or be the platform for coping with the transition to a post-retrenchment environment (Watkins & Hosier 2005). In the first qualitative interview, participants were asked 'Can you tell us something about the housing you have lived in since you became and adult? Where did you first live and where and when did you move on?' Responses to this question may reveal links between biography, belonging, housing tenure and housing location and of theoretical interest is the extent to which patterns or trajectories in the responses can be identified. The question did not require respondents to put their previous housing history into historical sequence (although this may seem logical) and nor did it ask respondents to reflect on attachment to home and/or place. Responses to the question, by definition,

incorporate the lived experience of residential mobility and the scalar aspects of home (Blunt & Dowling 2006). The question did not ask respondents to connect employment at MMAL with housing moves. Responses were analysed at two levels. The first level of interest was sequential ordering of housing experience. Given that the question asked for a housing history commencing with adulthood, it would be expected that participants would start from that point and proceed to construct a history true to sequence. Any deviation from that form might be indicative of a less conscious interest by the participant in an aspect of their housing history. The focus for the second analysis was the factors associated with residential moves such as work and social or personal relationships, including marital separation.

The respondents consistently adhered to the chronological sequence of events when narrating residential history after leaving the parental home. Typical of this pattern was the following response:

> Let's see, I moved into a unit with a mate, we shared a unit for a while, then we got sick of the unit and we went and rented a house together. Then he moved interstate so I stayed at my sister's place, moved in with my sister for a month and then she went, yeah she went interstate after and got a job interstate, so I rented her house for a couple of years. Then I met the missus and she moved in with us. When the sister decided she was coming back, we were getting married anyway, so we went and rented a house until we found our own to buy and then bought the house and lived in our own house ever since.

This particular example of a housing history is broadly consistent with the *housing career ladder* model of housing consumption/decision making in Australia: cohabitation in early adulthood coinciding with renting and eventual home purchase following marriage. This example also demonstrates the impact of other people's decisions on the participant's earlier residential history. On two occasions, the respondent's house sharing arrangements had to change due to the other person moving interstate for work or other reasons.

There was considerable diversity in how work and/or personal factors influenced residential moves. For one interviewee, a previous experience of retrenchment led to the decision to purchase land and build another house:

> Well we actually only lived around the corner originally. We moved here in '85 and my wife and I, she was my fiancée at the time, we built a house, small three bedroom. We lived in that for 10 years. With the children being born it was a bit small. During that period of time the company I was working for Solar Optical were doing the restructure and after 17 years my employment was finished there so at that particular time we bought the block of land and built this house that we're in now and we've been here 11 years.

Six respondents referred to the impact of separation on their housing decisions. Typical of this phenomenon was the following situation described by one participant:

> Oh when I first got married I lived in a house, a flat down at Seacliff, was livin' there just payin' rent, left there and got a house at Morphett Vale, was renting there, same deal, then I left there and bought a, it was Housing Trust home, yeah, I'd nearly paid it off, divorced, lost it all, thought stuff this, I've got to get a house of me own, so I like, yeah, bought this place and just you know, battled away at payin' it off.

The majority of study participants were in the 35–50 year old age cohort and it was common for people in the market for housing in Australia at that time to project manage and in some cases directly participate in the building of their houses. Seven participants had built one or more houses at some stage since leaving the parental home. The experience of building a house (buying a block of land and contracting with a builder to construct a house according to specifications selected by the purchaser) may be the consequence of or shape a particular meaning of or attachment to home compared to attachment processes associated with buying an existing house.

Five respondents volunteered information about the relationship between work and housing. In one case, the cost of fuel precipitated employment at

MMAL and the relinquishing of a similar but slightly less well remunerated job at another manufacturing sector establishment:

> Ok. When the wife and I were first married we lived in a unit just on Barrian Rd, but then bought a house at Morphettville and the commuting from Morphettville to Gerard's down at Bowden was fine, but after 13 years it was starting … the petrol again was going through the roof at the time which now we'll say is cheap but back then it was certainly a big jump up. That prompted me to actually move to Mitsubishi because of the travelling. Being Lonsdale and being so close it cut down the travelling costs and the actual wages at Mitsubishi were slightly better.

Saving for the house deposit was mentioned by six respondents. Typical of the context was the experience as constructed in the following response:

> In England we saved up more when we were engaged and we put a deposit on a house and then brought a house at that time and then when we moved out here which was about two or three years later and we sold that house and moved out here I sort of did the layout of this house and we got a builder to build this house.

6.2 Attachment to Place

Over 42 per cent of workers had never lived outside of the southern region of Adelaide: defined as living within the boundaries of the Onkaparinga and Marion Council areas. For those people who moved into the southern region from other regions or interstate, the most common reason (25 per cent of all reasons) was work, with over half of the respondents in this category stating that they had come to work for MMAL. Other key reasons for moving into the area were housing affordability, life style, to be close to family and friends, moving from interstate or overseas and previous knowledge of the area as a child.

Table 6.1: Responses to the Question: Have You Ever Lived outside the Southern Region? (Wave 1)

Have You Ever Lived Outside the Southern Region?		
	Frequency	**Percentage**
Yes	212	57.8
No	155	42.2
Total	**367**	**100**

Over 40 per cent of respondents had lived in their current neighbourhoods for 15 years or more and 28 per cent had lived in their current house for the same period of time indicating that participants in this category had moved house, within the area, at least once during this time. This pattern of 'sedentarism' (Morley 2000) is consistent with national residential mobility data for Australia (ABS 2010).

Involuntary or voluntary retrenchment is a labour market 'shock' when people are forced to confront the reasons why they have stayed in the job until this point in time (Mitchell et al. 2001) . Participants in the first in-depth interview were asked to indicate the best and worst aspects of living in the area. Attachment to the region (the majority of participants lived in the southern suburbs) manifested in three key domains: accessibility to services, landscape—especially the bushland and beach environments; and peacefulness/sense of connectedness with the environment. The main push factor regarding the residential environment was distance to work. As Mitchell et al. (2001) have argued, attachment to or embeddedness in the current job is in part a function of internal and external links. The key external links connecting an employee and his or her family in a social, psychological and financial web include work and non-work friends, groups, the community and the physical environment in which they live. In the first qualitative interview, participants were asked *if they had to move house in order to get another job would that be difficult and if so, why?* They were also asked if they would be prepared to move out of the area. For the majority of

participants, the key issue preventing them from leaving the area was their obligation to ensure the emotional and education security of their children:

> Basically it would boil down to my children, their education, their friends, the area which we live in 'cause I love the area we live in, I really like this house and hopefully I'll be able to keep it. But, no, basically it's down to my children. I mean, I could go to Perth tomorrow and I know I've got work over there but my kids, their education is here, their friends are here and that's where I will stay until a point where they no longer need me, I mean, they'll always need me but they don't need me to be with them all the time.

For others, the issue was about neighbourhood quality:

> I've had bad experiences with neighbours and if I move somewhere else I don't know whether I'm going to go into a bad neighbourhood where the people are nasty and sort of you've got to be too quiet or sort of like to be normal and sort of lived in places where you can't make any noise, it's not possible.

Connection to older children and family were also important:

> Yeah because I don't think John would. That was an option that he had when he first left … We've got family here and I don't think. He's very family orientated where the boys are concerned, the boys are very special. It's alright for them to move away, but it's not alright for us to move away.

> Oh, yeah, it would because you got to leave everything behind. Your mates, your you know, the whole lot. Your kids, everything, you'd have to leave it all behind.

For other people, the physical environment would be difficult to give up:

> The whole area of the southern suburbs is just the beaches. We have sort of got city living but without the city, being in the city you know. There's still a little bit of the country-type feel, but still being in metropolitan Adelaide.

> Q: Are you very far from the sea?

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A: Probably maybe two or three kilometres. I can see it from my dining room window, you know. I've grown up with the sea, and I don't think that I can move too far away from that, so. I have now just bought a boat.

Because I'd be giving up the lifestyle I like here, and it's basically just the thought of moving, perhaps, into the city, where I know my husband would absolutely have a nervous breakdown there.

For some participants, their identity was embodied in the home:

No because I've done too much to this house of my own and it would sort of be leaving a part of you in the house.

This pattern of embeddness is not consistent with the finding from the Wave 1 survey on the spatial pattern behind friendship networks. Nearly 70 per cent of respondents stated that they had either few or no people *they knew* living in their neighbourhood.

Table 6.2: Responses to Question: To What Extent Are the People You Know From Your Neighbourhood? (Wave 1)

To What Extent Are the People You Know From Your Neighbourhood?		
	Frequency	**Valid Percentage**
All	17	4.7
Most	61	16.9
About Half	35	9.7
Few	159	43.9
None	90	24.9
Total	362	100

6.3 The Meaning of Home

This section argues that knowledge of the meanings of home that workers had prior to and held during adjustment to retrenchment can provide a foundation for exploring how the adjustment process involved (re)discovering, securing and/or exploiting the meanings of home. In the first qualitative interviews, 38 respondents were asked 'Do you think of this place as home? If so, what does home mean to you?'There were 12 respondents still working at Mitsubishi at the time of the in-depth interview; however, it is argued that the process of adjustment was well underway for these respondents. Six out of the 38 respondents were women. Responses to the questions were reviewed for evidence of the themes—'categories of meaning of home'—as identified by Gurney (1996) in the responses to the same question in his survey of homeowners in the UK; additional themes were also sought. The results are summarised in Table 5.2. In addition to Gurney's (1996) 12 themes, the theme of centrality was also identified. Sub-labels of haven, autonomy and status have been included in the table. These were the psycho-social benefits of home studied by Kearns et al. (2000) and considered important variables in relation to home as a source of ontological security.

Table 5.3: Results of Meanings of Home Discourse Analysis of Responses to the Question: Do You Think of This Place as Home? If So, What Does Home Mean to You?

Discourse	Words used by respondents in Stage 1 in-depth interview
Emotions	family, children, safety, we are very secure here
Back region *(Haven)*	privacy, come back to, go home to, haven
Negative/Instrumental	lonely, stopping off point, don't like being in this home, two dogs were killed due to street traffic
Relaxation	relax, take it easy, unwind
Comfort	something your comfortable with; comfortable
Safety	feel safe
Ownership	this is your home, we have the house build, somewhere that was our own, its mine, its all paid, all of the mortgage is paid
Personalisation	because I do the garden, its just ours, everything is ours; make changes that suit yourself,
Autonomy (Autonomy)	when i want to, where i want to; shut the door, the world stays outside, do my own thing
Front region *(Status)*	no problems with neighbours, invite over friends, will never leave the area, never move to out of south, area is good
What you make it	what you make of it
Centrality	hub, base, in the middle,

In a small cluster of responses, spatial metaphors were used to represent the relationship between the home and domains of family, socialising and work. These were themed as 'centrality'. There was considerable diversity in the expression of centrality:

> A For me home its the hub of the wheel and everything that you do in your life it all stems from that hub which is here, everything evolves, your family, your work, you leave here and you go to work and then you come back here.

> Q: But is it a sort of security thing, a safety thing ?
> A: So yes we're very secure here so yes you'd be right in saying that but yes I like to just visualise it as the wheel.

A Yes, it's the hub of your life really. You know that's where everything revolves around your home I suppose.

A Yeah, look, it's a base, it's a base and I suppose where we all come home to at night.

A Somewhere where you feel comfortable, somewhere that's close to everything and yeah, just, and around family, my family, my brother's at Christies and my family's at Hackham and we're right in the middle of both. Basically where everybody else is that you spend time with and around your work, it only takes my husband 15 minutes down the expressway to get to Mitsi and I try to do work within the southern area.

Tognoli (1987) has suggested that centrality, along with continuity, privacy, self-expression, personal identity and social relationships, are attributes of home that distinguish house from home. For those workers for whom centrality—arguably a subset of the spatial variable of location—is particularly important, a change in the distance of the commute to work may be a disincentive to take a particular job.

This data shows that the meaning of home for these workers was associated with a wide range of factors of which comfort was the most commonly mentioned. Despres (1991) has suggested that meanings of home can be categorised as being reflective of underlying models: territorial, psychological, sociological and phenomenological and that irrespective of the model, meanings of home should be analysed with respect to the agency/structure dualism, as a material reality, a perceived and experienced reality and as a societal entity influenced by ideological, political and economic forces. Gurney and Means (1993) have proposed a similar framework for analysis of meanings of home; however, their framework emphasises an experiential approach with a hierarchy of meanings: cultural, commodity and biographical.

To achieve a greater depth of understanding regarding the cultural and ideological dimension of the meaning of home for retrenched workers, data was analysed in response to a question contained in the first in-depth interview: 'What do you think people mean when they say "the Great Australian Dream"? Does this phrase mean anything to you at a personal level?' This data allowed consideration of the extent to which personal experience might influence or challenge the diffusion and ideological construction of the normative assumption of Australian's 'owning their own house and block of land' (Forster 2004). A thematic analysis was conducted on the responses and categories of homeownership ideology were identified: *narrow traditional*, *utopian* and *planning*. *Narrow traditional* interpretations of the expression 'Great Australian Dream' stressed the importance of detached housing with minimum plot size of a quarter acre, home ownership, secure employment and car ownership. *Utopian* responses stressed the importance of quality of personal and family life, political freedoms and the explicit assertion that a house is not a home. *Planning* responses stressed the importance of the environment, amenity and access to service. It is clear from these responses that there was general agreement about the normative dimensions of the term 'Great Australian Dream'. However, there were also a range of values and outcomes being sought by these workers regarding the experience of home that were tangential to if not directly challenging of the dominant discourse in Australia regarding homeownership. It was not possible to determine from the data what processes/experiences were driving these oppositional 'voices'.

To deepen the understanding regarding the underlying structure of the experience of home participants for retrenched workers, participants in the first in-depth interview were asked 'Do you value your home because of the memories associated with it?' The experience of home (assumed to be a positive experience) for study participants was not strongly structured by positive memories of the home. In fact, only two respondents out of 29 stated unequivocally that they valued their 'home' because of the memories attached to it:

Q: Do you value your home because of the memories attached to it, you know, raising kids that sort of thing?

A: Yeah.

Q: Spending time with the family at home.

A: I mean, that's what a home is, it's everything that happens in it, the kids growing up.

Yeah, there's a lot of history in that sort of situation with the kids being quite young when they first moved in here and their activity out in the garden and stuff like that and their friends they met within their school life and that sort of situation it's all helped to consolidate all that. So, yeah, there's a been a lot of good memories and the kids, my son used to sort of go up into the hills there and they sort of had a fort over there and had a bit of fun, and that was pretty good.

Not all respondents were quite as clear about the relative unimportance of memories regarding evaluation of the home although his response was not atypical:

Q: Do you value your home because of the memories attached to it?

A: No, it's just a house.

Q: Just a house?

A: Just a house. Would move tomorrow. So there's no .... It's just a house.

The memories attached to the home were more likely, especially for women, to be associated with marital or other domestic disharmony or worse, and this finding is consistent with previous research on the meaning of home for women (Gurney 1997; Blunt & Dowling 2006). Wise (2000:301) has suggested that home 'is the creation of a space of comfort (a never ending process)' and in order to transcend a situation where the home may a space of violence or pain, *'Home* then becomes the process of coping, comforting, stabilising oneself, in other words: resistance'.

Participant responses echo this strategy and strongly confirm the importance of homemaking to the experience of home. In this first response (from a female outright owner), the emphasis by the respondent is on home in the present moment and where the experience of home is not diminished by the

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way in which the value of housing is used to invoke status—she argues that home is something *money can't buy*:

Q: So, just, sorry, just getting back to the meaning of 'home', do you value your house, or your home, because of memories attached to it, do you think? You know, in terms of this is the place where you raised your children, and because you spent a lot of time with your family and friends here, does it have memories that mean anything?

A: I guess it has memories.

Q: Not always good ones.

A: Not when you have teenagers. And also, I love living here. I just love it. I mean, it's not much in other people's eyes, but I just love, like you said, looking out there and seeing my vegie patch and the birds, and to me, that's worth more than money.

In this second example, the respondent (male, outright owner) also stresses how home is made and can curtail negative emotions associated with failed relationships:

Q: Do you value your home because of memories attached to it in terms of raising children or spending time with family and friends?

A: No. I do have children but I value it as a place to be. As opposed to, I don't worry about the memories. I've had good and bad memories there I'm currently in my second marriage and the first marriage wasn't all that enjoyable.

Q: Is that in the same house?

A: Yes. Well it was the second house that we owned together but yes

Another male respondent expressed similar views:

Q: Do you value this home because of any memories attached to it?

A: No.

Q: Not even in terms of when you've had kids or spent time with family and friends?

A: Mostly I've been here by myself. So I've had a few mates who've been living with me from time to time and they've gone through the same thing I went through.

Q: You mean in terms of Mitsubishi or being divorced?

A: Being divorced.

As discussed above, home is a space for the learning of gendered roles. A male respondent distinguishes between the emotional work of his partner in the domestic sphere as a pathway to attachment to the house and the instrumental nature of his attachment through his technical knowledge of the house, although acknowledging that not all males might share his view:

Q: Do you value your home because of memories attached to it?

A: My wife does certainly. She's very attached to the house from the point of view of the children. All the children were born, not born in the house, but born when we were living in this house and they've all grown up in the house. Not so much for the males. For me anyway, but I think most males. I know the house, I've been in it that long I know exactly what makes it squeak, what makes it tick etc and so forth. Yeah, I suppose so, I'm comfortable with that.

Another male respondent acknowledged his wife's attachment to the home as expressed through home renovations, but explains his own lack of attachment as an outcome of his lower interest in 'materialism':

A: Not really. I'm not that materialistic, I could live in a tent and still be happy whereas Michelle she likes—she's designed this extension. And this is what she want done and it's her kitchen.

Q: She spends a long time here I guess.

A: If Michelle said to me let's move to Piccadilly tomorrow I'd go.

Q: So there's no real emotional attachment to this house for you?

A: No.

In some cases, respondents chose to stress the value of the home in terms of financial and psychological security rather than in any memories attached to the home, as one female worker explained:

Q: Do you value your home because of the memories attached to it, perhaps in raising children or spending time with family and friends, is that one of the reasons that home is important to you?

A: No. It's just security.

Q: So you don't have children?

A: Yes I've got two boys. I mean it's their home as well. We don't have a lot of things, we're not really money orientated, what we've got is ours,

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but it's somewhere that if anything ever happens well the boys have got the house to come to, financially and…

Bad memories regarding the home were not restricted to the problems associated with relationships:

Q: Do you value your home because of the memories attached to it? Perhaps because you're raising children or spending time with family and friends?

A: Yes and no. We've had a lot of bad luck in this house. No, I wouldn't say memories, no. Just because we put so much into it, we've had a flood and a fire in one year.

Q: Ouch.

A: This whole house was flooded, our Puratap system burst and we were out all day and it flooded through the whole house, so that was the first thing. And then we had a fire in the roof but didn't do much damage. Yeah, we've had a lot of bad luck in this house. Bad memories.

6.4 Conclusion

The analysis of housing histories, attachment to place and the meaning of home shows how the relationship between home and work developed for the retrenched workers prior to retrenchment. The sense of home that had developed since leaving the family home in late adolescence was structured by various influences including changes in housing tenures facilitated by employment or in some cases triggered by relationship breakdown, the experience of managing the building of houses and the need to save for a deposit to purchase a house. Nearly half of the study participants had never lived outside of the study area. However, the most common reason for not wishing to leave the area to pursue other jobs was less to do with place attachment than with the need for continuity. For the majority of participants, the key issue preventing them from leaving the area was their obligation to ensure the emotional and education security of their children. For those living in the southern suburbs, regional attachment was based on accessibility to services, appreciation of landscape, especially the bushland and beach environments and peacefulness/at oneness with the environment. Comfort was

found to be a central meaning of home for workers and is argued by Ryczynski (1986) to be, along with privacy, domesticity, and intimacy, one of the organising principles for the design and use of domestic spaces among the bourgeoisie in the Netherlands during the early period of industrialisation and the separation of work and home. These organising principles are argued by Mallett (2004) to be prominent and recurring themes in contemporary analyses of the meaning of home. It would appear that the meaning of home for retrenched workers was not strongly related to accessibility to work or being a haven away from work.

Chapter 7: Home and a Major Life Challenge - the Lived Experience of Adjustment to Retrenchment

This chapter argues that the way home plays a range of roles, both enabling and constraining of adjustment, can be identified in how retrenched workers narrated the processes of adjustment over the study period, captured in responses to open-ended questions. The chapter analyses qualitative data on the adjustment journeys of study participants and identifies how home was experienced, defined, implicated, mobilised and defended in the processes involved in adjustment. The presentation and analysis of data is framed by two conceptualisations. The first is the five tasks that, according to Moos and Schaefer (1986), must be undertaken to integrate a major life challenge and be psychologically healthy and the second is the notion of mutually constitutive domains for determining adjustment to retrenchment: personal well-being, financial health and career. Consequently, it is argued that the role of the home is revealed in data on how retrenched workers:

a) *establish the meaning and understand the personal significance of the situation*, as explored in data on the personal impacts of job loss (Wave 1)

b) *confront reality and respond to requirements of the external situation*, as explored in data on the assessment of dimensions of job satisfaction associated with a new job (Wave 2)

c) *sustain relationships with family members, friends and other helpful individuals and maintain reasonable emotional balance by managing feelings*, as reflected in data on a global evaluation of the loss of the specific job (Wave 3)

d) *preserve a satisfactory self-image,* as partly reflected in data on themes regarding how workers assessed the key structural factors such as the institutional and political environments that both constrained and enabled aspects of their adjustment (Waves 1–3).

Greig's (2006) distinction between houses as physical structures and homes as a places of belonging underpins the overall analysis.

The chapter is structured to represent these four broad processes. In Section 6.1, the chapter focuses on responses to Wave 1 questions on the social, family and health impacts of retrenchment and on the retrenchment experience in general. A thematic analysis of responses is conducted to establish the relative importance of these impacts and a content analysis is conducted regarding references to home, house and place. This section also analyses comments by workers on the overall experience of the retrenchment journey with respect to references to the home. In Section 6.2, a content analysis is conducted on responses to Wave 2 questions regarding 'the best' and 'the worst' things about the current job for those people in full-time employment. The relative significance of the home as expressed in the responses is also discussed. In Section 6.3, content analysis is conducted on responses to questions in the Wave 3 survey regarding the personal meaning of the job loss when participants were asked what was 'the best thing' and 'the most difficult thing' about leaving MMAL. Although these impacts are described up to three years after the retrenchments it is argued that they represent the lived experience of the retrenchment as a major life challenge and as such were developed through cognitive appraisals of the retrenchment situation and which, in turn, informed subsequent action throughout the period of the study. In Section 6.4, data from Waves 1, 2 and 3 on workers assessment of the situation regarding their role and that of broader forces is analysed. In Section 6.5, the findings discussed in sections one to four are summarised and the implications for the conceptual model are considered.

7.1 Establishing the Meaning and Personal Significance of Job Loss

In the Wave 1 survey, participants were asked: 'Do you think that the changes at Mitsubishi have affected your social and group activities?', 'Do you think

that the changes at Mitsubishi have affected your family life?' and 'Do you think that your health has been affected by the changes at Mitsubishi?'

Responses to these questions show how retrenched workers linked the objective circumstances of retrenchment from MMAL (notified but still working or already gone) and their general labour market status with specific and general aspects of their health and well-being. It should be remembered that at Wave 1, approximately five months after the announcement, some workers were still employed by MMAL, some had negotiated another job and some were unemployed. Put another way, for some, the journey notwithstanding the years of uncertainty that preceded the retrenchment had only just begun and for others it was near completion.

At the time of the Wave 1 survey, there were 222 respondents who described how changes at MMAL had affected their social and group activities. In 11 cases, more than one response was recorded. In these open-ended responses, workers discussed four broad meanings of job loss: fewer social activities (with former MMAL colleagues); a new life/job with positive effect on social activities; new life/job with negative effect on social activities; or no change. As can be seen in Table 6.1, 153 respondents reported having fewer social activities with friends and colleagues at MMAL. Of those 153 respondents, 31 attributed the lower level of contact with former MMAL colleagues to financial pressures and 14 due to having moved house. In addition to financial pressures and relocation, the main reasons given for fewer social contacts with friends and colleagues at MMAL were the closure of various social clubs, loss of day-to-day contact and people taking up other jobs or moving out of the district. An important function of meetings at social groups was the ability to, as one respondent said, 'discuss the job loss situation and to provide support'.

Table 7.1: Responses to Question: Do You Think that the Changes at MMAL Have Affected Your Social and Group Activities? (Wave 1)

Response themes	Number of respondents	Percentage
Fewer social activities with former MMAL colleagues	153	66
New life/job causing positive effect on social activities	52	22
New life/job causing negative effect on social activities	18	7
No change	8	3
Total	**231**	**100**

Source: Beer et al. (2006)

The finding that 31 respondents said financial pressures were the main reason for the loss of contact with former colleagues demonstrates that financial hardship can have impacts other than in domestic consumption and is consistent with suggestions that loss or reduction in the manifest benefits of work—money—can lead to loss of agency regarding the ability to plan a meaningful future through short-term restriction on social interaction and all that it can mean

The significance of the inter-relationship between the personal and financial meanings of job loss is demonstrated in the data in response to the question 'Do you think that the changes at MMAL have affected your family life?' Positive effects on family life were reported by 80 people and negative effects by 101. Of the 101 responses indicating negative effects, more than half (53) were associated with financial stress, highlighting the importance of loss of the manifest benefits of work.

Table 7.2: Response to Question: Do You Think that the Changes at MMAL Have Affected Your Family Life? (Wave 1)

	Effect	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Positive effects	More time with family	57	27
	Other positive effects	23	10
Negative effects	Stress\worry	49	23
	Financial stress	53	25
	Less time	15	7
	Marital breakdown	14	7
Total		211	100

Source: Beer et al. (2006)

Two hundred and thirty nine respondents elaborated on their response to the questions about the meaning of the retrenchment with respect to their health. Approximately equal numbers of respondents believed their health had improved as believed it had worsened. A small number described both improved and worsened aspects of their health and a similar number stated that their health was unchanged. Other responses were not relevant to the question.

Table 7.3: Responses to Question: Do you Think that Your Health Has Been Affected by the Changes at MMAL? (Wave 1)

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Health improved	96	40
Health worsened	94	39
Improved and worsened	14	6
Health same	18	8
Other	17	7
Total	239	100

Source Beer et al. (2006)

7.1.1 Home and the Impact on Social and Group Activities, Family Life and Health

Home can be mobilised in different ways depending on the tension between the experienced and imagined home and the assessment of the impact on the life course (Watkins & Hosier 2005). As discussed above, the Wave 1 survey contained open-ended questions regarding the impact of retrenchment on social and group activities, on family life and on health. In this section, it is argued that in responding to these questions, retrenched workers' references to the home provide data that can be analysed for patterns regarding the mechanisms through which the home is engaged and mediates the process of adjustment to retrenchment. For example, from a psychological perspective, the data on impacts on social and group activities and on family life can reveal the roles that home plays in the coping process since the responses to the questions represent cognitive appraisals of the retrenchment experience and consequently illicit problem solving and emotional-based coping responses in the context of available coping resources (Waters 2000). Data on workers' experiences of the changes at MMAL (the announcement, process and partial implementation of redundancies) provide insight into how workers constructed and responded to the challenges of retrenchment and how the home mediated the construction or the response (Sixsmith & Sixsmith 1990; Gurney 1997). An analysis of references to home also helps to establish the extent to which home is conflated with family at an experiential level (Mallett

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2004). As the terms 'home', 'house' and 'place' are often used interchangeably in the Australian vernacular or are used to express subtle or not so subtle differences with respect to the emotional and/or instrumental aspects of the residential experience, the analysis of responses to these open-ended questions was extended to include the use of the terms 'house' and *'place'*. Responses to the open-ended questions were sometimes recorded (and subsequently transcribed) by interviewers verbatim and sometimes interviewers made notes about the response. Occasionally both strategies were used.

7.1.2 Impact of Retrenchment on Social and Group Activities and the Role of the Home

Whether or not and how home is implicated, defined, mobilised or defended during adjustment can be identified in narratives of adjustment and in particular in what retrenchment means as determined through its perceived impacts, such as the impact on social and group activities. In this section, content analysis reveals the complexity of the ways in which home is enacted as workers attempt to understand and respond to challenges to their social interaction strategies prior to retrenchment. References to house and place reflect the distinction being made by retrenched workers between belonging and not belonging. Exactly half of the respondents (186) thought that the retrenchments had impacted on their social and group activities and half reported the opposite. Two hundred and twenty-two respondents took the opportunity to elaborate on their responses. These responses are analysed below in relation to containing the terms 'home', 'house' and 'place'.

7.1.2.1 Home

Home was mentioned in seven cases. The analysis of these cases reveals the psychological importance of home to those individuals in appraising and coping with the challenges of retrenchment.

Two workers lamented the loss of social interaction through work and the failure, even the anticipated failure, of the home to provide a compensation for the sociality of the workplace:

> It will once we close down—won't see people so often. Seems like we spend more time with work mates than partner at home. These work relationships are important and will be missed.

> At work you work and talk with friends, it's not the same, at home you've got no friends.

However, this lack of sociality provided a safe haven for a worker for whom social interaction was stressful:

> Well I don't go out anywhere, don't socialise any more. If I go out I want to get home ASAP. I feel uncomfortable around people, have become a real loner.

Sensitivity to the safe haven of the home was shown by other workers as instanced by the following response in which the use of the expression 'going around' implies visiting a person in their home/house:

> Because a lot of the guys are still not settled and you don't feel comfortable going around for a barbeque when you have a job and they don't. I don't have the regular contact any more. You don't miss the place but you miss the guys.

Another worker, commenting on the disruption caused by retrenchment, used home as a metaphor to highlight the certainty once provided, but now inaccessible, by and through employment at MMAL. This reference also illustrates the permeability of the boundary between home and work for this individual and is reminiscent of the Hochschild (1997) finding that for many workers work provides all the benefits of home and home has become the place with too much to do:

> It's thrown me into mayhem—we were very entrenched into MMAL, it was home away from home—I intended to stay there until retirement.

Another worker commented on the attainment of a more satisfactory social life now that he was no longer constrained by shift work. At the time of the interview, he was not working—a situation he framed positively as being 'at home'. The reference to being 'at home' helps to avoid the stigma of the term 'not working':

> I was always on shift work so had very little social life—currently at home so go out more often.

In a similar vein, another worker considered that friendship with former workmates would continue whether they were working or 'at home':

> No, still all mates regardless of whether they still work or are at home or not.

One worker returned to their hometown in the Riverland but this came at the cost of less contact with old friends in his former neighbourhood near the Lonsdale plant.

7.1.2.2 House

Two respondents referred to houses in elaborating on their responses to the question on the impact of retrenchment on social and group activities. In both examples, the word 'homes' would appear to have been a suitable alternative to the word 'houses'. Perhaps for these workers, only occupiers have homes and other people have houses. Alternatively, these male respondents may be making a distinction between the inside (the home) and the outside (house) of dwellings. For these workers, social interaction and resource sharing in and around each other's houses had been severely curtailed:

> Working there for 15 years meant I had built up a large group of friends who socialised regularly. We would go to each other's houses, fix cars together, help each other build sheds etc. This has virtually ceased since I left. I work shift work which also interferes with socialising.

We don't go out anywhere as much as we used to. No longer have any real contact with MMAL work mates. We used to have get togethers every few months at someone's house but these have not continued. We have all gone our separate ways.

7.1.2.3 Place

Two out of the three instances of the word 'place' in the responses were references to the workplace at MMAL and the other reference was to places to go to (from home):

> You don't miss the place but you miss the guys.

I was very involved with the MMAL social club and it's a bit sad, people have moved on and you don't see them regularly, when you work at a place for 20 years over time the people at work are very important, that's your lifestyle, there's not much time left for other friends.

Because of the lack of a steady income, I think twice about going places because of the cost.

In the first quotation, the respondent appears to be stressing that the social interaction with other colleagues/peers is what is missed not the other elements that make up the experience of the *workplace* such as the organisational culture, the labour process, the general physical environment and the individual workspace. However, as Fischer (1997) has noted, while work may be a place of submission and constraint, it is also a place where one puts down roots and creates a territory. The reference to 'a place' has more resonance with Fischer's (1997) construction—the social interaction and workplace are seen as more integrated. As Relph (1976) has argued, places involve a physical setting, activities and meanings and this second reference to place resonates with Relph's construction.

7.1.3 Impact on Family Life and the Role of Home

In contrast to the seven instances of the word 'home' contained in the responses to the open-ended question on the impact of retrenchment on social and group activities, there were 47 instances of the use of the word 'home' in response to the question on the impact of retrenchment on family life. As

Mallett (2004) has argued, home and family are often conflated. Five themes were identified using the complete response to the question as the unit of analysis. Examples from each theme are presented below.

7.1.3.1 Theme: The End of Uncertainty (2 Responses)

As discussed in the literature, the experience of uncertainty about retrenchment—when it will happen, how much notice will be given, size of retrenchment package—can be just as, if not more, distressing, than the actual announcement. In cases in which workers experienced uncertainty, relief at the announcement was pronounced and the benefits were at least in part expressed in terms of the experience of home:

> In a more positive way. For the last years the environment has been very negative—you take it home, but now its over and have payout—there's a sense of finalisation—can move on—reflected in more harmony at home

> I think when there is talk about closure which has been going on for 12 years my family was very supportive but it was very worrying time. I was lucky that being in the union meant that I was involved and knew what was going on. However, many people asked your advice on what they should do and this added to my worries, which I would bring home as well.

In the first quotation, there is a strong reflection of the interdependence between home and work and how that plays out when retrenchment stresses are experienced well before formal announcements and are resolved by the actual announcement. Home is the place where employment insecurity must be managed or at the very least is experienced. In the second quotation, a multiplier effect is evident with respect to home and employment insecurity. Not only do individuals feel the stress of their own situation, but some must also deal with the uncertainty felt by other work colleagues.

7.1.3.2 Theme: More Time at Home (16 Responses)

Positive references to being at home included references to simply spending more time at home, enjoying spending more time at home and to enjoying contributing to home life more. While the common thread of the theme is more time at home, the distinction between the sub-categories resonates with theoretical considerations such the ability to reconfigure the gendered nature of the home work relationship vis-à-vis work and of homemaking in general and of the stresses associated with shift work:

Probably spending a bit more time at home during the day.

It has improved it as more time at home. No longer working night shift.

Improved it. When my wife and I both worked we both got home late. Now I am here, the cleaning is done and I cook for my wife and daughter.

Been home for five months. My wife and five children think it's great. I'm getting to

know my kids. Previously I worked afternoon shift and only saw my children in the

mornings.

7.1.3.3 Theme: Disruption to Routine (3 Responses)

Not all experiences of home are positive. Jahoda (1982) has argued that routine—the presence of a habitual time structure—is one of the five latent benefits of work and its destruction through unemployment can result in 'a major psychological burden'. The presence of routine has also been argued by Giddens (1984) to be essential for ontological security. For some workers, spending more time at home heightened the disruption to the routine provided by the structure of a working day, while for some it was possible to re-establish a routine at home:

At home more. Short tempered at times as routine changing.

The whole routine of our lives has changed—I'm at home all the time now. My wife has to

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put up with me. Wife commented⸺everything has changed⸺I used to do different things

on different days, now I don't. Its harder to get things done when I'm not busy; and sorting

out all the things like financial advice and Mutual Community⸺it breaks up your day.

Researchers such as Waters (2000) acknowledge that relationship problems are one of several stressors associated with the unemployment experience. The interdependence of home and work is underscored by one worker who found that his greater presence in the home was a disruption to his wife's routine:

> My wife is used to having more time to herself—its causing conflict with
> me being there. My wife is not used to being constrained in terms of
> money and time alone in house.

7.1.3.3 Theme: Less Time at Home (4 Responses)

Due to new commuting arrangements or shift work, some workers had to adjust to not being able to spend as much time at home. In the first response, there is a net reduction in the ability to spend time at home and this is experienced as loss of contact with family members. In the second response, the focus is on less time with the family but also on the ability to protect the home from intrusion:

> I had more time at home with family when I was MMAL—now spend
> more time travelling, e.g. Elizabeth, Pt Adelaide.

> Being on afternoon shift I can't see my son as much or catch up with the
> family in the evenings—you can't when your working night shift, I like to
> be at home in the evenings with all the burglaries in the area. I'm working
> afternoons because the money is better.

7.1.3.4 Theme: Home Not a Haven (3 Responses)

Emotion-based coping strategies may include spending more time at home; however, some workers found that the home was anything but a haven:

> My family is concerned, always on the phone asking what's going on, asking how's my money. I've also had problems with my ex-partner over child support—she thinks I'm just sitting at home not working so I don't have to pay it but I'm trying to tell her I have to get a job that pays properly so I can afford to pay it—she's not happy, that's causing problems.

> Definitely so. Financially—have less money to help my kids. Being at home rubs off on everyone else in the family. They feel sorry for you, I must throw vibes out that I am unhappy. I have always been at work all my life.

> Before I was working and we had more money. Now I stay at home and more relaxed but I sometimes feel depressed, useless, bored and like I'm too old to work. I would have stayed there for about another five years to retirement.

7.1.3.5 Theme: Place (1 Response)

There was only one reference to place and this was in the context of workplace. The data was taken from a field note record:

> Bad moral and stress in workplace because of uncertainty about job future. Says that bosses put pressure on people/made environment stressful place—pressure on people to leave without package.

The role of home in mediating personal well-being as evidenced in data on how retrenched workers experience the impact of retrenchment on family life demonstrates the scope and dimensions of home. Home is not necessarily a haven when it comes to unemployment. A key source of ontological security—the routines of home—can be disrupted for the job loser and other family members. Not being able to spend as much time at home with the family illustrates a source of psychological stress. However, being able to spend more time at home is clearly an important resource and restrictions to its mobilisation will be experienced in a very negative way. Spending more

time at home confronts home as an arena for the social construction of gendered roles (Blunt & Dowling 2006) and in so doing, contributes to the assessment of retrenchment as having positive experiences, especially for many men. It also opens a window on the proposition by Douglas (1991) that the most vital function of home is coordination. Home is also where relief is experiences when the uncertainty about retrenchment is resolved.

7.1.4 Impact on Health and the Role of the Home

7.1.4.1 Home

The home was mentioned in six of the responses to the open-ended question about the impact of retrenchment on health. The ways in which home was mentioned were similar to the themes regarding home and the impact on family life. Some respondents connected home directly or indirectly with improved health by being able (or have little choice other than) to spend more time at home:

> I'm happier being at home so my health has been affected positively.

> It has probably improved. I'm eating more healthy and drinking less. I just used to eat takeaway all the time. I'd get Hungry Jacks or Kentucky on my way to work and maybe have a couple of sandwiches for dinner. Now I have to make food at home.

There were examples of limits on the ability to use the home as a haven to cope with feeling cut off socially. The use of withdrawal as an emotional coping strategy had failed to assist one worker. The restriction of agency that comes about from loss of the material benefits of employment, i.e. money, manifested in an inability to afford the cost of socialising and resulted in loss of social contacts. A kind of resignation had set in:

> Don't want a lecture from the doctor or to talk to anyone because no-one can really help my situation. Not having a full-time job has created financial difficulties which has meant can't afford help and can't go out socially either so I feel cut off from previous social networks. Being home with my dog is comforting as he understands when no-one else does. Mentally it is harder to get on with life and I don't want to burden people

with my problems. Have always been able to cope and be a strong person but now feel like I can't anymore. The changes in my life [through leaving MMAL] have very much lowered my quality of life and living standards.

For another worker, loss of access to some of the latent benefits of work—enforced activity, routine and social interaction—could not be compensated for through home:

There is nothing around the house that fills in for all the activities I did at work. My lifestyle has changed so completely, the loss of interaction, there is a big void, it's too big a change of life.

There were three references to place, but each of these was a reference to the place of work.

7.1.5 Overall Assessment of Retrenchment Adjustment and the Role of the Home

As discussed above, participants were asked at the conclusion of the Wave 1 survey if there was anything else they would like to say about their experience of the changes at MMAL. In order to explore how the home played a role in these assessments, references to the home, house and place were included in the analysis In addition to analysis of how the home was involved in these statements, narrative analysis was also conducted. For this analysis, attention was given to both the narrative form of the responses as well as the content and links to theoretical propositions. Reponses to the question on 'experiences of changes' were treated as bounded segments of an interview text about an incident (retrenchment) and references to home, house or place would be understood as constructed within the meaning of the response as a whole.

7.1.5.1 Home (11 Responses)

There were 11 responses to the open-ended question that included a reference to home and an additional three responses mentioning home were included in the data set drawn from the transcribed 'additional comments' field in the data

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set. In terms of the structure of the narratives, an intriguing finding was that in nine out of the 11 responses to the open-ended question, the reference to home came at the end of the response, as illustrated in the following examples:

> Leaving MMAL—the feeling of that was up with my divorce—it was really hard, the guys at work had been really important since the divorce five years ago. I'm a single dad and you really miss the company—I'm pretty isolated now, I work alone in the truck, I'm alone a lot of the time. I go from South Road/Torrens Road corner—Melbourne St and Holden Hill Police Station. Depot is at Dry Creek so I travel there each day from Morphett Vale, spend about two hours travelling—takes me about 1.5 hours to get home at night.

> I'm very fortunate that I'm still here—haven't been forced out like others who have had to get other jobs—gives me time to look for jobs, get more training—be better prepared. From October to November fog started to clear—by December had made decisions—examined options, scenarios— each day did this and wrote down until I had decided I could leave my beautiful property. It was going to be too much financial strain. Very tense at home—we have a blue at least every day.

The pattern of home anchoring the sentence held true for unemployed and employed workers. In one sense, this is not surprising as analysis of statements about the meaning of home from the first qualitative interviews showed that home was important on several fronts and indeed for some it was central to their sense of well-being. Nevertheless, the question 'Do you have anything else to say about the retrenchment experiences?' clearly did not refer to home and housing was one only one of five key categories in the overall survey design. This narrative structure may be a reflection of the level of acknowledgement among workers that home and work are interdependent. This level of acknowledgement is higher than researchers might otherwise understand as a prevailing attitude among blue-collar workers.

In each case, the response, predictably perhaps given the question, summarised the experience of changes in terms of impacts, strategies and

current feelings and then concluded with a reference to some aspect of home, which was, despite being at the end of the sequence, still part of the integrity of the summary overall. Some workers focused on the latent benefits of work such as routine and social contact in reflecting on their experience of changes:

> I'm currently doing volunteer work about four hours in op shop. I find myself disorganised. I do miss the people dreadfully and now I have the time to read the papers and watch TV. I realise MMAL was a great place to work. I think I would be lonely if my husband was not at home but we get on very well.

Others included references to the latent benefits of work and expanded the response to paint a fuller picture of their situation, which reveals, in the case of the following example with the reference to planning, the difficulty that this person had in establishing a future orientation. In addition, for this retrenched worker, a lesson has been learned and is expressed in the response—loss of structure and resulting boredom had been a high price to pay for a one off financial gain:

> I would love to get back into the same field. I really miss the challenges I was faced with as part of my job—there was a real sense of satisfaction. Financially I felt I was better off not to work until end of financial year for tax reasons but this does not account for the boredom I feel—some things are more important than money. I get really angry at people getting the dole who just spend it on alcohol etc. Lots of things make me angry at the moment, things that normally wouldn't worry me. I am keeping my options open about starting my own business—I feel I would fall down on the quoting and paperwork side—because I don't have experience. I walk in the morning and I have a lot of energy then but coming home afterwards the energy disappears because I don't have a plan for the day. Wife insists I carry on although I don't feel like it.

7.1.5.2 House (7 Responses)

There were seven responses that incorporated a direct reference to the word house. In each case the word house was used to accentuate a commercial or commodity aspect of, action about or attitude to a dwelling. In these instances

the dwelling may have been occupied by the respondent or may have been another dwelling in which he or she had a financial interest. The following response is an example of the way in which the term house was used:

> I would have been lost without the support of the Salvos (my job network provider). They were a real godsend. They were ringing me once a week. They couldn't have been any more helpful. I do have tinges of regret that I have left MMAL but overall it has been good as we have been able to pay off our house and there is no way we could have saved that amount of money.

7.1.5.3 Place (19 Responses)

There were 19 instances of the word 'place' in the responses. In no cases was the word 'place' used as an alternative to home or house and in fact, all were references to working at either of the MMAL plants, typically in this form:

> MMAL was a good place to work, I wish I was still there. Although the work was boring, the money was good. However, I found it very difficult to keep up with the pace of work at MMAL due to my health issues and so really had to leave.

Some workers chose to distinguish between the people who worked at MMAL and MMAL as an employer 'the place':

> Its not the place you miss so much but the people—we were like a family, I think because things had been so uncertain for so long. I've lost an extended family.

> It's a bit of a shame, but it's a global decision and no fault of our own. I won't miss the place, but I'll miss the people. I mean not the monotonous job.

7.2 Confronting Reality and Responding to Requirements of the External Situation: The Impact of a New Job

In the Wave 2 survey, participants who were working full time were asked to describe 'the best' and 'the worst' things about their current job. A total of 104 participants responded to both questions. A thematic analysis was conducted on the responses and the results of the analysis are presented in Table 7.4. The top five categories of responses are presented.

Table 7.4: Top Five Categories of Responses to the Questions: What Are the Best and Worst Things about the Current Job (Wave 2: Those Currently in Full-Time Employment)

The best things about the current job (No of responses)	The worst things about the current job (No of responses)
Job satisfaction (39)	Commuting to work (15)
Management culture (14)	Long hours (14)
Closer to home (13)	Management culture (13)
The pay (9)	The pay (10)
Variety on the job (8)	Uncertainty (7)
	Occupational health and safety (7)

The theme 'job satisfaction' included a range of positive experiences such as greater challenges, more autonomy and feeling respected. The numerical strength of this category relative to other categories is surprising given the rhetoric regarding the generosity and general working conditions in the MMAL plant and is consistent with the finding by Milkman (1997) on plant closures that auto industry workers in the US were 'prisoners of prosperity'—high wages compensating for bad working conditions. References to the latent benefits of work in the case of the best things about the new job—job satisfaction, management culture and variety on the job far outweigh references to the manifest benefits of work—the pay. This finding lends supports to the contention expressed in the literature (Hassall, Muller & Hassall 2004:73) that the latent benefits of work should be accorded equal status to manifest benefits when considering the impact of job loss on subsequent psychological health. Workers who nominated proximity to home as the best thing about the new job did not make any reference to the family or to the benefits achieved through proximity to home other than references to saving time and money. Workers who nominated travel to work as the worst thing about the new job also did not make reference to the family and stressed the time and cost involved in travel to work. These instrumentally oriented responses may just reflect the nature of the survey process—responses to questions of this type in the survey were usually short—or gendered

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approaches to communication. Nevertheless, the references to commuting point to the relative importance of the integration of work and non-work in the post-retrenchment environment.

7.3 Sustaining Relationships and Maintaining Emotional Health: Integrating Job Loss over Time

At the time of the third survey (Wave 3), 300 participants remained in the study and the level of unemployment within the cohort at that particular time was approximately six per cent. This section reports the analysis of responses to questions in the Wave 3 survey, which were designed to provide data on the meaning of job loss and the overall assessment of the retrenchment experience.

7.3.1 The Meaning of Job Loss

In the Wave 3 survey, participants were asked 'What has been the best thing about leaving MMAL?' and 'What has been the most difficult thing about leaving MMAL?' The 300 responses to the first question were reviewed and coded in relation to key themes. The top 10 themes are listed in Table 6.5.

Table 7.5: The Top 10 Themes in Response to the Question: What Has Been the Best Thing about Leaving MMAL?' (Wave 3)

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Change/new life/flexibility/freedom/ lifestyle/new challenge/can enjoy life/more time	65	29
The package	38	17
The package and paying off mortgage	13	6
Nothing	30	13
Better job	27	12
Less stress	20	9
The end of uncertainty	13	6
Work/life balance	8	4
Health improvement	7	3
Self-employment	7	3

The largest group of responses were associated with perceived benefits outside of work, especially activities that led to expression of personal agency, fulfilment, self-awareness and stimulation. Typical of this group of responses were comments such as:

I wouldn't have chosen to leave but I guess it's a new experience, a new way of doing things.

To be able to direct your future. Taking charge of my own destiny instead of someone else having control.

I think when I was working there it became the centre of everything … I've realised there is more to life… they gave me enough money to be able to do what we want to do, they have given me free time, it's given me freedom.

In 38 instances, coded as 'the package', the survey participant stated that the best thing about leaving MMAL was 'the package' 'payout' or 'the money'. Reference to this financial factor, unlike in other categories of responses, were usually not elaborated. Often the response was just two or three words, although in some cases there were references to how the retrenchment package led to a particular benefit. As one worker expressed:

> My payout. That's the way to get rid of stress, you can pay things off, makes you feel a hell of a lot better.

In 13 cases, respondents made specific reference to the payout assisting them to pay off the mortgage. Typical comments included:

> Getting in money to pay my house off, from the package.

> There is no best thing except the redundancy package which let me pay off the house.

For 30 respondents, there was nothing that they considered fitted into the category of being 'the best thing about leaving MMAL' In most cases, the response was simply 'nothing', 'nothing positive' or 'no best thing'. In the few cases in which respondents elaborated, it was to be even more emphatic. For example, one worker commented:

> I haven't done anything better than when I was at MMAL socially or otherwise.

Other categories of positive responses to job loss included having a better job, less stress, particularly the stress associated with the demands of production and assembly line work, an end to the years of uncertainty regarding future employment at MMAL, improved work/life balance, better health and the ability to be self-employed. The relatively small number of references to work/life balance may be a reflection of the gendered nature of the division of labour at the household level.

The 300 responses to the question 'What has been the most difficult thing about leaving MMAL?' were reviewed and coded in relation to key themes.

In some cases, respondents mentioned more than one issue. The top 12 themes are listed in Table 7.6. The two most common themes were the loss of social interaction and loss of income. This finding is entirely consistent with the conceptualisation that loss of access to the latent and manifest benefits of work are vital for understanding psychological health of job losers. Thirty respondents also stated that there was nothing difficult about leaving MMAL.

Table 7.6: Top Twelve Themes in Responses to the Question: What Has Been the Most Difficult Thing about Leaving MMAL? (Wave 3)

Response theme	Number of responses	Percentage
Loss of social interaction	102	37
Loss of income	62	23
Nothing	26	9
Job insecurity	21	8
Adapting to change	15	5
Stress of finding a new job	14	5
Loss of routine	8	3
Increased travel	8	3
Inability to resume a respected role through work	7	3
Losing access to a familiar work environment	5	2
Disruption to work/home integration	4	1
Disruption to place	4	1

Those who said that there was nothing bad about leaving were usually emphatic:

> Nothing, no regrets at all. No stress and no dramas. A move in the right direction.

> Nothing, I was glad to leave, there was nothing different at all. I took the first offer they made.

> Nothing, should have done it years ago.

Dominating the responses was the loss of social interaction. This was experienced along a number of dimensions: missing people, feelings of loyalty, loss of camaraderie, loss of sources of information and practical assistance, loss of 'mateship', loss of regular contact, missing the experience of shared activities inside and outside of work, loss of companionship, and no longer belonging to a family. Typical comments included:

> Leaving my mates. You go through hatch, match and despatch with them and get quite bonded and then this is disrupted and changed.

> Maintaining your friendship really with people, a job is more a social activity, where I worked at one stage we had about 70 in our section, you now have to go out of your way to remain sociable, that's a big thing for me, I'm a social person.

> After 20 years, it's a lot. I had a family there and I've lost it. For eight hours a day at least you were in their life and you miss it a lot. I thought I was secure there and hoped to retire there.

> After 26 years, Lonsdale was like a big family. The biggest problem would be missing the guys you worked with all that time. The youngest guy in maintenance was 23 years at MMAL.

Loss of income was the second largest theme in the responses. Most respondents simply referred to 'the drop in pay', 'financial difficulties', 'the money', or 'less income'. When respondents elaborated, it was usually to indicate the consequences of the reduction in income, which in most cases did not appear to be severe although there were exceptions:

> Losing my income to my retirement, the five or six years to my retirement.

> The financial side of it—not having a weekly wage. Not having the money to go out to the movies, go out to dinner … still happens but rarely—not to the extent that we used to.

Not having a wage coming in. You have to re-evaluate what you want and have to be very careful with your spending.

Losing my house. I couldn't afford to keep it. We had to shift and split the family. My daughters are studying at uni. We had to move (me and my husband) back over to the Yorke Peninsula.

Some respondents included three or more issues in their answers and these integrated responses tell a powerful story of the meaning of retrenchment:

Having the job security, the camaraderie, the contact with other people and the comfort zone everyone is there and you're used to it.

Having to find a job. The loss of wages. Most important was the loss of the people who were there. You lose a lot of friendships from walking away from a place after 24 years.

The job, obviously I enjoyed working for MMAL. I have missed my work colleagues. Also financially it has been harder as I don't earn as much as I did at MMAL

Losing the work attributes, the day-to-day environment, the emotional interest, the people, the daily outcomes, the rewards. Your performance is under focus and your problem solving skills are under focus and the highs and lows are a daily thing and the highs are very good.

The financial side, trying to come to grips with how much things cost. I miss the network at work, you might ask who had recently bought a TV, where they got it, how much they paid. No longer has that informal network to seek a range of info, miss the comradeship.

Getting my head around being useful, having a purpose, going from being required to not being required, someone pulled the rug out from under me, going from being wanted, a needed part and doing that job well, and then when you go for other work and get told you're too old and you think, well last week I wasn't. That's the worst one

Approximately three years after the restructuring at MMAL, most workers remained in the labour force and many believed retrenchment to have been a positive experience. Many felt that loss of social interaction was the predominate issue in coping with retrenchment and a significant number of workers felt the restrictions of a reduction in income. Responses to the meaning of job loss show that compensating for loss of access to both the latent (income) and manifest (social interaction) routines and source of positive identity, benefits of work are important. The findings show that the ability to pay off the mortgage was an important benefit of retrenchment. They also show that improved work/life balance was a moderately important benefit of leaving MMAL and that in relation to the disbenefits of leaving the job at MMAL, disruption to home/work integration and to a sense of place were far less important for the majority of survey participants than was loss of social interaction.

7.4 Preserving a Satisfactory Self-image

The conceptual model of adjustment suggests that preserving a satisfactory self-image is an important process for feeling positive during and following job loss. This section argues that summative comments made by workers in each of the three waves in response to the question 'Do you have anything else to say about retrenchment?' provide a partial window on the dimensions of that process. Preserving a satisfactory self-image involves allocating responsibility for the situation and being seen to do what is right with respect to re-employment within the constraints imposed by external factors (Ezzy 2000). As Fryer and Fagan (1993) have argued, adjustment to job loss must be seen as ongoing process engaging micro- and macro-factors and this thesis argues that awareness of this situation is vital to preserving a satisfactory self-image in the face of retrenchment. The data from the responses to the 'Anything else to add?' question across the three waves was analysed (see Table 7.7). The more common strategies employed by participants in responding to this question were a) to make general evaluative comments about the retrenchment situation; b) to critique the general labour market

assistance provisions; and c) to express concern about obtaining or keeping a new job. Over the course of the study period, the focus of general evaluative comments shifted from concerns about other people and the loss of social interaction through to reporting of improving circumstances to more generally reflective comments about the retrenchment scenario. However, with respect to the assessment of general labour market assistance and anxiety about getting and/or keeping a new job, there was little if no diminution of concern. Retrenched workers were very much in tune with the perspective argued by Fryer and Fagan (1993) and they could see the institutional and political environments that both constrained and enabled aspects of their adjustment.

Table 7.7: Waves 1, 2 and 3: Top Three Themes and Responses to the Question: Anything Else to Add?

Response themes	Wave 1 (N=246)	Wave 2 (N=236)	Wave 3 (N=121)
General evaluative comments	Focus on missing people and worry about prospects for work mates	Situation improving	Reflective comments—philosophical
	N=93	N=126	N=119
Critique of general assistance and job network	Negative	Negative	Negative
	N= 61	N= 26	N= 45
Concern about getting or maintaining a job	Very concerned	Very concerned	Very concerned
	N=40	N= 40	N=30

The striking outcome of this analysis is the anger expressed by workers regarding the inadequate support received through the statutory support networks provided under the labour adjustment package. It is one thing to have access to resources but, as Price et al. (2002) have argued, the adjustment to job loss is in part a measure of the personal and social resources of each individual and their ability to mobilise these resources. The level of uncertainty and insecurity about the labour market situation for the survey participants remains high even after three years and this finding is consistent with the shift towards casual work and insecure forms of employment that characterised the aggregate outcomes for the study sample.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter attempts to make explicit the psychological processes involved in adjustment to retrenchment and how these are influenced by or in turn influence home. It shows that loss of the latent and loss of the manifest benefits of work played pivotal roles in how workers felt about retrenchment. Workers were very clear about these two factors and the ability of a new job or of home to compensate for the lack of social interaction following retrenchment.

In establishing the meaning and understanding the personal significance of the situation, workers were concerned with the impacts on social and group interaction, family life and health. The loss of close social interaction with workmates and problems associated with reduction in income were the two key challenges associated with sustaining relationships with family and friends and managing feelings. Many workers found that the retrenchment had led to a feeling of liberation and renewal, partly attributed to the separation package. In order to confront reality and respond to the requirements of the external situation, many workers found new jobs. The majority of workers experienced strong job satisfaction in the new job, but just as many workers were happy with the pay, management culture and changes in commuting patterns in the new job as were disaffected. Working longer hours, job insecurity and problems with occupational health and safety were characteristic of many of the new jobs. Many workers were not able to satisfactorily access supportive resources regarding the job search and employment insecurity was pervasive during the whole of the study period even as unemployment levels fell for the study participants.

The meaning of home was most evident in the description of the positive and negative impacts on family life arising from retrenchment. Overall, the role of home in relation to processes of adjustment to the major life challenge of retrenchment can be summarised as pathways that included:

a) becoming an isolated loner at home with adverse health consequences

b) relieved from the stress of production line and other stressful work and spending more time at home leading to a better quality of life

c) spending less time at home and more time commuting

d) spending more time at home and less money and having fewer social contacts with changing relationship with other family members.

Chapter 8: At Home and Planning for a Meaningful Future ?

The thesis' conceptual framework suggests that temporary or permanent loss of access to the manifest benefit of work—the agency restriction theory (Fryer & Payne 1984; Fryer 1986)—can lead to inability to plan a meaningful future. As discussed in Chapter 7, access to a retrenchment package was a major factor in how workers assessed the 'benefits' of losing their job at MMAL. This chapter explores the processes through which the retrenchment package contributes to adjustment materially and psychologically and assesses the relative importance of the contribution compared to obtaining another job. It also directly identifies the mechanisms through which the meaning of home changed for retrenched workers and contributed to the adjustment process.

8.1 Money Isn't Everything: The Impact of the Redundancy Payment and of Getting a New Job

During the second in-depth interview, respondents were asked 'What effect did the redundancy payout have? Did it help alleviate some of the stress associated with redundancy?' Reponses to this question were analysed in terms of how the money was used (the purpose to which it was put) and the psychological and emotional impact of that decision. The mean retrenchment payment was a year's salary. As discussed in the literature review, researchers working in the field of the psychology of financial planning (Anthes and Lee 2000) have suggested that there are particular barriers that arise in the case of involuntary retrenchment that make it financial planning difficult and a generic strategy in the first instance is to focus actions that can reduce stress. Approximately half of all workers sought financial assistance and the majority of respondents at the Wave 1 survey rated the advice as very useful.

There were 33 responses to this question and nearly a third of the participants used some or all of the payment to pay down or pay off the mortgage. The

psychological benefit in using the money to pay down or pay off the mortgage is experienced as a reduction in ongoing financial stress as expressed in the following response:

Q: So you're doing better financially since leaving Mitsubishi?

A: Yeah because I got that redundancy and I put three quarters of that on my mortgage which brought my monthly payments right back down.

However, the retrenchment packages were used in a variety of ways and with different combinations. The full range of purposes was as follows: to pay off or reduce the mortgage; to supplement or completely compensate for the loss of a wage for a limited period (act as a buffer); to top up superannuation; pay for training courses; take a holiday; start a business, undertake home renovations; invest in shares; give money to children; pay a deposit on a house; pay off credit card debts; and buy cars.

One worker used the payment to address multiple issues:

Q: And what effect did the redundancy payout have, did it help alleviate some stress, did it help reduce some stress?

A: Yeah it did yeah, because I got a fairly good payout which we were able to pay the house off with and pay for the course I was doing. So yeah it did help, it helped for a few years, but now I've started work and pay is so much less it is a bit of a struggle.

The most common psychological benefit was experienced as 'things being made easier' or 'made easy' but the underlying mechanisms were varied. As discussed in the literature (Fryer & Payne 1984; Fryer 1986), for some workers, the benefit of the retrenchment package was experienced as time to plan for the future for either the short or long term. As indicated in the following response, a retrenchment packages provides a buffer for the period when there is no income, enabling people to properly assess the situation and take appropriate action:

Q: And what effect did the redundancy payout have?

A: That was good.

Q: That initially I guess helped alleviate some of the stress of…

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A: It did, it did. You didn't have to worry about a thing. It gave me plenty of time to plan all this, what I was going to do, how I was going to go about it, is there enough money in it to at least give me a wage initially and I didn't have to worry because I knew that we had just about paid the house off.

In the following response, the planning was longer term:

Q: And what effect did the redundancy payout have?

A: The redundancy payout was good for me, that helped me by for six months. I was able to just hang out and do things that I wanted, go for my drives to Meadows and sit by the beach and think and decide what to do for the rest of my life.

However, the retrenchment package was not able to provide the same level of ability to plan for the future and experience the attendant psychological security in the way that happens when you have a stable job. As implied in the following response the arrival of a large amount of money can be accompanied by the temptation to spend it *unwisely*, which could lead to unhappiness:

Q: Ok and what effect did the redundancy payout have? Did it help to alleviate some of the stress associated with the redundancy? I know you've talked about it a bit but is there anything you want to add?

A: No it really didn't do much really. Money is money you know money can't buy happiness or you know, you know what I mean kind of thing? … It's having the stable job is the main thing. At least you know you can plan things or you can go on a holiday or you can do this, do that but at the moment can't plan nothing or do anything because you don't know where your next wage is coming from so—you know money doesn't—that money they gave us wasn't going to last forever anyway, so some people went out and blew it and spent the whole lot. Some invested a little bit like I did but you know that's so I wouldn't spend the money.

Structural adjustment can be achieved through retraining and redeployment of workers (Evans-Klock 1999), which results in no job loss for the individual worker, less overall reduction in jobs and therefore saving of jobs potentially available for future job seekers within that industry. Restructuring strategies

sometimes include giving workers the option of redeployment or retrenchment. Workers may choose retrenchment over deployment if they assess the job search will be successful and the financial compensation allows them to plan for a future with less financial stress as in the following case:

Q: And what affect did the redundancy payout have? Did it help relieve you of some of the stress associated with …

A: Oh yeah, yeah. That's why … they actually offered me a job back at Tonsley Park, but it was better for me to take the package because there was extra bonuses to take it. So I took the package and you think about when you got the lump sum and you think where you're going to put your money and how much you can play with it and all the rest of it and hopefully, like I said, I'm young enough to find another job so I'd be able to still bring in some income. So yeah, we managed to pay some things off and do some other things. It's been pretty good. We're not debt free but.

Another psychological benefit of the payment was as a form of compensation for being dismissed when you have done nothing wrong. By definition workers carry no blame for retrenchment scenarios (although voluntary retrenchment is, by and large, an expression of choice) and many workers experience a breach of the psychological contract between employers and employees (Robinson 1996). The breach, as in the response below, can be compensated for by an appropriately sized payment. This particular worker refers to his knowledge about retrenchment impacts when workers are not paid entitlements:

Q: And what effect did the redundancy payout have? Did that help to alleviate some of the stress?

A: No, there was never any stress.

Q: Okay. I suppose—would there have been stress without it then I guess?

A: Oh, that redundancy money—if the redundancy money wasn't there, yeah, certainly—clearly you could see that there would have been some stress because I suppose you'd worked for that company for many, many years and there were no entitlements so that would be—that could have some damage and effects on anyone really. Even for myself, it could create some stress but as it was there was a pool of money and it was good so— yeah, and that—I suppose that's the thing that I like about the redundancy

is the fact that I have worked with other people that have been made redundant and have been working with a company. Some have got very little money out of it. Some have got some monies out of it, but not as much.

The psychological benefit, in addition to compensation, was also expressed in terms of being able to start all over again without any financial baggage:

Q: What effect did the redundancy payout have? Did that help alleviate some of the concerns that you might have had about your finances in the future?

A: Yeah, well the severance side of it was very good, because all the major bills you got out the road sort of thing, if you had anything on lay-bys and whatever you were able to clean that up and virtually start with a clean slate, which was very good. I wouldn't have wanted any less from the severance side of it. Yeah, it was worth that because you were able to clean the table and start afresh, yeah, very good.

In the second in-depth, structured interview, retrenched workers were asked 'If you have had employment since leaving MMAL, did that help you move on with your life?' There were 21 responses. The responses can be divided into three broad categories: responses where a job has been unequivocally a pathway to adjustment; responses where a new job has not been a pathway; and responses that reflect ambivalence. However, within each category there is also diversity with respect to the central debate in the literature regarding the relative importance of deprivation of the latent and/or manifest benefits of work and to other concepts discussed in the conceptual framework such when retrenchment adjustment actually starts.

Unequivocal belief in the benefit of re-employment can be enhanced, as is illustrated in the following response, by the experience that comes from having witnessed and been a *survivor* of retrenchment on a previous occasion within the same company. The uncertainty raised by the previous experience can trigger adjustment strategies that include securing home ownership in order to manage the risks of the labour market in an era of globalisation (Mitchell 2001) This strategising can include factoring in the possibility of a

retrenchment package in the future (Clarke 2007). In these cases, re-employment is not essential for purposes of addressing housing cost stress:

> Q: And do you think getting employment now has sort of helped you move on with your life?
>
> A: Yes, definitely. The other thing I'd just like to say; over the years at Mitsubishi, I mean, there has been various, what's the word? Redundancies, you know, and the last one was back in 2000, there was a big redundancy and, even at that time, you know, some of us thought we might have been going then, but I was lucky to survive that one. That one came pretty close, actually, to me leaving back in 2000, so, in a way, I sort of thought to myself 'Oh well, even if I can stay at Mitsubishi for another five years' and the reason why I say that is because I did reach my 25-year record; got a watch, which is really nice, which was fantastic, actually, but I mean, in a way, and I sort of thought, back in 2000 'Oh, my job's not secure…anything could happen. I don't have any idea how long I'll be able to last at Mitsubishi' you know? 'X number of years and let's start paying more off the mortgage' or, you know, so in a way, those five years were a bit of a bonus, I felt. Yeah, so, then of course, with all the rumours and everything going around and 'This and that, this might happen,' you know, you sort of did look to the future thinking 'Oh well, one day I might, something might come along or a package might be offered.
>
> Q: Yep, so in a way, you were already prepared.
>
> A: Yeah, well, that was the first time that I sort of started seriously thinking 'What if?'

In cases where there was no mention of forward planning, the re-employment also addressed the loss of the manifest benefit work and the implications for mortgage payments:

> Q: How has being employed since leaving Mitsubishi helped you move on with your life?
>
> A: It definitely helps because you don't have the stress of not having the money to pay your mortgage. You've got to have employment, yeah.

Inability to plan for a meaningful future can arise through complete or partial deprivation of access to the manifest benefits of work. As discussed in Chapter 5, many workers went from working full time in well-paid jobs to

casual work and significant net loss in income. While a bad job may be better than no job at all for some people (Jahoda 1981), economically inadequate jobs can led to psychological stress (Hassall, Muller & Hassall 2004:78) In the case of the following response, the clear implication is the current job is constraining the ability to 'move on' due to the insecure tenure associated with the job:

> Q: And how's having had employment since leaving Mitsubishi, has that helped you move on with your life?
> A: No it hasn't. My life's been put on hold because I haven't got a stable job so that's the answer to that question.

Retrenchment is an episode in the life course and its resolution through employment does not necessarily affect broader issues that constrain well-being. The latent benefits of work such as time structure and purposeful activity are not easily accessed through other sources and a job that provides intellectual stimulation, even if it is insecure employment and has no other redeeming features, may be better than no job at all:

> Q: If you have had employment since leaving Mitsubishi, which you have, did that help you move on with your life?
> A: Not really. The only reason I've really gone back to work is to keep my mind active. Like—yeah, that's the only reason I've gone back.

8.2 Discovering, Securing and Exploiting the Meaning of Home during Adjustment

The meaning of home is not static (Horwitz & Tognoli 1982; Thompson 2002). Horwitz and Tognoli's (1982) study of residential histories of adult men and women living alone found that home has varying environmental and psychological dimensions across people's lives. Zingmark et al.'s (1995) study of persons aged 12 to 102 who narrated their experiences related to the phenomenon of 'being at home' found that the experience of being related to significant others, significant places, significant activities, oneself and transcendence was a common experience of being "at home". Integral to the experience of being at home throughout the life span were 'being given an home', 'creating a home', 'sharing a home' and 'offering a home'

To assess the extent and nature of processes that might involve discovering, securing or exploiting the meaning of home during the process of adjustment to retrenchment, data from a question in the second in-depth interview 'Has your attitude to your housing or home change since you left Mitsubishi?' was analysed. Responses were coded and initially eight key themes emerged: continuity, for example, *'I'd say probably not, I still love being here….'*; concern about mortgage repayments, for example, *'well it's a bigger priority because we've had to scrape to make our mortgage repayments and all that sort of thing'*; insights into the impact of work on home, for example, *' so when you start looking at the importance of the contacts and families and stuff you realise that your own family and friends which you develop in your own sphere is very important and it is not to be ignored because if you ignore that altogether and it drifts away and all you have got is a work environment well then when the work environment finishes which this highlights it can do then you might not have anything much'*; the security of homeownership, for example, *' No, I don't think so because we actually owned this house before I was even made redundant'*; location, for example, *'No. No, it's—I mean, I'm still in the same geography of the place. I'm still a 15 to 20 minute drive from work'*; the experience of home, for example, *'Not at all, no. No, no, it's*

pretty—it's probably improved in some ways because I have more time, yeah. So clearly the jobs I could do around the house and stuff like that are done a lot easier, yeah'; and wealth creation, for example, *'Very much lately it has. Very much. I've seen my house as a tool to be able to get more houses and work towards my retirement a hell of a lot quicker'.*

The diversity of the responses is a small but important window on what matters in relation to the home as people come to terms with retrenchment. Some of the categories of meaning of home that were identified at the first in-depth interview (see Chapter 6) such as homeownership, emotions and centrality are expressed in the responses at the second interview. For some workers, the change in income and/or job security status raises concerns about housing affordability problems. For others, there is a realisation of the inherent risks in taking for granted the sociability that can be accessed through work. Consequently, there was a greater appreciation of the continuity and emotional security provided in the home domain. Hochschild (1997) has also commented that on being made redundant, workers lamented the previous strategy of securing the benefits of home at work.

To assess how housing design and location influence planning for the future, participants in the second in-depth interview were asked 'Do you think you will ever leave this house?' Fifteen out the 25 respondents felt that they would move at some point in the future, five were uncertain and five were adamant that they would not move. The main reason for 'leaving the house' was to achieve a more appropriate housing design in order to address needs associated with ageing. Several of these respondents mentioned that the hilly terrain of the area would eventually become a problem and they would need to move to a less undulating environment. The security inherent in home ownership and its ability to act as the foundation for a coherent intergenerational plan was evident in the response of one homeowner:

Q : And do you think you'll ever leave this house? It's a house for life, is that it?

A: Well, it's a house for a long time. Well, eventually, I mean once the kids leave home then we'll probably look at doing that because eventually

that's why I want to—I think I was saying to you earlier on about retiring. Perhaps at the mid to late 50s because then we can just hop in the car or something and my wife and I want to travel around Australia, because my wife doesn't wasn't to be working full time forever, you know. She wants to—she's hoping that by the time she's 50 that'll be it. Or we can go overseas or something like that. Those are the sorts of things we want to do. And that may mean selling this place up. I mean, we—you know, we won't, I don't think, be living here till our dying days. I think we'll eventually—

Q: But you might move around in the ...

A: Yeah. I think we'll eventually move on, or whether the kids stay here and we move on, I don't know. But I don't think it would be long term, like forever. I think once the kids are established in life then I think maybe that will be our cue to move on.

The constraint of homeownership with respect to family formation was expressed by a younger respondent. His concern that the house he currently lives in and owns would always be his house and therefore he and a future partner would have to buy a new house together is suggestive of the operation of the *belonging/possessing* dialectic, one of three that Zingmark et al. (1995) suggests are the essential dialectics comprising home:

Q: Do you think you'll ever leave this house?

A: Oh yeah. Eventually.

Q: And where do you think you will move to?

A: I feel, being single, I'm still young enough to fall in love. To me, my way of looking at it is I don't feel I could bring a girl into this house to live with me because it would always be my house. So if I fell in love now and I had to do the relationship shit and move on with this girl, I'd have to buy another house. And so it was our house. Because this would always be my house whether I sell it or leased it or rented it out or whatever, this would always be my house. So that's up to me. At the moment I'm not planning to move, I'll sort myself, the situation out, and then I'll look at it a bit down the track because it's not as if it's going to happen overnight.

8.3 Conclusion

The ability to plan for a meaningful future is considered by some researchers to be the pre-eminent indicator of a successful and equitable adjustment to retrenchment. Retrenchment packages are clearly critical to that ability. Retrenchment packages alleviated the stress of redundancy by providing the ability to make decisions without being rushed and in particular to make short and long-term financial plans such as paying off credit card debt and investing in superannuation. Without retrenchment packages, it is difficult to see how most workers would have been able to plan a meaningful future. The most common use of retrenchment packages was in paying down or paying off the mortgage and this has been discussed earlier. The main reasons for this decision were to reduce the current debt, to reduce the ongoing interest repayments and to reduce stress/feel more secure. Paying down the mortgage, at least to some extent, would achieve all three objectives so the desire to pay off the whole mortgage may have been reviewed as circumstance changed. Of the workers with a mortgage at Wave 1 (N=261), 141 had intended to pay off the mortgage using their retrenchment package and 120 people did not intend to pay off their mortgage. However, by Wave 3 (based on the responses from those still in the study), only 51 respondents had paid off their mortgage; however, an additional 90 people had used some of the payout to reduce their mortgage.

Getting a new job helped people to 'move on', but the need for stable, well-paid work militated against adjustment. The experience of retrenchment had caused some workers to think about and value the home in different ways. While in general, workers remained attached to their regions and homes, some realised that moving to a more suitable home would be inevitable. There did not seem to be any anticipation of regret in coming to this realisation and there appeared to be a capacity to re-establish a sense of home on relocation.

Chapter 9: Adjustment journeys and the sense of home: the Role of Household Dynamics

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This chapter, drawing on qualitative data from the interviews, demonstrates that intertwined with psychological processes of coming to terms with retrenchment is the task of maintaining a sense of home. The trajectory of an individual's sense of home—the tension between the experienced and the imagined home—commences early in life and can be viewed as a 'life long process, influenced by relationships with place, ensconced within a social context and used in preparation for future life transitions and challenges' (Watkins & Hosier 2005).

The sense of home is informed by and influences decisions about work as well as decisions about housing expenditure, location, design and tenure, and the part that housing plays in broader strategies regarding wealth creation and intergenerational transfers of wealth. Furthermore, retrenchment may represent, at least for most people, a time of social and spatial fragmentation and uncertainty, and may cause people to recount personal associations with a place and to 'look for old certainties marked by memories or objects of nostalgia' reflecting and informing what 'home' is about and what it means (Reinders & Van Der Land 2008:4). In a similar vein, job loss can be an experience that 'exposes the meaning of work in a different light' (Metzgar 2000).

The choice of the adjustment journeys to be analysed in this chapter was based on the desire to analyse retrenchment situations that were known to include one or more factors suggested in the literature to be important in terms of theorising retrenchment and the meaning of housing: whether the retrenchment was voluntary or involuntary (Clarke 2007); subjects' gender; housing tenure and neighbourhood amenity (Kearns et al. 2000); previous experience with retrenchment (Kinicki & Latack 1990); post-redundancy

employment situation (Waters 2000); and place/distance from the workplace (Hanson & Pratt 1988).

The structure for these constructed case studies involves six elements integrating household as a key analytical tool (Clapham 2005). The first is a brief overview of the basic demographic, household, employment history and facts of retrenchment (Introduction). The second element focuses on what home means and where it is with an emphasis on processes and structures of place attachment and homemaking (The sense of home: What and where is home how is it made?) The third element establishes the meaning and latent benefits of working for MMAL over the period of employment (What did it mean to work for MMAL?). The fourth element captures the immediate and longer term material and psycho-social effects of the retrenchment (Personal and household impacts of retrenchment). The fifth element explores the personal dispositions and household approaches to dealing with the emotions and issues surrounding retrenchment (Coping strategies and tactics). The final element engages the hopes and plans of the respondents as they consolidate their post-retrenchment situation (The future). Each retrenchment account is discussed in relation to the significance of the sense of home for how individuals in the context of their household situation went about coming to terms with retrenchment.

9.1 Malcolm
9.1.1 Introduction

Malcolm was born in the UK in 1949 and migrated to Australia at the age of five. He was brought to live in an orphanage in Western Australia (WA), under the auspices of a program established by the British and Australian governments and their respective welfare agencies.

At the time of his retrenchment, Malcolm had been working for MMAL for 14 years, in semi-skilled and unskilled occupations such as driving, welding and packing. His income on leaving MMAL was between $31,200 and $36,399 per annum. He was offered and accepted a voluntary redundancy

package worth approximately $30,000. He did not take up offers of assistance regarding training or employment. While working at MMAL, he states that he was very healthy until he developed cardiovascular problems and other major organ-related problems during three last three years of his employment. While working at MMAL, he lived in the western suburbs of Adelaide, unlike most of his work colleagues who lived close to the MMAL plants in the middle and outer southern suburbs. He had lived in this region for the last 25 years after spending the previous 20 years living interstate including while working as a long haul truck driver. He married in Adelaide and had three children. He subsequently separated from his wife. At the time of the first interview, he had one grandchild with one on the way. After leaving MMAL, he applied for and was deemed eligible for a disability pension. He considers himself retired and managing comfortably on the pension, the proceeds of his retrenchment package and previous savings.

9.1.2 The Sense of Home: What and Where is Home and How Was it Made?

At the time of the first interview, he was living on his own in a privately rented unit in the western suburbs of Adelaide having lived in the unit for three to four years. Previously, he lived in a privately owned, detached house in a nearby western suburb, which he described as a 'bad area'. Prior to that, he lived in the marital home, also in the western suburbs. He sold the more recent home and split the proceeds between his wife and children and moved into the privately rented flat. He was satisfied with his decision to give the proceeds of the sale of a house to his children feeling that: 'I give them something that I didn't have. I give them a start'.

In the long term, he wants to move into a Housing Trust house in a location equidistant between his former wife—with whom he is on good terms—and his daughter and grandchildren who are also living in the western suburbs. He volunteered the spatial term 'a circle' to describe the links that would ensue in the prospective residential arrangements between his wife, daughter and himself. He is prepared to wait as long as it takes in order to be offered

Housing Trust accommodation in the area he wants. While he only rated his current home as being 'somewhat important', he rated homeownership as being 'very important'. He considered his current unit as:

> A stopping off point until where I go. I could be dead by the time I get a Housing Trust. If I get a Housing Trust, well that's my next stop and that's where I'll stay the rest of me life.

He is financially secure, seeks and actively contributes to the same outcome for his children and is pragmatic about his current living arrangements:

> Q: So it doesn't worry you about renting privately?
> A: No. I have the most security on me to last me about five lifetimes.
> Q: You reckon okay. It sounds as if you haven't used your Mitsubishi payout much? Is that right?
> A: That's gone all to the kids.

Malcolm does not attach any particular significance to his current home in terms of the memories associated to it; however, there are memories attached to his marital home that influenced his decision not to keep it.

Asked about his understanding of the expression the 'Great Australian Dream', Malcolm said he did not believe the version promoted on the television, instead suggesting that 'the actual dream is freedom, love, happiness … there are more but I can't think of the words for it'. He linked his interpretation of the 'Dream' to his own feelings about being taken from the UK after World War II and brought to Australia to be placed in an orphanage—a process that he described as being 'kidnapped':

> In 1955, I came out here to Australia where I was put into an orphanage with thousands of other kids. There has been articles lately in the paper on how these kids were abused and everything like that. Well we had to virtually fight for our survival and I'm not going by anybody. I'm going by actually my experience, what's happened in my life is that I fought as hard as I could to actually survive which I have. I've stole, I've bludged, I've begged just to actually stay alive and keep up and by the time I got a job I was very, very young, even too young to actually get a job.

He is not an Australian citizen nor does he feel he can return to the UK; a situation he does not describe in terms of being 'homeless'.

Most of his neighbours work and during working hours he spends half his time at his unit and the other half at either the home of his ex-wife or at his daughter's home with the grandchildren. While he does not like most of the neighbours in his block of units, he does maintain contact with two of them and recognises the age gap between him and them:

> When they're home and I'm home well we have a drink together and they're younger than me so I'm surprised they actually talk to an old person.

He does not consider that there are particularly bad or particularly good aspects of living in the area. Malcolm was successful in applying for a disability pension and receives Commonwealth Rental Assistance.

9.1.3 What Did it Mean to Work for MMAL?

Working for Mitsubishi was 'just a job to get us money home for us to actually live off'. Malcolm does not miss working there at all. He does not miss his former workmates, although he was a member of the social club for a while. He did enjoy and expressed pride in exercising his ability to learn on the job at MMAL and master a set of skills quickly and was disappointed that after working for 10 years he was not offered the job of a leading hand when the position became vacant. He also felt that the work contributed to a mild heart attack and that while he appreciated being put on lighter duties after he became ill, he felt the company suggest that his drinking habits contributed to his disability. The offer to accept a retrenchment package was accepted in the following terms:

> I knew I wouldn't be able to last much longer in the actual workforce ….
> At least I'll get something for actually what I worked for. There was 30 odd thousand dollars and I said well yeah I'll take it and I'll just retire.

He did not experience any grieving process, stating 'I couldn't see what there was to grieve about', and when asked to express in three words how he felt about leaving Mitsubishi he replied 'Hip, hip hooray'. He feels that leaving MMAL was the best thing he ever did, claiming that they expected him 'to be a robot'.

In addition to the limitations imposed by his disabilities and consequently, in his opinion, the futility of doing any retraining, he did not feel that he would be able to benefit from any retraining simply due to his limited education. He believed that the Catholic orphanage in WA did not provide him with any meaningful schooling.

9.1.4 Personal and Household Impacts of Retrenchment

Malcolm feels more secure being away from the stress and danger of the assembly line environment, given his compromised cardiovascular system. He did not feel fit enough to work. He struggles with smoking and limiting his drinking to what he considers acceptable levels.

He feels that his financial, health, family and social life have all improved since leaving MMAL and stopping work. He has more time to spend with his children and grandchildren. His level of trust in people or institutions has not changed.

9.1.5 Coping Strategies and Tactics

Malcolm takes pride in never having sought any assistance from MMAL or the union and doing things 'for himself'. He does not believe in support groups. He feels its best to 'laugh off things' and not to face problems. However, he feels that he has been angry all his life. He feels his capacity to trust people was compromised by his perception that the processes adopted by British and Australian Government and respective welfare agencies to place him in an orphanage were emotionally abusive:

The actual whole lot is, if I was growing up with actually my family getting to know that I had a mother and father and know the neighbourhood in Birmingham instead of being put in (a situation) which I class or regard as a slave camp and being told to do what's you actually wouldn't even think of doing or letting your kids do if you know what I mean. They're the things I've got no respect for and the actual government, churches, the actual bosses of factory, they all expect the impossible and no thanks to people.

9.1.6 The Future

Malcolm saw his future prospects limited by his illnesses but to the extent possible, his future was with his family:

My hopes in the future is to put my feet up and have as many grandkids as I can, and see them all. And I just try and live out as simply as I can and try and enjoy my life with my kids—that's about it.

He saw his participation in the retrenchment research project as an opportunity to speak honestly:

Well to be involved is to actually let you know the truth about Mitsubishi. The truth on what work was like, the truth about how the actual workers felt about needing help. Like I say I'm not saying I need help, but I know other ones did. You can actually see it in their faces, they're pulling their hairs out and saying what am I supposed to do, you know. There is that much stress in the place it was just a joke

He feels very happy about spending more time with his family yet, speaking honestly, says that if he was fit he would 'love to work'. However, his illnesses are apparently insurmountable obstacles with respect to work. He will seek to strengthen links with family members through a change in housing tenure and location, which will not appear to change the meaning of home in the short term.

9.1.7 Discussion

Malcolm's adjustment to retrenchment can be characterised by the managing of his emotions (Waters 2000) and by a practical orientation to his own need for shelter and a longer term identity as a caring father and grandfather investing in the future of his kinship network (Dupuis & Thorns 1996). He was happy enough to leave MMAL due to his health problems and since he did not socialise a great deal at work, he did not experience any sense of loss, although his coping strategy of managing his emotions rather than facing problems, may mask other feelings. Of some interest here is whether individuals are active agents or passive victims in responding to unemployment (Leana, Feldman & Tan 1998) and whether in their portrayal of adjustment there is evidence of 'romantic', 'tragic' or 'complex' job loss narratives (Ezzy 2002).

Malcolm's rented unit functions for him as shelter and basic amenity but he does not appear to be connected to or embedded in the local community. Malcolm's investment in maintaining a sense of home or being 'at home' in and across three geographically distinct places is remarkable and may reflect the fractured development of his early sense of home through the experience of inter-country adoption and unhappy residential care experiences. Many people who leave the Australian foster care system at age 18 speak of having nowhere to call home.

He will seek to strengthen the links with the people in the 'circle' by a change in tenure and location, which will not appear to change the meaning of home in the short term. The equity he had in previous properties has, as is often the case, contributed to an intergenerational transfer of wealth within the family.

His sense of home did not appear to be challenged by the experience of retrenchment. In fact, it may have been strengthened. While it would appear that retrenchment left him with a need to structure time, he certainly had a regime in place where he could achieve an alternative routine through his spending allotted time 'at home' with those close to him. There is some evidence that home functioned as a source of ontological security.

9.2 Harrold

9.2.1 Introduction

At the time of the first survey, Harrold, age 60, was still working at MMAL but had been advised of his pending involuntary retrenchment. He had worked at MMAL for 35 years, the last 15 years as a draftsman at the Lonsdale foundry. His pre-tax income was between $52,000 and $77,999 per annum and his redundancy payment would have been well in excess of a year's salary.

Very shortly after receiving his redundancy payment, his wife left him and claimed half the payout. Part of the financial settlement involved Harrold remortgaging the marital property at Clarendon, a semi-rural environment within a half hour commute of the Lonsdale plant. Through an arrangement with his son and daughter-in-law, Harrold was living in a refurbished shed on the property while his son and daughter-in-law lived in and paid the mortgage on the property. Harrold had one son who worked at the Tonsley Park plant and another son who worked at another large employer based in the southern suburbs.

9.2.2 The Sense of Home: What and Where Is Home and How Was it Made?

Harrold had lived most of his life in the outer southern metropolitan area. Shortly after marrying, he and his wife shifted to Tasmania and on returning four years later, built a house in a neighbouring suburb. His long-standing attachment to the area is in part an attachment to his parents and siblings:

> Well, I got married and moved to Tasmania from Adelaide and I worked there on quite a successful project for a few years, three or four years and then I moved back to the Adelaide. That's where my family was and Tasmania was like a nice holiday. I built a house at Happy Valley, just over the hill and then about 12 years ago I relocated here and now I've relocated into the garage.

Moving into a refurbished shed allowed Harrold to maintain a sense of home in the face of the difficulties raised by the separation. Harrold was also attempting to subdivide his property in such as way that he and his son- and daughter-in-law could live on adjoining properties:

> A: Mmm, this will always be my home here and whether it's in here or if it's out, next door.
>
> Q: So what makes it home for you? Just the location, just that you love the location?
>
> A: Yeah, I love the location yeah, the quietness, I mean, we don't even have to close the curtains here, or blinds.

His attachment to the area is also based on evaluations of environment and amenity:

> Oh, it's beautiful here, yeah. Oh, just the climate, it's a little bit cooler, we don't have to worry about air conditioning here, even the house isn't air-conditioned. It's a beautiful valley to live in and so close, I had to go to Marion last night and I was, I had an appointment at six o'clock and I left here at 20 to six and I made it easy. So 20 minutes and I'm at Marion from here. Ten minutes and I'm at Woolworths over the hill.

The importance of home and homeownership fluctuated for Harrold over the three years of the survey series, perhaps reflecting the dynamic elements comprising his sense of home—as landlord on a highly geared property, as tenant on his own property and as aspiring home builder. All of these elements were in play in an environment and place to which he was very attached—including his relationship with neighbours—but in which the possibility of continued residence was problematic due to the need for relocation to find work. Three years after retrenchment, the importance of home and homeownership had waned considerably, as demonstrated by his comment 'it's only a house', perhaps also reflecting the fact that his dream of subdividing the property and continuing to support his son- and daughter-in-law in paying the mortgage on his property would not be realised.

While Harrold would be prepared to live interstate, particularly WA, he would not contemplate living in the northern suburbs of Adelaide, a disposition

partly informed by assessments of the northern suburbs amenity made during a period when he had worked in the area:

A: No, I'll just travel through Western Australia and probably head north, Karratha or Port Headland, up there.

Q: Booming places, I mean, I know that they've postponed or they've cancelled developments on mines 'cause they just can't get labour.

A: Yes, yeah, that's what I hear.

Q: So pretty good prospects for a job.

A: And that may happen here in that, and the way they're advertising for maintenance fitters and fitters and turners and that sort of thing in the northern area of Adelaide, it seems to be that way here but I'm not prepared to move to the north of Adelaide, I just do not like living over that side of Adelaide. I'd go anywhere else but not, I used to work at Weapons Research at Salisbury.

Q: Oh yeah, that's a fair drive.

A: Yeah, was.

Q: When did you do that?

A: When? When Matt was a baby.

Q: Before Tasmania?

A: Yeah, after I served my apprenticeship. So, I just don't like it out the other side of town, that's why I built this side of town when I came back from Tasmania, I realised that, gees, there's only one place to be and that's south of Adelaide or the Clare Valley or the Barossa Valley or Mount Gambier or somewhere like that.

Q: Yeah, it is, I mean I live in the southern suburbs, I think of the north as hot, flat and dry.

A: Yeah, it is, and depressing. I used to take one of the lads out to Elizabeth four or five years ago to play baseball and while he was doing his warm-ups I used to go for a walk and I tell you what, it's bloody, I did not like it one bit. Just go for a walk around the suburbs, forget this, no way that I would even think about living out that side of Adelaide.

9.2.3 What Did it Mean to Work for MMAL?

Working at MMAL played an important role in Harrold's life, particularly socially:

A: Yeah it was, it was a great social network.

Q: Was it?

A: And that is something that people don't realise I think, the friends you build up, the people you work with, the social clubs that are there, not only at Lonsdale did they have their own social club, Tonsley Park had a social park, in fact there's two at Tonsley Park that you could belong to, so you could belong to three different social clubs and build up a great network of friends if you wanted to. I'd only go along to one and even now in retirement, or since I've left there I'm still a member.

A sense of how important working at MMAL was in Harrold's life can be gained through an understanding of what he missed most about working at MMAL:

Well, there's probably three things, the work that I was doing I really enjoyed while I was there, 'cause I had a number of jobs while I was there and each job that I had at Mitsubishi was like moving somewhere else, they were complete changes because I was working as a tool maker, I was working as an inspector, I was working as a production foreman, a maintenance foreman, a tool foreman and a draftsman. And each job I moved to different sections and it was like, although I was going to the same place because the place was so big it was like getting a new job somewhere else, and there's a whole load of new challenges each time. The other things that I liked there are the people I work with, and I've said that before.

Harrold experienced the loss of the job as 'disappointment' especially in the context of the apparent lack of planning in the closure of the Lonsdale plant and what he saw as a failure by management to ensure worker's expectations about the future of the plant were realistic:

A: I was disappointed that it happened, but I wasn't angry or upset or anything. Just generally disappointed, not only for myself, but others.

Q: Did you think it was inevitable?

A: Well that's the sad part about it, they kept saying that the place will keep going and they weren't being honest with us, because I was involved in a project where we bought machinery; very, very expensive machinery and we were allowed to go right through with that process and that

machinery came into the plant, millions of dollars worth, came into the plant and it was never unboxed. When the plant was sold the Japanese came in, picked those machines up and took them all and they would have paid scrap rate for them. I don't know how they balance the books, this creative accounting, but that's when you become very sceptical too. They let us go right through with that project and then they announced the closure. The letters go right through; I was involved in the new block and we just got the first block off the line and the next day it was announced that we were going to close. And they let that happen and they knew that it was going to happen, instead of being honest right from the start, saying look this plant is going to close and we don't want you to go ahead with it. But they kept everyone fired up. I was very disappointed at that.

9.2.4 Personal and Household Impacts of Retrenchment

If the involuntary retrenchment had not come along, Harrold imagined that he would have continued to work for another four years until retirement at age 65. Whether causal or correlational, Harrold was faced with the process of marital separation shortly after retrenchment, which not only saw him move out of his house into his shed, albeit refurbished, but also meant he had to part with at least half his separation package and risk manage the remortgaging of his house. While he managed to find work, it did not pay as well, was very insecure and he had to travel much further than the previous commute to Lonsdale. However, the greater physical activity associated with his new work contributed to improved fitness and some weight loss. Harrold felt that after an initial period of stress, ultimately the challenges he had to rise to in adjusting to new work environments gave him a sense of confidence. He had made 'lots of friends'. He felt he had become a little more cynical and less trustful since retrenchment. He also felt that the retrenchment had given him the flexibility to take time to do things between work contracts, things that he would not have been able to do at MMAL:

> Yeah lived here for about 15 years. I lived at Happy Valley for about 20 odd years before that. Yeah that's been good. I really can't complain about anything. My age, I can still get a job even though it might not be full time, but at the same time I enjoy that flexibility. Because even though I'm

working for contractors and even though I'm signing workplace agreements for short terms and all that sort of thing, at this stage of my life it means that from January 5th I can have a month off if I want to. Or in March I can have a month off or I can go overseas, so its given me the chance to have a bit of flexibility in my life and that's been good. In fact I went to Thailand for three weeks with a friend back in May and two months after he came back he passed away.

By living fairly simply, he managed financially, especially after concluding the financial settlement with his former wife.

9.2.5 Coping Strategies and Tactics

Harrold's retrenchment was not voluntary. He did have several months to think about it, as he was one of the last to leave the Lonsdale plant. He always thought that 'there would be something else' and he was resigned to the fact that he 'might be out picking grapes'. If he went through a grieving process, some of it happened while he was still at work:

> Because I was there till the end, I saw everyone go. I think it all happened before I left and I was able to take time to unwind after. I didn't go straight into another job, I didn't jump straight from that job into the job, I took a month off and went and did that cycle tour. I went to Tasmania for a holiday, I had a week at Mildura and generally had some holidays.

Harrold felt that the holiday he shared with one of his former MMAL colleagues, a person who happened to be quite ill, helped both of them in different ways:

> We did and that was fantastic, because he was ill before he did it, but he didn't know what was wrong, whether he had cancer. He had bowel cancer and he had bone cancer, but we worked together for 30 years and although we'd never been real close friends in the true sense of the word, we were really good acquaintances at work. And every day, every day of that three weeks from when we woke up to when we went to bed at night, there was always someone's name coming up. And that three weeks together with him we were able to talk about all the characters we worked with and a lot

of incidents of things that happened and storied we told each other. I wish I had written them all down, tape them like this, because they just went on and on. And I think it was good for him, because even though he didn't know what was wrong with him, he was able to tell me a lot of things about people and the characters that he worked with and the same with me. I forgot about that in the early part of the interview, that was a good part of the leaving and the moving on.

Harrold continued to participate in a model-building group and considered this activity sufficiently important that it would be a factor in any decision regarding relocating interstate. He also maintained regular contact with former MMAL colleagues.

9.2.6 The Future

Harrold was optimistic about the future even if it involved moving interstate to obtain work. His hopes for the future were based around the idea of continuing to work, travel and eventually to return to the area. There appears to have been a diminution of the connection to the valued environment in so far as there was a willingness to sell the former marital home; however, he intended to buy another 'place':

> They're fairly simple, I will sell this house, I will buy another place somewhere. Not necessarily straight away, maybe a couple of years. I'm thinking very seriously about getting a caravan and travelling and I may end up in Western Australia working or Queensland working, who knows. I would like to stay in the trade because I enjoy it.

While optimistic about his own future, his personal experience at MMAL made him cautious about the future for the factory where one of his sons worked:

> More sceptical yes, when we were at Mitsubishi there was always everything is all right and there is no problems and we would have big meetings and they'd give you a cup and say the future is in our hands and all this sort of thing. Whereas at the end of the day with the stroke of a pen they can wipe you out. And the same thing can happen at Hardys, the same

thing can happen at any of these other big plants around the place, now that we have become a global, lots of global takeovers and that sort of thing. Hardys are part of Consolation Brands in America and up on the wall there is the time in Los Angeles and California and all that thing. And every time you look you say well I wonder what they are thinking about now, and with the stroke of a pen they can say well we'll just make champagne at Hardys at Reynella, or we'll put that into great big bladders and we will ship that to Thailand and bottle it there or something. So I hope it doesn't happen, because it's a fantastic plant, a fantastic plant and they're good people and all that sort of thing.

However, in general, his sense of confidence about the future for his family in the current global situation remained intact. The experience of his own adjustment, which in part relied on a realistic appraisal of the marketability of his basic skills outside of MMAL, allowed him to feel that whatever further economic restructuring might be in the wind his children would be alright:

No not really, because my family, I have got a daughter and two boys, my daughter is married with three kids and she's a home person and her husband is in the building industry and they are doing quite well. And my two boys, the oldest one works at Mitsubishi at Tonsley Park and he's an electrician there and he feels pretty positive about the whole place. And the younger one Scott works at Hardys and he's been able to put a good word into the boss and so I've been able to get some employment there. And even if both those plants close I am happy to say that both my boys have got enough skills that they would be able to move into many areas. So I'm quite happy about that.

9.2.7 Discussion

Harrold's story of adjustment to involuntary retrenchment is suffused with the complexities involved in the parallel journey of estrangement from his wife. The negotiation of the divorce brought Harrold face-to-face with the meaning of home. He sacrificed the retrenchment package in order to hold on to the marital home even if the financial strategy underpinning the arrangement meant vacating the home to live in the shed while his son- and daughter-in-law lived in the house and paid the mortgage. Central to his meaning of home

is the amenity and expressive capacity of the semi-rural environment: its quietness and its proximity to more urban infrastructure and services. This infrastructure of course once included his job at MMAL; the relationship between home and work built on home as a rural retreat. But this environment is also where he maintains his relationship with a network of friends, neighbours and his children. He has one son as a landlord and when there is work he obtains employment from another son. He has plans to sell his house and might consider working interstate for an extended period of time but would never sell his 'home' to be closer to work in the northern suburbs—a stigmatised area where 'home' could never be (re)established/imagined.

9.3 Van

9.3.1 Introduction

Van was born in Asia in 1948, migrated to Australia in 1978 and settled in Adelaide. At the time of her retrenchment, she had been working for MMAL for 16 years as a machinist and machinist trainer and was earning between $36,400 and $41,599 per annum. She was offered and accepted a substantial voluntary separation package.

Van was married and her husband, aged 57, worked full time in the quality control section of MMAL. They lived in a suburb south of the Adelaide central business district (CBD) but not as far south as the group of suburbs where most of the MMAL workers live. She did not return to paid employment after leaving MMAL, instead she accepted responsibility to be the full-time carer of her mother, aged 79.

9.3.2 The Sense of Home: What and Where is Home and How Was It Made?

Within two years of arriving in Adelaide, Van and her husband purchased a house in the outer southern suburbs for themselves and their two very young daughters. They sold that house two years later and moved to a neighbouring

suburb. For the last eight years, they have lived in their current location in a house they had built:

> I moved from Trott Park to Hallett Cove, but after that my children grown up so we move here to so easy for them go to school, transportation more easy, I can go shopping.

While a more convenient location for herself and her daughters attending university, it did meant less contact with friends from her days in the outer southern suburbs. Asked what home meant to her, Van saw it in the following terms:

> A: It mean a lot, you know, yeah, because this your home, you put everything for it, you know, so that's why I love my home, because I do the garden, I, we have the house built.
>
> Q: Oh, did you?
>
> A: Yeah...everything
>
> Q: You designed it?
>
> A: Yeah, and we go to display house, AV Jenning, and bought it like the curtain, the carpets, the garden we have to uh do from start of the beginning, so you put so much work ...
>
> A: You put too much work on this so you love it, you know. I left two houses, one at Trott Park and one at Hallett Cove, and every time we left we feel sad.

Her current home is important in a practical sense since it provides a dedicated room for her elderly mother, is much closer to Asian grocery shops in the CBD and is very close to public transport. She could not think of any problems regarding living in the area.

Memories associated with her current home were significant:

> Yeah because we did everything, we had this house built, no carpet, no curtains, no garden and you have to do; you put too much work on this house, so you feel you love it. Yeah this is the way we had this house built eight years ago and my husband and I did every, we saved money and did everything, one thing to another thing. Like that and when we have saved enough money we do the carpet, when we have enough money you do the

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curtains, step by step. So that's why you love it, you put too much work in it, so we feel we attach with this house.

While she has less contact with friends from her former location, her current neighbours were important and the retrenchment had not changed that relationship:

Q: And are your neighbours important to you?

A: Yes, because if they nice you feel comfortable, but if they not nice you don't feel comfortable. They nice; this one she's a nurse and her husband have a shop, curtain shop to make the curtains. Very nice, sometimes in weekend we do the garden and we talk, that's ok.

Q: And have your neighbours become more or less important to you since you left Mitsubishi?

A: Just like before.

Van believed that home and home ownership were of the utmost importance and she had used some of her retrenchment payout to reduce the mortgage. Van and her husband worked hard to buy their first home but thought that with two people working it was not that much of a struggle. Van spends some time working in the garden but has limited time because her priority is care of her mother. They have not considered it necessary to do any home improvements and have no plans to move unless one of them dies in which case the other may wish to move into a smaller house. The impact of the retrenchment on her attitude to her home in the two years since retrenchment has only been that she has more time to clean.

9.3.3 What Did it Mean to Work for MMAL?

There was an option to stay at MMAL (i.e. not to take the voluntary separation package) but that would have involved working on the assembly line and she believed this would have been even more demanding than work in the machining area:

I take the package, that's why I left, but if I don't want I stay there, but they will give you the job they have, not so; my job is a sewing machinist and that department outsourced, that means closed down. So if I don't

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want to leave they give me another job, they don't sack me, but the job is not suitable for me, the main job is heavy on the line, it's heavy. So I don't want it. You do the heavy job you can get back problems.

Van liked working at MMAL even if it was a demanding job. She valued the human resource policies adopted by MMAL especially their willingness to let employees use long-service leave and annual leave when production fell and labour was not required at the normal levels. She also considered that they paid a great deal of attention to training and that there was a willingness to be flexible regarding start times and time off provided employees did not abuse the system and were willing to reciprocate. The thing she missed the most was the contact with other workers:

Q: What do you miss most about your work at Mitsubishi? Because you were there a long time.
A: Yes. I miss my friends, nobody talk. Sometimes you want, sometimes we uh, before on lunchtime normally we sit together and we talk, but now you don't have friends to talk you know?
Q: Have you stayed in contact with your friends?
A: A few, yeah.
Q: Is it something that you have to organise to stay in contact?
A: Sometime they ask me go to like, birthday, um baby and uh to end the year, but sometimes because I attend the computer course at nighttime I cannot go.

Asked to describe how she felt, in three words, about losing her job she replied 'awful, awful, awful'. Despite the fact that her retrenchment was voluntary, she felt it took her about six months to adjust, commenting that 'I feel depressed. I have to find something to do or I'll go mad'. For Van, the worst thing about working at MMAL was the heat inside the factory, but this was eventually addressed with introduction of air conditioning.

9.3.4 Personal and Household Impacts of Retrenchment

Initially, Van found not being in the routine and practice of work stressful:

The feeling, when I just left about six months after I left you feel, I don't know how to say, you feel like you are not useful people anymore, because suddenly you don't go to work and you feel like you are useless. After that it's ok, but when you just leave Mitsubishi, normally you have to wake up early and go with my husband, normally I wake up early and go with my husband. But when I left there I don't have to wake up early and my husband has to wake up early to go to work and I feel awful, why do I have to stay at home. I can go to work or something like that, but now I have to stay at home.

Since retrenchment, Van feels she has more time to spend on doing other things and feels less stressed, as she felt her job was quite demanding. She attends Tai Chi and swimming classes provided her mother can be left unattended. She feels she is able to interact more with her daughters and even it that means doing more for them it feels less stressful than the daily routine of work. It has also proved beneficial for her relationship with her husband. She states, 'it is better, I can look after him better. He feels better—we feel better.'

In her final interview, Van reflected on the impact retrenchment had on her:
> If you had small children or your husband didn't have good salary you would have had problems. But for me it was fine. I was ready to retire, but if you had too big mortgage it would have been difficult.

If the retrenchment hadn't come along, Van believes she would have continued working until aged 62,

9.3.5 Coping Strategies and Tactics

Initially, Van felt quite depressed and grieved for a role that she valued positively:
> Q: Do you think you went through a process of grieving once you left Mitsubishi?
> A: For a few months.
> Q: Did you?

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A: I feel, I don't know, I feel like you are a loser.

Q: Did you?

A: Yeah, yeah. I feel uh you hopeless.

Q: Yeah.

A: Because I don't think positively, you know, so you feel depressed for a few months ... and after that I try to do something, you know, to school or do something, but now I enjoy it. [Laughs.]

She discussed it with her family who felt she should stop work and concentrate on her home and supporting her husband to stay on working. She has integrated the change into her life, seeing her employability declining as she ages:

A few months after I left. But after that I used to it, so I have another thing to do, I try to keep myself busy with many things, so I feel all right now. I feel relaxed, I accept now I getting old, I stay at home. And because I am not young to have it all too, so it's not easy for us to look for a job. If I tell them I am nearly 60 not easy, not easy to find a job.

She has also undertaken courses in cake decorating, computing and English. She did not blame MMAL for the retrenchments:

In fact, the policy at MMAL is very good. Just because business is not good they have to close down. Now my husband is still working. I have friend they take package they get job elsewhere and try say that no company is better than MMAL.

While clearly dedicated to the care of her mother, she places a high value on the ethic of work. Given the opportunity she would work as she feels that at home 'by yourself you feel boring and lonely and you feel you not useful' because 'I don't like to stay at home'.

9.3.6 The Future

Van feels good about having more time to look after her mother and the house. She feels that while they have less income, they can manage on her husband's salary. Overall, she is more relaxed. However, things are different.

Referring to the time when she was still working, she explains 'I had money; I could buy straight away, now I have to think about that'.

In general, Van's picture of the future is linked to her family:

> Q: What are your hopes for the future?
>
> A: My hopes for my future. It's easy, my daughters get married, have grandchildren to look after, that's why I am happy, I'm waiting.

9.3.7 Discussion

Van's adjustment to voluntary retrenchment is consistent with the literature that argues that voluntary retrenchment, while having features that make it a much more user-friendly string in the organisational restructuring bow, also raises profound issues regarding identity (Clarke 2007). Van grieved over the loss of a valued role and perhaps remains somewhat ill at ease with the new role of full-time carer for her mother who is a member of the household. She would rather be at work even though culturally there appears to be strong support for her caring role. Initially, home was not a good place to be during the worst times of her adjustment but now home means reaping the benefits of hard work and being able to enjoy positive relationships with neighbours and access to cultural and other infrastructure. It would be easy to characterise Van's relationship with home as being strongly gendered as discussed by Blunt and Dowling (2005:19).

9.4 Bruce

9.4.1 Introduction

Bruce was born in the UK and had worked at MMAL for 20 years. He was a foundry worker at the time of his voluntary retrenchment. At the time of the first survey, he was 49. At the time of retrenchment, his before tax income was between $41,600 and $51,999 per annum. His voluntary separation package was substantial.

He lived with his wife and three children in an outer southern metropolitan area suburb. His wife was not working at the time of his retrenchment. His oldest child was working and the two other children were still at school. He did not seek to become re-employed in the same industry but instead chose retraining and was in full-time training in the IT field at the time of the first in-depth interview. He remained in training for over a year and then obtained full-time work, which he held for about 12 months. He left that job and at the time of the Wave 3 survey, he had been unemployed for at least six weeks, spending approximately 50 per cent of his time trying to establish his own business and the remainder looking for work and on family duties. He was on unemployment benefits.

9.4.2 The Sense of Home: What and Where Is home How Was it Made?

Bruce had lived in his current house for eight years and had paid his house mortgage off using part of the proceeds of his package. He had lived in his current neighbourhood for over 15 years, having never lived outside of the southern metropolitan region of Adelaide after he left the parental home. He had moved three times since leaving the parental home. The idea of home and the status of homeownership were very important to Bruce. Asked if he considered his current 'place' home and if so what did home mean, he replied, 'well, just a place where you can come home and be with your family'.

Eighteen months after his retrenchment, he felt that his attitude to his home was different in so far as the weight he now placed on its role as an asset:

Yeah probably look at it that way, it's more of an asset yeah. You've always got something there if something goes wrong.

Bruce believed that the popular conception of the Great Australian Dream probably meant 'buying your own home, having a good job and a good car' but the phrase did not mean anything to him personally.

He was comfortable with the decision he made to use all of his payout to pay off his mortgage, feeling that he did not have to worry about the mortgage any more. He also felt comfortable with the decision to use the payout on the mortgage since the advice to take that course of action had come from financial planners and his accountant. A recent home improvement project—a new kitchen—had been undertaken prior to the retrenchment.

However, he did not consider his current home to be significant in terms of memories nor even after seven years did he feel 'too attached to it'. His neighbours were important to him and the experience of retrenchment had not changed his attitude to his neighbours. He thought it would be difficult to move to another state or a northern suburb due to his fondness for the area and difficulties maintaining his childrens' valued social networks and schooling arrangements. Given the option of a job that involved moving, he would chose not to take the job. His attachment to the area was in part based on amenity considerations and familiarity:

I think it's just a nice area. It's close to the beach, nice surroundings I guess. I just like it better than living down in the plains, the metropolitan area. I just find it's the best place out of Adelaide that I like. I've always lived down this way.

These factors outweighed negative aspects such as travel time to the city or current work and potentially future work opportunities, which he believed would be less likely to be found in the southern suburbs. Nevertheless, he had no plans for moving but was realistic about the need for contingency plans:

Q: Do you think you'll ever leave this house?

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A: Well I don't think I ever will no, but you never know. Never know what the future will bring, but I'm planning to stay here, I'm not planning to move.

9.4.3 What Did it Mean to Work for MMAL?

Bruce had spent most of his working life at MMAL having previously worked on a furniture delivery truck and doing other general factory jobs most of which he could not remember. He had worked at MMAL for 20 years mostly on a cord-making machine and had also done some work on the assembly line. He enjoyed the pay and working conditions and some of the benefits that went with the job such as long-service leave, annual leave and 'lots of days off'. During the first in-depth interview, Bruce was asked what role working at MMAL had played in his life:

> A: Probably a big part, I was there for 20 years which is a long time, so yeah. Yeah, it's been a big, fair part of my working life.
>
> Q: Was it only the working part of your life though? Did it spill over into the social or anything like that?
>
> A: No.
>
> Q: You weren't part of that at all?
>
> A: No.
>
> Q: Okay. So is there, what do you miss most about working at Mitsubishi?
>
> A: Probably just the fact you knew you had a job to go to every day, which I haven't got at the moment.

However, there was also a downside to his work at MMAL. He related that 'it was a hot job, hot, dirty job. It tended to be kind of boring a lot of the time'.

Two years after leaving MMAL, Bruce was asked whether there was anything he missed about the job:

> Probably just the people I knew and probably the security there. There was always a job for 20 years, you knew you had a job the next day to go to. I probably miss that aspect of it that you had a secure job there that for what we done it was pretty well paid.

At that time, he was also asked to describe, in three words, how he felt about losing his job:

> Initially I was glad, because I'd been there 20 years, so I was glad to get out and get the opportunity to try something different, so I wasn't really

upset by it. Plus being there for 20 years I had a fairly good payout, so I was quite glad in a lot of ways to get out of there. But then when I left I was a bit lost for a while, because I thought what am I going to do now kind of thing. I wasn't really sure what to do until I decided to do the IT.

9.4.4 Personal and Household Impacts of Retrenchment

If the retrenchment had not come along, Bruce believed he would have continued to work at MMAL. Clearly, such a situation would have made it difficult for him to experience or afford to do something new such as full-time training in IT.

Bruce felt that since leaving MMAL his health had improved slightly. He had noticed that the frequency of sore throats and hay fever has declined considerably. He thought that his weight had gone up a little, consistent with less daily activity since he stopped riding his bike to work and no longer had the physical activity associated with his former work. While experiencing some initial stress associated with uncertainty about a course of action to cope with the new situation, that stress abated once he made his plans. His family life and social life have not changed much although his training program has involved evening study and that has had some impact on his ability to spend time with his wife and children. His community activity has remained at the pre-retrenchment level. His sense of self has not changed. There was a degree of financial difficulty but it is not overwhelming. He earns 20 per cent less per week since leaving MMAL. His sense of trust in people or institutions remains unaffected since retrenchment.

9.4.5 Coping Strategies and Tactics

Even though Bruce left MMAL voluntarily, he did feel stressed about leaving:

> Q: And what was the most stressful thing about leaving Mitsubishi?
> A: Probably just not knowing what I was going to do. It was hard to leave there after 20 years and the hardest thing was having to go out and find another job.

Bruce felt much more at ease once he had a plan. Bruce signed on for an IT course within a few weeks of leaving MMAL feeling that obtaining qualifications and returning to the workforce as soon as possible would be the best plan. He paid for three quarters of the cost himself and received the other portion as part of a retraining grant. He was also eligible for Austudy. He worked closely with MMAL and job search consultants and took advantage of the opportunities that were presented.

Consistent with his decision to take voluntary retrenchment, Bruce saw the retrenchment as a 'golden opportunity' to do something different:

> Probably for a few years I've wanted to leave and I've always had an interest in computers, I wanted to try and get some qualifications and some courses on that but just never seemed to have the time or the money.

He felt that he knew enough about the automotive industry to understand its uncertainty as a source of employment and did not blame the company about the plant closure and his retrenchment:

> Q: Were you angry at all or disappointed?
>
> A: I wasn't angry about leaving Mitsubishi, no I wasn't angry. You could see it coming for a long time, probably for about the last 10 years there's been a lot of; even now I would have done it. Tonsley there's still a lot of uncertainty about whether they're going to survive or not. So it's been on the cards for quite a few years I think.

He did not give a high priority to staying in contact with his former work colleagues but did see some people from time to time. He did not feel that he grieved over leaving his job. He used his redundancy payout to pay off the mortgage on the house and ensure he would not have to pay rent should his employment situation become difficult. The payout helped for a few years but now that he has started work and the pay is 'so much less', daily life is 'a bit of a struggle'.

Bruce has had two jobs since leaving MMAL, both in the IT area. The qualifications he obtained through retraining were crucial to obtaining these

jobs. Working hours and pay rates are still problematic but he 'enjoys the work'. Further, gaining work helped him to 'move on' with his life such that employment at MMAL was starting to become a 'distant memory now'.

9.4.6 The Future

Bruce's hopes for the future were consistent with his decision to take a voluntary separation package:

> Q: What are your hopes for the future?
>
> A: Just to get the kind of job I'm looking for in IT with a reasonable pay, I'm not looking for a director's job and get filthy rich out of it. Just a reasonable wage that you're comfortable to live on. Anything more than that would be a bonus.
>
> Q: Would you be happy to be on a wage similar to Mitsubishi, would that be the ideal?
>
> A: Yeah I would be happy with that yeah.

In his first in-depth interview, Bruce was asked what advice he would give to someone else 'facing redundancy':

> Probably say it's a good opportunity to try something different, a career change. Yeah, probably would be the main thing.

In the second in-depth interview, he was asked what is had been like for him to be part of the study:

> Yeah I wouldn't say it was fun, I don't really mind doing it, but yeah it's hard to say. I wouldn't say it was fun no. I enjoyed the free movie tickets. I don't know if it helps in some way, I guess that's good. I don't know what you're going to do with it, but it sort of helps whatever you're going to do with it.

9.4.7 Discussion

The point that comes through in this case study is the psychological importance of having a plan in place regarding the future. For Bruce the stress that he was experiencing vanished once he had a plan. Even though he is currently unemployed he feels that retrenchment can be seen as an opportunity to try something different. He felt that the meaning of home was about engagement with family however having paid off his mortgage he now sees the home as more of an asset.

9.5 Arthur

9.5.1 Introduction

Arthur was 40 when he was retrenched, involuntarily, from the Lonsdale plant of MMAL, after having worked there for about 10 months. He was married with two primary school-aged children. His wife did not work. He lived in the north western suburbs, a one to one and half hour commute to the Lonsdale plant. At the time of retrenchment, he was a maintenance manager and his income was between $52,000 and $78,000 per annum. He did not feel he received much by way of a retrenchment payout but was eligible for all the support components of the overall package. Prior to working at MMAL, he had been employed at a large electrical switch gear manufacturer in Adelaide as a engineering manager and had similar jobs in smaller companies in and around Adelaide before that job. He had one previous experience of retrenchment. Before the retrenchment took effect, he obtained a position at a large food processing company in the north western suburbs.

9.5.2 The Sense of Home: What and Where is Home and How Was it Made?

Arthur grew up in the Port Adelaide region known as a working class area but with strong pockets of gentrification. On marrying, he and his wife moved into a unit in the country. Sometime later, they decided to work in a number of African countries for about three years. On returning, they bought a house at Largs Bay where they lived for a few years and subsequently 'upgraded' to their current house where they have lived for about eight years. Asked for his views on what people meant by the expression the 'Great Australian Dream', Arthur focused on the personal meaning:

> At a personal level it is to be happy and content, and later in life having paid for the house, the children's education to the best of our ability, or their ability.

Asked about whether homeownership had given him a sense of achievement, Arthur had mixed feelings:

It's been a struggle. We've had to sacrifice to do it but I was 37 years old when we bought this house outright. So it didn't give us a sense of achievement. It was probably one of the lowest days of my life because you work for all those years and then somebody hands you a piece of paper and says there's your loan paid for. I don't know if you expected a fanfare or firecrackers and other things to go off but it was just like there you go and that was the end of it. Mixed feeling there.

Arthur believed that culturally, the dream of homeownership was important in Australia. However, it was not a value he and his wife applied to their home:

I suppose that's the aim of every Australian to try and pay off their mortgage but that's not totally an aim for us because, as I said, my wife isn't out getting employment. So she's not working to pay off the mortgage. So we're still a single income family, we survive. I mean we more than survive and that's because we budget well. We live within our income and I don't have a brand new car,

He thought that home and homeownership were very important to him. He considered his current residence to be home and when asked what a home means to him, Arthur focused on the role that his wife played in homemaking:

A: My wife is a full-time mum and when I come home from work the heater is on in winter and the air conditioner is on in summer and the food is cooking and things like that.
Q: It feels like a home.
A: Its home. I come home for my children. I know they're being looked after. I know that my wife is looking after them and it's warm and it's nice and I enjoy coming home.

Approximately a year later, Arthur was asked if his attitude to home and housing had changed since he had left MMAL:

Very much lately it has. Very much. I've seen my house as a tool to be able to get more houses and work towards my retirement a hell of a lot quicker.

Arthur had purchased another investment property shortly after leaving MMAL and had also sold one. They were renovating their home at the time of the second interview and living in one of their investment properties.

While the memories attached to home were not personally significant, he appreciated that they may be significant for his wife:

> Not really. I'm not that materialistic, I could live in a tent and still be happy whereas Michelle she likes—she's designed this extension. And this is what she want done and it's her kitchen.

He thought that the better aspects of living in his current location were its proximity to relatives, that it was close to public transport and halfway between the northern and southern areas of the Adelaide metropolitan region:

> A: I'm a western suburbs boy and so I grew up in Port Adelaide. My wife comes from Seaton area. My brother lives at St Peters so we're basically halfway between everybody and I'm halfway between north and south.
>
> Q: So it's a convenient location?
>
> A: Yeah. So I haven't moved too far away from mum and dad and my brother, her mother and her family. So I'm far enough away that it can't be annoying but we're close enough that if we want to hop in the car they're 10 minutes down the road.

One of the more problematic aspects of living in the area was his concern about home security as a consequence of crime, which he considered a problem in the Adelaide area generally:

> Q: Do you worry a lot about crime?
>
> A: I do worry a lot about crime—I am very conscious to see things are locked and take a lot of precautions.

The other problem with living in the area was also defined in relation to a larger scale problem, the declining employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector in South Australia.

He enjoyed working around the house and garden, although every three weeks the family would drive to a picnic location or further afield in order to 'get a

balance between work and family life'. He did not feel he had any real emotional attachment to the house nor did he have any interaction with his neighbours. That level of interaction had not been influenced by the job loss.

He thought that eventually he would leave his current house and live in Tasmania, which would provide him and his wife with a cooler climate and the amenity of the 'beautiful' city of Hobart.

However, any choice to move from the house that was providing them with considerable amenity would not be made simply for the sake of employment and would need to reflect the value that they both placed on homemaking:

> Q: If you had to move house in order to find a job would that be difficult for you or not?
>
> A: No.
>
> Q: That wouldn't be difficult?
>
> A: It wouldn't be difficult for me but I wouldn't move house because of the job. If we make a decision to move then the job could be part of that after. So to me moving to seek employment or seeking employment to move they're kind of like two separate entities. So rather than say we change tomorrow—I've always wanted to live in Tasmania, I'd go tomorrow. We'd be gone; I'd then look for a job down there.
>
> Q: And it wouldn't be difficult for you to leave here?
>
> A: I don't think so. But certainly from my wife's point of view that's just totally different to her perspective. But I wouldn't get the job down in Tasmania and then say how am I going to do it? I have certain confinements even when I'm looking, even now when I'm looking for a position. There's no way in the world I'm going to be looking for a job out at Gawler or Elizabeth. I'm not going to look out there. I'm not prepared to travel. I'm not prepared to travel to Mannum for work at Bagshaws. I'm not prepared to travel to Clipsal at Murray Bridge. I'm not prepared to travel to Clipsal at Strathalbyn I'm not prepared to travel to Lonsdale.

9.5.3 What Did it Mean to Work for MMAL?

Arthur considered that the best aspects of working at MMAL were the pay, company car and the hours. The worst aspect was the daily long commute to work and back. Commuting probably heightened his awareness of the some of the benefits of living in the outer southern area for some of his colleagues:

> Well I'm at Woodville and they're down south so a lot of the guys down there are from Lonsdale. A lot of the guys have very idyllic lives. They live at places like McLarenvale and one guy came up and lived at Victor Harbour. They live very idyllic lives. Guys come up from Willunga and all those other places so a lot of those guys I don't see.

He got his job at MMAL through insider knowledge of vacancies in the plant—some of his long time friends worked for MMAL. He had sent in a résumé some four months prior to obtaining the job. He did not feel particularly attached to his other work colleagues. He had some respect for the company, but was equivocal about the impact and benefit of so many long-term employees at MMAL:

> They're a big company with a very good reputation and they pay very well. They are a professional outfit, okay every company has got its good and bad points but Mitsubishi were a good company to work for. The only thing was that 80 per cent of their workforce, because they'd been there for that long, it actually was a sign of what a good company they were working for.

Arthur was a manager at MMAL and in the brief time he was employed, his major frustration was the strength of the union movement. The difference between the attitudes at MMAL and that of his current employer to corporate strategy was very noticeable:

> At Mitsubishi you're constantly dealing with the union, shop stewards, the threat of being—I mean I don't mean to sound wrong, but being union bashed. As a manager the union can put a grievance against you on the slightest little thing. I mean at Mitsubishi they even had these pads in triplicate already made up so they could put in a grievance against you. It's

like give us a break, you've only got to say one thing out of turn and bang you're gone. And you've got to come up front to some manager and explain why you said this. And the shop steward has got to be present while you're at your interview and it's like, different stresses. At Smith's the stress is making products and achieving target.

9.5.4 Personal and Household Impacts of Retrenchment

Despite the commuting problems and frustration with corporate strategies had he not been retrenched, Arthur felt he would still have been working at MMAL, the financial incentive being uppermost in his mind as it underpinned his overall wealth creation strategies and goals:

> I would probably still be there. Probably be further along my financial strategy that's all. When you're getting an extra $20,000 per year that enables you to invest in a lot more portfolios and greater net to be able to explore. It gives you…our portfolio had a low risk option and a medium to high risk and a high risk, when you're earning an extra $20,000 you can slip more into high risk areas but if you lose it, you have the ability to make it up and that balance…we still take some high risk but we can't do it to anywhere near the extent. So we have to be more conservative.

Asked how he would describe his feelings about losing his job, Arthur said he felt betrayed and disappointed yet he also felt it was inevitable given the high salary structure and poor performance of the company. The most stressful part of the retrenchment was having to find another job, a situation that was aggravated by his complete lack of confidence in his assigned job network provider.

While he had to take a $20,000 per annum cut in pay and lost his company car, his working hours had improved. He no longer did shift work and he now worked much closer to home. His wife had commented that he was 'no where near as grumpy' and Arthur experienced positive emotional benefits in his relationship with wife Michelle and two children:

> Yep. We are closer, its better now than its ever been. I have a beautiful wife, two amazing children, that's what's important.

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He also felt more confident about the security of his new job given that he was no longer in the automotive industry, which he felt was in decline. He believed that working in the food industry was completely new and interesting; there was free food, the level of training was very high and he had never received this level of training anywhere else.

He also felt that losing the job at MMAL was a catalyst for being able to implement some investment decisions he had been thinking about for some time, partly informed by his tertiary level training in business. Asked to summarise the impact on his family he replied:

> Having a brand new car basically given to you and whatever else, that certainly was a nice thing to have. So to have to buy a car and run a car again was certainly an added expense that we had to put back into the budget. I work longer hours at Smiths but that is more than compensated that I don't drive for one and a half to one and three-quarters hours on the road anymore and also at Smiths I don't do the rotating shifts that I did at Mitsubishi. So overall, looking at it from my wife's point of view, probably Smiths is…what I've lost out in wages and the car I've picked up on…I'm only day-shift. I start at 6.00 every morning and sometimes I come home at 6.00 at night but at least I start every time. Whereas at Mitsubishi it was one month you're on days, one month you're on afternoons and the next month you're on nights. And then you could be back on afternoons and they you're on nights.

9.5.5 Coping Strategies and Tactics

Arthur had previously experienced retrenchment and his strategies for securing his financial position in case of hardship had paid dividends:

> I was, I mean I'm young, I'm keen and this is the second time in my life I've been made redundant. So being made redundant didn't matter a stuff for me. I've got income tax insurance, I've got my mortgage insured so if I went on the dole well, I'm covered. But I actively engaged in my own employment so that doesn't happen to me. But a lot of these other people they didn't do it.

His attitude in the face of the difficulties presented by retrenchment was to be proactive and be solution-oriented:

> I see it as just a part of life. It's the second time I've been made redundant. Just have to accept it/its not a big tragedy/need to get on with your life/it's a chapter that's closed.

Overall, he and his wife felt that the experience had taught them to be a little more self-reliant:

> We're earning less but my wife and I, it drove us into a strategy and since we left Mitsubishi it's been a far better position. I didn't get a payout. It's just the fact that we've…what's the word for it? We pulled everything together, made some decision and went out in a set direction.

He did not feel that his perception of himself had changed as a result of the retrenchment. He felt that what he needed to do was to reflect on his strengths and weaknesses and learn from the experience:

> No, not really. I was into psychology at uni so I've got a fairly clear idea of what are my traits, what are my strengths and my opportunities. How I see myself. How I deal with situations, how I blow my temper, how sometimes I don't blow my temper. A lot of these things were identified years and years ago so no, the only thing that hits me about Mitsubishi is probably the poor judgement of the fact that I sit back and keep on asking myself, how did I fall into that hole that in 10 months I had to be looking for another job. I had pretty well set myself up for the rest of my life on a fairly high income, good money, good car. Japanese company as well, what I saw to be security was there and then on top of that you had this massive company that just enabled huge growth potential. For my own career development there was all these opportunities. So what did I miss 10 months ago that enabled me to make that wrong decision and that's probably the one area where I keep on looking at. I mean I'm looking for another job now and that has taught me … again I'm asking a lot more questions now.

He did not experience a grieving process and on the contrary, was able to quickly conclude that it had been 'good while it lasted' and could have been

much worse. In fact, the last time he was made redundant he was only given four weeks' notice and left without any entitlements or assistance. He believed that most other people in Adelaide facing retrenchment in the future would not be in such a good position as those at MMAL and probably Holden. His strong emotional reaction the last time he was made redundant could be shared with his friends who had also been made redundant:

> Yeah, there we go again. I was 21 the first time it happened. I went down and got smashed and never came back to work. I must admit I didn't do that at Mitsubishi because I had to lock the factory up but basically on the way home from that we all met somewhere.

His advice to other people was to ensure that there CVs were updated by professionals who understood how to write competency-based CVs and the most important thing was to accept:

> That it is going to happen. It will happen; it's going to happen, so make things happen so you're not the victim.

He felt that given the corporate strategies at MMAL, the retrenchments were inevitable:

> It's inevitable that they're going to close. There's no way in the world that you can run a factory paying people one-third … the amount of money … I mean I walked into Mitsubishi, I could not believe that their unskilled labour was a) being paid the amount of money that they had to be paid; b) doing the amount of work that they were doing for it; c) was that Mitsubishi had its hands tied that they couldn't reduce their workforce. They signed a non-redundancy agreement or whatever it was. So if you're using 1,000 people to make 100 cars, if you're only making 50 cars, if that workforce has to drop to 600 then it drops. There's no way in the world that the business can still be financial if you're employing 1000 people and only making 50 cars. There's no way!

9.5.6 The Future

Arthur had clear dreams about the future and had plans for early retirement:

My hopes for the future is to grow fat and bald, be self-sufficient. I want to be retired in about five years' time. So that's where I want to be. But I know I might not make it but I want to retire at 45. I want to be enjoying life.

He had been diagnosed with Menier's disease and had already had several operations. In the future, he would have to work within the constraints set by the disease. His current employer had been very supportive of his situation. He could still be philosophical about the retrenchment perhaps influenced by the previous retrenchment:

Q: Do you think losing your job from Mitsubishi has made you more conservative about security for the future within work?

A: No not really. Mitsubishi was the second time I was made redundant, not the first. So the way I look at it is that it happens, I had my own career plan at Mitsubishi planned out, that's the reason why…I was actually an engineering manager for another company, I actually took a backward step to actually go to Mitsubishi but the though process was that Mitsubishi were a far larger company and they did pay extremely well. When the opportunity came, I grabbed it with the intention of … because it was so much more … all these opportunities are going to open but unfortunately I got there in the September or October and then in the March we got made redundant.

Overall, the experience had made him more realistic about employment opportunities and had a positive effect on his confidence about the future for himself and family in the changing world circumstance:

I think it's made it clearer. It's definitely got rid of the rosy coloured glasses. It's made me look at a lot of … particularly trying to find another employer. Looking at a more balanced decision. As I said I took a lower position at Smith's than what I had been offered but I think in terms of balance between wages security, Smiths are only 10 minutes down the road here at Regency Park so when you combine the whole lot together, it was a package that was worth going for and two years down the track, I'm still there. So that's how I see it.

Arthur felt that the writing was on the wall for the future for the automotive industry in Australia:

> A: They've just spent billions of dollars on a brand new one in Shanghai in China. Where do you think Holden's going to go? General Motors is going to move them off. It's only a matter of time.
>
> Q: It doesn't make a lot of sense does it?
>
> A: Well I can understand why … and that's why I think Holden's going to be in the same boat. Holden's got their hands tied. The entire assembly line at Holden for the new Commodore can be unbolted. It's made in an entirely modular form, I know engineers that have worked on it. Totally modular form, can be set up in a hangar anywhere in the world in three weeks flat. So what does that tell you?

9.5.7 Discussion

There are two particularly interesting aspects to Arthur's story. The first is to do with his reaction to paying off the mortgage. Rather than feeling elated Arthur felt deflated – all those years of work and having finally achieved what some suggest is the great Australian dream he takes no satisfaction in it at all. His feelings can perhaps be explained by his broader views about home – its the place where he experiences the benefits of the division of labour in the household. The home is not a status symbol. The other interesting feature is how he applied his previous experience of retrenchment to the current episode. Having been made redundant once before he thought he had a good plan when he took up job at MMAL. He had rated the fact that the job was in the automotive industry highly as was the fact that it was a Japanese owned company which implied job security. As it turned out he was retrenched within 10 months of working at MMAL but had managed to find alternative work before the retrenchment took place. He ponders as to why he hadn't been able to predict what happened – as if the fact of retrenchment was his own fault. However previous experience of retrenchment has taught him that the best thing to do is to accept that it is going to happen and not be a victim

9.6 Conclusion

This Chapter demonstrated the importance of household dynamics for understanding housing pathways in the context of unemployment. The in depth interviews were all conducted in the homes of the participants and there is strong sense that this choice of location facilitated an open exchange between interviewers and research participants. In some cases other members of the household were in the house and this appeared to assist participants feel at ease and more readily access key emotions, decisions and events in the context of life planning. The construction of these case studies demonstrates the mechanisms involved in interplay between adjustment to retrenchment and maintaining a sense of home. A strong theme within these case studies is identity – eg as responsible father or grandfather, as carer for the elderly, as a successful business person. Not particularly as homeowner. Across these case studies it is possible to see aspects of 'romantic', 'tragic' or 'complex' job loss narratives (Ezzy 2002). In these cases however what is demonstrated is how home acts as a stabilizing influence within these narratives. The difference between the experienced and imagined home for at least two of the participants is quite wide and for three participants there is still a healthy degree of tension. In each case nevertheless this tension is recognised and informs life planning for each of the participants and interacts with the retrenchment narrative in complex ways. Malcolm is able to wait for his version of the ideal home courtesy of his previous frugality and the retrenchment package; his narrative is very much about being a victim of an insensitive employer while he was working and a less than generous employer in retrenchment. Harrold's experienced home was shattered indirectly by the stress of retrenchment in that it led to the complex narrative of divorce. But his sense of home is strongly influenced by the surrounding environment and it is restorative. Van feels conflicted about her previous identity as a income earner and her current identity as carer – home has taken on a slightly different meaning. Bruce now sees the commodity level of meaning of home and Arthur's experience of previous retrenchment provides strategies which

might otherwise have seen him tell a different story. These five case studies demonstrate the central role of the tension between the experienced and imagined home in relation to narratives of adjustment to unemployment and whether subjectively or objectively it would be possible to categorise any participant as being passive victims of retrenchment

Chapter 10: Running the Risk of Retrenchment and Securing the Sense of Home

10.1 Introduction

This thesis has investigated how home mediates the process of adjustment to retrenchment. Following Greig (2006) home was defined as a place of belonging and while a house was a physical structure which provides shelter, albeit that housing is usually only attainable through participation in a housing market. The thesis suggested that the 'risk society' era as formulated by Beck (1992) could provide a model for understanding the relationship between the individual, employment and society in the contemporary era and the relationship between the experience of work and the experience of home. Furthermore following Blunt and Dowling (2005:22) home was defined as being simultaneously material and imaginative, influenced by ideology and power, and multi-scalar. An earlier call by Hanson and Pratt (1988) for a reconceptualization of the linkages between home and work also informed the thesis. This call was essentially to acknowledge the two way interdependency between home and work and that 'home' would recognise the neighborhood as the locus of a set of potential jobs, social networks, and services that bear critically upon the household's work decisions. Home also had the capacity to be a source of ontological security. This rendering of home leaves less space for an earlier view of home in the industrial era, as developed through structural functionalism, that saw home as separate from the workplace, facilitative of individualism, contributing to the rise of domesticity and as a sanctuary to escape from the workplace, a source of domestic privacy and a status symbol (Shorter 1976). Nevertheless this is the space that the thesis explored

Using the findings and or constructions regarding retrenchment, coping/adjustment and home discussed in the literature it was argued that adjustment to retrenchment involves the interplay of two processes – the agency expressed in how the individual assesses the challenges and benefits

associated with losing one job and perhaps getting another and the agency expressed in how the individual develops and maintains their sense of home. In other words retrenchment is, hopefully although increasingly unlikely, a one off events that interrupts, for better or worse, the unfolding life course sense of home which in turn influences housing and other decisions. It was argued that in order to fully assess how home enables or constrains the process of adjustment to retrenchment it is necessary to acknowledge that (a) adjustment may start well before the formal announcements, (b) adjustment has cognitive and emotional dimensions, (c) the sense of home may be enabled and or constrained by retrenchment, (d) perceived loss of the latent and or manifest benefits of work may inform reactions to job loss (e) the level of job satisfaction will influence adjustment and (f) the need for a satisfactory home/work balance will influence job search activity and job satisfaction.. The investigation was conducted through a longitudinal, mixed methods and multidisciplinary study of the adjustment experience of retrenched auto-industry workers where the focus was on the subjective – the perceptions, attitudes and meanings of a sample of retrenched workers to house, home, place and job loss and re-employment, over time – to be integrated with quantitative data

10.2 Research aims and questions

The thesis had three main aims. The first was to document and analyse the journeys of adjustment to retrenchment by a cohort of workers as expressed in their own words and as measured through indicators. The thesis achieved this aim by integrating the largely unmediated responses of answers to questions about the nature of job loss and the resolution of labour market goals with aggregate data measuring indicators. Data on the psychological, social and economic processes of adjustment to retrenchment was drawn from interviews with up to 372 participants including 38 participants at up to 5 points in time, with in depth interview material analysed to assess the way challenges raised by retrenchment were understood and acted upon. This data provided a very "thick" description of the perspective of individual workers on what it meant to lose or give up a job and feel satisfied in a new job.

The second aim was to identify the aspects of context that were unique to the participants in the study and understand how these shaped events, actions and meanings. Dimensions of context in relation to retrenchment include the institutional, regulatory and political environment that shape the expression of retrenchment as it occurred for the participants, the places in which retrenchment was experienced and the nature of the local labour market. In particular this would involve assessing how well Beck's risk society model of the post Fordist era applies to the circumstances and events surrounding the retrenchments at MMAL. The thesis research design involved data collection during what some might call a natural or quasi experiment or perhaps a case study. The interpretations, actions and emotions raised by an "intervention" in the form of plants closure and associated retrenchments – not knowingly manipulated by the researchers – were monitored over a period of time by a research team in such a way that the physical, place and social context was not divorced from the study. Participants were interviewed in their homes of at places of work including in some instances at MMAL if retrenchments has not been implemented at the time of interview

The regulatory and political environment that framed the plant closure which was the source of research participants was documented and analysed as were the constructions of retrenchment on the part of workers following the retrenchment announcements. The regulatory and political environment encapsulated a belief that the burden of structural adjustment for retrenchment in the automotive industry in Australia and particularly for the plant closure in question should not fall harshly on those who were voluntarily or involuntarily retrenched. The mechanism through which this was achieved was the industrial award negotiated between the unions and the company prior to the involuntary retrenchments at the Lonsdale plant. It delivered financial and other compensation that was considered to be the best in the country although that would still leave many workers experience recurrent shortfalls in remuneration for many years. It was clear from the data on adjustment that many workers were fearful about the future of the company for at least 10 years prior to the retrenchments in question. Rumours had circulated for many years. Those who were employed in 2000 would have witnessed and been

'survivors' if not in some cases 'victims' of the round of retrenchments that occurred in 2000. Others would have been familiar with the sequence of national inquiries into the automotive industry commencing in 1990. Consequently workers had a long time in order to develop personal and household strategies regarding how to manage the risk of being retrenched – a risk which of course would be accompanied by a mixture of opportunities and anxieties, notwithstanding that the risk society is characterised by perceived invisibility, incalculability and ambiguity of risk, choice and constraint (Beck 1992). It is clear from the broad evaluations that workers were asked to make at each of the three surveys that they were very aware of the short comings of the job placement schemes that were part of the industry adjustment package provided by Government. They were also deeply troubled by the transition they had to make into the flexibility paradigm after having the illusion of a 'job for life'. Their responses show a pervasive level of insecurity even among workers who were in full time work. Overall the circumstances surrounding the retrenchments at MMAL in 2004 and the reactions of workers show only a partial mirroring of the 'generalisation of employment insecurity' asserted by Beck and the situation is probably more consistent with the 'risk cultures' than the 'risk society' model. That said the thesis confirms the utility of the study by Butz and Leslie (2000) in which they employed a risk society framework to theorise internal displacement of workers at an automotive plant in Ontario Canada. As discussed in the thesis literature review the Butz and Leslie conceptualization of employment risk revolved around four interlocking themes - contracturalisation as experienced in the manufacturing sector, growing prevalence of internal displacement within the firm (rather than outright retrenchment) and disembedding of social relationships, the risk of bodily injury and subjectification. Butz and Leslie found that many workers were less concerned about the discrete economic consequences of job loss than about the anxieties associated with chronic instability and uncertainty in the workplace. While the Canadian study was largely focused on the internal displacement of workers following restructuring – an option largely rejected by the MMAL workers - and the consequences for their health and well being, the findings have strong resonance with the experiences of workers at MMAL. In both the Canadian and the MMAL

situations many workers chose to retire (with a retrenchment package in the case of MMAL workers) rather than go on to assembly line jobs where the risk of repetition strain injuries and stress were feared. The analysis of job satisfaction patterns among workers who found a new job following retrenchment at MMAL also revealed a heightened concern with occupational health and safety matters at the new workplace. Both groups of workers were concerned about job security.

The third aim was to develop an interdisciplinary model of the process of adjustment to retrenchment over time and the role of home in that process. The basic assumption behind the model was that retrenchment represented an interruption of the sense of home that was already on a trajectory since the early years of life and that the sense of home might influence perceptions of and responses to retrenchment and that the opportunities and anxieties accompanying retrenchment might influence the ability to experience and imagine home Other factors, drawn primarily from the psychological, sociological and labour market economics literature were theorised to be germane to how home and the process of adjustment might be linked and were incorporated in the model. It was argued that the temporal dimension of adjustment should be divided into three periods – the time since rumours about retrenchment were first announced, the time following announcements and the time from when a new job was taken up. Clearly not every retrenchment journey would fit neatly into this model however most did although it should be remembered that many workers moved into and out of different labour market statuses throughout the course of the research

The thesis asked 'How does home mediate the process of adjustment to retrenchment?. The thesis sought to identify mechanisms which constrain, and or enable the process, directly or indirectly. Key sub questions were posed and follow from the model

- do workers act on rumours of retrenchment and if so how?
- which is more significant - loss of the latent or loss of the manifest benefits of work?

- does the meaning of home change over the course of adjustment
- how does home/work balance influence adjustment
- does home act as a source of ontological security

The first time period was included on the assumption that the adjustment process actually commenced long before the formal announcements and the flip side was that research suggested that the most important impact of the announcement of retrenchment was the end of a long period of uncertainty. Mitchell (2001) had suggested that to manage risks associated with globalisation, such as retrenchment, workers might seek to secure homeownership and work second jobs. It is clear from the data that prior to retrenchment the workers in the study already enjoyed higher homeownership levels than the general population although that might have been an effect of age. Many workers were clearly aware that retrenchments were a possibility and many were relieved when the final decision was made however there is little in the data to suggest that workers took 'risk positions' from the onset of the rumours. In fact one worker took a job at MMAL following his retrenchment from a previous job on the perception that working in the auto industry provided job security. Consistent perhaps with the 'incalculability' of risk concept is the finding that despite nearly 25% of the study participants still in the study at the third wave of surveys having had a previous experience of retrenchment there is little to suggest that this was reflected in post rumour decision making or in fact in post announcement outcomes. It was clear however over the course of the research most workers used the retrenchment package to pay down or pay out the mortgage. The main reasons for this decision were to reduce the current debt, to reduce the ongoing interest repayments and to reduce stress/feel more secure. The qualitative data is very supportive of the contention that the retrenchment package was critical for the ability to plan a meaningful future, consistent with the assertion by Fryer and subsequently by Weller that the loss of and or interruption to the manifest benefits of work – the salary – is the most telling issue regarding adjustment to retrenchment. Nevertheless loss of the latent and of the manifest benefits of work were highly implicated by workers in the adjustment to job loss process.

The qualitative data suggests that the meaning of home can change as a result of retrenchment even if the importance of home and homeownership measured in the surveys remained relatively constant throughout the adjustment period. Particularly telling is the insight by some workers that trying to find 'home' at work can backfire when retrenchment occurs and that the significance of home as a general source of ontological security was brought into focus by the retrenchment experience. This could be construed as mild support for arguments by Clapham (2005) and Sennett (1997) that employment insecurity is leading people to seek something different from their homes and to invest identity in house and neighbourhood. What must be remembered however is that despite the predictions by Beck regarding the generalizability of employment insecurity only one in eight people in Australia in 2003 believed that their jobs were under threat. This of course is entirely consistent with the fact that the 'risk' of retrenchment varies by industry and is linked to cyclical downturns and is rarely more than 3-4% of the total labour force. The study has also shown the benefit of looking behind and examining alternative conceptualisations of the characterization of unemployed or underemployed workers as being 'locked in place' using constructs such as the meaning of home, the sense of home and place attachment to reveal the dynamics involved. In that regard the thesis provides support for the finding by Dufty (2007) in her study of the subjectification capacities of neoliberalism, that attachment to place can inform an alternative subject position which resists the production of the locationally flexible neoliberal subjects. Retrenched auto industry workers also incorporated neighbourhood and regional spatial scales into their appreciation of home and showed their commitment to the area through place as process such as advocating for a fair share of economic development resources for the region which was often regarded as being left behind compared to the northern suburbs of Adelaide. Interestingly however memories of home were not significant in the experienced home – quite the opposite in fact, especially for women. Furthermore while the importance of home was associated with housing tenure – higher importance associated with homeownership – this did not hold true for women who consistently rated home as important

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irrespective of housing tenure. The case studies of household impacts on the sense of home confirms the model developed by Watkins and Hosier (2005) regarding highly individualised and complex processes of homemaking. It is the complexity and subtlety of these processes that supports the trajectory of the sense of home and to be sufficiently resilient to remain a constant in the face of heroic, tragic and complex narratives of job loss Ezzy (2002). Neighbours and neighbourhood were not engaged at higher levels throughout the adjustment process despite the finding that conceptualisation of home was, as called for by Hanson and Pratt (1988), extended to implicate the amenity of the neighbourhood.

The importance of a suitable home/work balance was demonstrated by the qualitative data on the implications regarding commuting that arose from getting another job. For some workers the commuting time was reduced which gave them an opportunity to spend more time at home but for as many others commutes were much longer which restricted their ability to participate in home life. Also significant is the realisation that many workers were able to undertake activities in the home sphere as a direct result of the networks they had in the workplace. The thesis also makes a contribution to the argument by Blunt and Dowling (2005) that the dualistic thinking that opposes home and work, feminine and masculine, private and public, domestic and civic, reproduction and production, stasis and change is breaking down. In that regard the study also makes a contribution to the literature on place attachment in the workspace as discussed by Fischer (1997). Fischer argued when workers reappropriate time, space and objects in a process of gaining psychological control, roots are put down and a territory is created that is both liveable and provides freedom. Data regarding the high level of liberation and freedom associated with retrenchment by workers in this study suggests that the kind of place attachment discussed by Fischer may not be so easily accessed in a production line environment even though camaraderie and socialisation was clearly evident amongst the study participants. At a higher level of abstraction concern over loss of social interaction may also be associated with the need to express class solidarity and the performance of masculine identity (Cooper 2000; McKenzie et al 2006)

The are important limitations regarding interpretation of the study's findings. The strong expression of liberation and renewal by many participants must be seen in the context of the significant number of people in the study group who has elected to take retrenchment packages – voluntary retrenchment. People in this position, as discussed in chapter Three, are in an advantageous psychological position vis a vis people who are involuntarily retrenched particularly regarding feelings of control (Clarke 2007). Given that the thesis was based on plant closure data there are limits on the extent to which generalizeability is appropriate to broader population groups ie all people working in manufacturing or all people who get retrenched. These limitations include the higher pay structures generally associated with work in the automotive industry, the stressful work environment especially assembly line work and the preponderance of male employees.

The thesis concludes nevertheless that there was evidence in the narratives of the retrenched works that the creation of 'life biographies', so much a feature of the risk society model, did actually play a part in the process of adjustment. Furthermore the sense of home animated these biographies and found expression through a reconceptualization of the meaning of home where home did act as a source of ontological security irrespective of housing tenure.

Appendix 1: The Lonsdale Plant Closure Agreement

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

Workplace Relations Act 1996
s.170LJ certification of agreement

Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd

and

Automotive, Food, Metals, Engineering, Printing and Kindred Industries Union

and

Communications, Electrical, Electronic, Energy, Information, Postal, Plumbing and Allied Services Union of Australia

and

The Australian Workers' Union

and

Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union
(AG2004/5633)

MITSUBISHI MOTORS AUSTRALIA LTD LONSDALE PLANT CLOSURE AGREEMENT 2004

Vehicle industry

SENIOR DEPUTY PRESIDENT O'CALLAGHAN   ADELAIDE, 15 SEPTEMBER 2004

Certification of Division 2 agreement with organisation(s) of employees.

DECISION

[1]   Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd ('Mitsubishi') have made application for the certification of the Mitsubishi Motors Australian Ltd Lonsdale Plant Closure Agreement 2004 ('the agreement') reached pursuant to section 170LJ of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* ('the Act') relative to the impending closure of the Mitsubishi Lonsdale plant in South Australia.

[2]   The application was made on 27 August 2004 and was the subject of a hearing on 8 September 2004. At this hearing the parties were represented on the following basis:

Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd- R Collett, K Priest, S Barrett
Communication, Electrical Electronic, Information, Postal, Plumbing and Allied Services Union of Australia ('the CEPU') - R Johnston

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Automotive, Food, Metals, Engineering, Printing and Kindred Industries Union ('the AMWU') - P McMahon

The Australian Workers' Union ('the AWU') - J Kane

Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union ('the ASU') - F Donaghy

[3]   Statutory declarations were received from all parties to the agreement.

[4]   On 7 September 2004 I advised the parties that the recent decision of the High Court in the matter of *Electrolux Home Products Pty Ltd v AWU* [2004] HCA 40 (2 September 2004) (Electrolux) had the potential to impact on this application and that if further time to consider the agreement was required, this could be requested. No such request was made. The effect of the very limited submissions made by the parties relative to what is clearly a significant agreement, was that the agreement was negotiated as a package with respect to the closure of the Lonsdale plant.

[5]   On the basis of the information provided to the Commission, the parties were advised that I was satisfied that the process followed in this matter was consistent with the requirements of section 170LJ of the Act.

[6]   The agreement is to be read in concert with the *Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Enterprise Agreement) 2004,* (the primary agreement) which agreement was certified by the Commission on 13 July 2004. I have not been called upon, nor indeed, am required to determine the extent to which this primary agreement is valid in the context of the Electrolux decision.

[7]   This agreement provides for a range of redundancy and other benefits and payments to employees affected by the impending closure of the Mitsubishi Lonsdale operation. As such, it is a somewhat unusual agreement in that it expressly regulates benefits and provisions relative to impending employment terminations. These include, but are not limited to, redundancy, redeployment and employees support provisions.

[8]   In the course of the hearing of this matter I bought three categories of issue to the attention of the parties.

[9]   Firstly, I sought clarification of the intention of the parties with respect to the following clauses:

- clause 1 Title of Agreement
- clause 4 Area, Parties Bound and Inconsistency
- clause 8 Application Principles
- clause 24 Employee Conduct
- clause 35 Wage Rates

[10]   The parties' responses with respect to these clauses are included in the transcript of these proceedings.

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[11]   Secondly, I sought advice from the parties with respect to the operation of a number of provisions of the agreement relative to the application of the Freedom of Association provisions of the Act.

[12]   In overall terms the parties unequivocally committed to comply with the requirements of Part XA of the Act.

[13]   With particular reference to clause 25 "Joint Review Mechanism" the parties provided an undertaking to the Commission that:

> "The Joint Review Mechanism will operate in a fashion which does not distinguish in any way between employees on the basis of their membership or non-membership of a union."

[14]   With specific reference to clause 29 "Tools", both Mitsubishi and the unions provided undertakings to the effect that the provisions of clause 29(d) will not be applied so as distinguish between employees on the basis of their membership or non-membership of a union.

[15]   On the basis of these undertakings and the advice provided to me by the parties, I am satisfied that the agreement is consistent with the requirements of section 170LU of the Act.

[16]   The third category of issue upon which I sought advice related to the extent to which certain provisions of the agreement could be described as matters pertaining to the relationship between Mitsubishi and its employees. The attention of the parties was drawn to the decision of the High Court in *Electrolux* (supra).

[17]   For the purposes of this particular decision I will not exhaustively detail the conclusions reached by the High Court. Suffice to say that the High Court decision establishes the requirement that the Commission be satisfied that the agreement is limited to matters that pertain to the employment relationship and the Commission should not certify the agreement unless this is the case. In *Electrolux* the High Court endorsed the approach applied in *R v Portus, Exparte ANZ Banking Group* (1972 127 CLR 353) and *Alcan Australia Ltd Exparte Federation of Industrial, Manufacturing and Engineering Employees* (1994 181 CLR 96) relative to the establishment of what is pertaining to the employment relationship.

[18]   Consequent upon *Electrolux* I have considered whether each of the agreement provisions is, on its plain terms, pertains to the employment relationship because, if this is not the case, the agreement cannot be certified.

[19]   The parties in this matter put to me that the agreement was a package negotiated with unions and employees and reflective of the magnitude of the plant closure and the issues and concerns on the part of employees such that all of the provisions of the agreement pertained to the employment relationship.

[20]   Whilst I am satisfied that the agreement provisions can be generally described in this way, there are two specific provisions which are of particular relevance in this respect.

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[21]   Clause 22 of the Agreement states:

"Clause 22   Employee Support

The Company will provide a comprehensive range of professional services to assist employees impacted by the closure decision.   These professional services will be coordinated through an employee transition centre to be established on the Lonsdale site.   It is intended that each employee will be individually case managed to ensure outgoing transitional needs are met wherever possible.   The range of services will include but not be limited to the following;

>   *Financial Planning##*
>   *Career Guidance*
>   *Superannuation##*
>   *Re-training*
>   *Job seeking skills*
>   *Job Placement/External employment support##*
>   *Professional personal counselling*
>   *Centrelink and Government agency Services*

Employees will have a choice of providers for the above designated services (##) at no cost to themselves.   Service providers shall include FVIU nominated organisations with preference given to South Australian providers."

[22]   I have considered the extent to which this provision pertains to the employment relationship.   In the circumstances of the impending redundancies and the fundamental purpose of the agreement, I am satisfied that an employee support clause of this nature should be considered to pertain to the employment relationship insofar as it details services that Mitsubishi have undertaken to provide to employees during the life of the agreement.   There is no question that these services are to be provided between Mitsubishi and its individual employees, irrespective of union membership or union involvement.

[23]   I have considered the range of services to be provided as part of this clause.   A number of these services would, taken in isolation, not be capable of being described as matters pertaining to the employment relationship.   However, I consider that the clause is fundamentally about the assistance Mitsubishi will provide to employees and the list of possible services simply characterises the services to be provided.   The range of listed services is an integral and inseparable component of the fundamental purpose of the clause. In essence, the clause is not about, for example, financial planning services or Centrelink functions but is about the support services to be provided by Mitsubishi.

[24]   I have also considered the extent to which the clause establishes procedures for the selection of these providers.   Again, taken in isolation from the clause, I doubt that this provision could be construed as pertaining to the employment relationship, but I am satisfied that it is a provision which is incidental to the clause as a whole in that it is also an integral and inseparable compable provision.

[25]   The operation and effect of such incidental, or machinery provisions, was considered in various of the judgements of the High Court in *Electrolux* (supra).   I have taken these observations into account.

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[26] On this basis I consider that the determination of a matter that is ancillary, incidental, or of a machinery nature in the context considered by McHugh J (*Electrolux* PN95-104) requires that the Commission be satisfied that the issue is an integral component of a provision which is about the employment relationship and neither operates in its own right, nor establishes obligations binding on parties outside of the employment relationship.

[27] On this basis, I am satisfied that this provision articulates a range of functions Mitsubishi will provide directly, or indirectly, to employees. While these services may well impact on employees subsequent to the conclusion of their employment, they are about the relationship in that the matters to be the subject of employee support, reflect the impending closure of the Lonsdale plant.

[28] In the context of the position earlier adopted by the High Court in *Alcan* (supra), I do not consider that the mechanisms described in this clause detract from the fundamental function of the clause which is about the employment relationship.

[29] Clause 30 of the agreement states:

> "Clause 30 Medical Tests
>
> *Employees who request a medical assessment will be provided with an assessment consistent with the standard medical testing programs already in place for Lonsdale employees, or as agreed between the Company and Unions following consultation with an agreed independent 3rd party specialist. The results of that medical assessment will be provided to a medical practitioner of the employees' choice subject to a signed medical release by the employee.*
>
> *Employees may request a copy of their medical records be provided to either themselves or a medical practitioner of the employees' choice subject to a signed medical release by the employee.*
>
> *Any matters dealing with the health and welfare of employees at Lonsdale shall be referred to the Lonsdale Business Centre joint OH&S committee and communication shall occur to all employees."*

[30] I am satisfied that the issue of occupational health and safety is properly described as a matter pertaining to the employment relationship and that this clause relates to what an employee could do at work. The fact that the clause deals with matters that may also have some relevance subsequent to the termination of employment does not prohibit it from pertaining to the employment relationship. I have considered the provisions of the clause relative to the identification of a third-party specialist. By itself, I doubt that such a provision could be countenanced. Similarly, the clause provides for the adoption of the medical testing programs already in place for Lonsdale employees, or a process which might be agreed between Mitsubishi and the unions. I am satisfied that this provision will be applied to all employees irrespective of union membership. I am also satisfied that the function of the clause is simply to allow for an employment-related service rather than defining an agreement between the unions and Mitsubishi. In the specific circumstances of this clause, I consider the reference to the process of selection of third party medical specialists to be incidental to the operation of the clause as a whole.

[31]   For these reasons I am satisfied that the agreement is about matters pertaining to the relationship between Mitsubishi and its employees.

[32]   Accordingly, I consider the prerequisite requirements necessary for certification of the agreement have been met. In accordance with section 170LT of the Act I will certify the agreement.

[33]   The attached certificate, giving effect to this decision will come into effect on 15 September 2004 and will operate until 14 September 2007.

CERTIFICATION OF AGREEMENT

In accordance with section 170LT of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*, the Commission hereby certifies the attached written agreement.

This agreement shall come into force from 15 September 2004 and shall remain in force until 14 September 2007.

BY THE COMMISSION:

SENIOR DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Appearances:

R Collet, K Priest, S Barrett representing Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd.
R Johnston on behalf of the Communications, Electrical, Electronic, Energy, Information, Postal, Plumbing and Allied Services Union of Australia.
P McMahon on behalf of the Automotive, Food, Metals, Engineering, Printing and Kindred Industries Union.
J Kane on behalf of the Australian Workers' Union.
F Donaghy on behalf of the Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union.

Hearing Details:

2004.
Adelaide:
September 8.

<Price code C>

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS AUSTRALIA LTD

Lonsdale Plant Closure Agreement

2004

27 AUG 2004

Clause 1   TITLE

This Agreement shall be known as the Lonsdale Plant Closure Agreement.

Clause 2   ARRANGEMENT

Clause 3   PERIOD OF OPERATION

This agreement shall operate for a period of 3 years from its certification

Clause 4   AREA, PARTIES BOUND AND INCONSISTENCY

This Agreement shall be binding upon:

Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd ("the Company") and its employees in South Australia who are employed in and covered by the classifications of the following Awards at the Lonsdale Manufacturing Plant.

- Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Vehicle Industry) Award 1998
- Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Supervisory and Technical Employees) Award 1998
- Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Clerks) Award 1998

The following Organisations, their members and officers:

- Automotive Food, Metals, Engineering and Printing and Kindred Industries Union (AMWU)
- Communications, Electrical, Electronic, Energy, Information, Postal, Plumbing and Allied Services Union of Australia (CEPU)
- Australian Municipal Administrative, Clerical and Services Union (ASU)
- Australian Workers Union (AWU)

Inconsistency

Should there be any inconsistency between this Agreement and the provisions of the Awards listed above or the Agreements listed below, this Agreement shall take precedence to the extent of any inconsistency.

- Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Enterprise Agreement) Award 1993
- Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Enterprise Agreement) Award 1995
- Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Enterprise Agreement) 1998
- Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Enterprise Agreement) 2001
- Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (Enterprise Agreement) 2004

Clause 5   RENEGOTIATION

This agreement represents full and final settlement of all claims relating to the Lonsdale Plant closure by the Unions and a binding commitment upon Mitsubishi to provide payments as specified.

Clause 6   NO EXTRA CLAIMS

The parties have negotiated this Agreement in good faith. It is a comprehensive Agreement about the terms and conditions surrounding the Compulsory Redundancy of the Lonsdale Plant employees as announced on the 21st of May 2004. Accordingly, during the currency of this Agreement the parties will make no extra claims in relation to redundancy payments

Clause 7   LONSDALE PLANT CLOSURE

This agreement addresses how the change will be achieved and the treatment of employees affected by the change. Specifically, change may involve:
- Mitsubishi Lonsdale Employees accessing redundancy as a result of Lonsdale Plant Closure;
- Mitsubishi transferring employees from Lonsdale to Tonsley Park where this is agreed and vacancies exist; and
- Mitsubishi assisting employees with external employment opportunities.

Clause 8   APPLICATION PRINCIPLES

a) Subject to clause 3, this Agreement only applies to permanent full time and part time employees, who are employed with the Mitsubishi Lonsdale Plant as of 21st May 2004. Permanent part time employees will be entitled to the provisions of this Agreement on a pro-rata basis.

b) Transfer or Departure will be based on the principles detailed below.

c) Transfer opportunities to Tonsley Park will be based on the principle that employees would be offered ongoing employment opportunities on the same classification / shift as they currently occupy. Where shift cannot be accommodated, shift premiums will be maintained for a period of 8 weeks.

d) Employees who have their request denied to either substitute with another Lonsdale employee, or access an early departure, may have that decision reviewed by reference to the joint review committee. The status quo shall remain whilst this review is considered. This review shall take place within a maximum of 5 working days.

e) Entitlement to the redundancy payments will only take place if the employee remains in the job until the job closure or as identified in clause 8.

Clause 9 SUBSTITUTION CRITERIA / EARLY DEPARTURE

Substitution may be available as an arrangement that provides for a current Lonsdale employees to substitute for another Lonsdale employee whose job is identified for earlier or later closure. In this case the principles determining eligibility are:

a) Employee departure must be directly related to a job closure.

b) Employee departure occurs at time of job closure.

c) Departure of substitute employee cannot have a detrimental impact upon the ongoing business of any department affected by substitution and job closure.

d) Employees willing to substitute will be provided a 4 week trial period in the new role. During this trial period the employee will work alongside the employee that he/she is substituting with. At the end of this 4-week period the employees must both confirm their willingness to substitute.

e) Employees substituting must meet the following criteria;
   i.   Must have previously done either that job or a similar job, and;
   ii. Must be physically capable of performing the full functions of the job, and;
   iii. Must be able to be trained in the full job functions within the 4 week period

f) Early Departure may be granted where an employee has found alternate employment, and that departure can be accommodated through substitution (as defined above) or consistent with the operating principals within clause 8.

g) Substitution and / or Early Departure will only be granted when sufficient labour of the necessary skill mix exists to facilitate ongoing operational requirements.

h) Employees granted Early Departure will be eligible for the full package under this agreement, plus award entitlements of long service leave and annual leave calculated and paid at time of termination.

i) Reductions in employee numbers will occur in consultation between area management, local and senior shop stewards plus local safety representatives.

Clause 10 TRANSFER CRITERIA

All vacant positions at Tonsley Park will be advertised at Lonsdale with Lonsdale employees given preference (all things being equal) consistent with sub-clauses 22.c and 22.f of this agreement.

Clause 11 TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

A Lonsdale employee who permanently transfers to Tonsley Park under arrangements within this agreement will be eligible for a one off lump sum payment of $1300. This payment will be made after the effective date of transfer and is subject to normal tax deduction.

Clause 12 NOTICE PERIOD

For those employees eligible for the redundancy payment, 5 weeks pay in lieu of notice will be applied.

Clause 13 SEVERANCE PAYMENT

For those employees eligible for the severance payment, 4.5 weeks pay per completed year of service will be applied.

The maximum available payment of both the notice period and severance periods shall not exceed 100 weeks.

Any severance payments specified within this Agreement will not exceed by a gross amount of $10,000 what the employee would have earned up until normal retirement age (in accordance with Company Superannuation Plans).

Clause 14   TAX ISSUES

Any payments made under this agreement will be provided in the most tax effective manner so as to maximise the benefit to employees.

Clause 15   LOYALTY PAYMENT

For those employees leaving MMAL due to job closure, a loyalty payment of 1 weeks pay per year of company service will be applied (pro-rata and uncapped).

Clause 16   LONG SERVICE LEAVE

For those employees taking a redundancy payment, pro rata long service leave (untaken) will be paid at the rate of 1.3 weeks per completed year of service from commencement.

Clause 17   ANNUAL LEAVE

For those employees eligible for the redundancy payment, all annual leave credits will be paid. Where an employee works shiftwork this payment will include relevant shift premium. Day shift employees are entitled to 17.5% loading as per the award.

Clause 18   PAYOUT OF SICK LEAVE

The payment of a maximum of 20 days unused Sick Leave credits maybe taken as a lump sum payment.

However, employees shall have the choice of taking such benefit as a cash payment (which will be subject to tax) or using the grossed up payment as a further reduction off the employees purchase price (after discount), of a locally made MMAL vehicle.

Clause 19   EMPLOYEE VEHICLE PURCHASE/PARTS

Employees who, at the time of separation, have completed 15 years or more service, or who are over 55 years of age, will be entitled to the same provision of purchase of parts and/or vehicles as retirees, ie. the discount rates at time of separation.

Employees who, at the time of separation, have less than 15 years of service, or who are under 55 years of age, will for a period not exceeding 36 months from date of separation, retain their entitlement to purchase of parts and/or vehicles as at their date of separation.

Clause 20   ACCELERATED TRAINING

The Company agrees to provide accelerated training to those affected employees that would like to complete any training course or program they are currently undertaking to finalise their current level of the qualification prior to separation.

Mitsubishi recognises the importance for individuals to complete the above courses prior to their separation and every opportunity will be provided to complete this training.

Where employees have skills that may articulate to a formal qualification, but the employee is not currently studying for that qualification, they may seek an RPL assessment from the appropriate learning institute to confirm their current skills supported by the Company.

Employees requiring refresher training shall be given the opportunity to do so under current Company requirements.

These arrangements will be monitored by the joint review committee.

Clause 21   SHIFT PREMIUMS

a) Shift Premiums will be paid on the notice and severance periods for employees who are working on shift (excluding day shift) at the time of separation, or who were working shift on the 21st of May 2004, and in either circumstance, had been working shift for a minimum period of 12 months.

b) Any employee who was working on shift (excluding day shift) on 1st of November 2003 and for a minimum period of 12 months prior to that date and who does not receive the benefits prescribed in point (a) above, shall receive a one off ex gratia payment of $1000 gross.

c) Employees working alternating shift work will have the average of their shift premium over their roster cycle applied, but must still meet the above criteria in point (a).

Clause 22   EMPLOYEE SUPPORT

The Company will provide a comprehensive range of professional services to assist employees impacted by the closure decision. These professional services will be coordinated through an employee transition centre to be established on the Lonsdale site. It is intended that each employee will be individually case managed to ensure outgoing transitional needs are met wherever possible. The range of services will include but not be limited to the following;

Financial Planning ##
Career Guidance
Superannuation ##
Re-training
Job seeking skills
Job Placement/External employment support ##
Professional personal counselling
Centrelink and Government agency Services

Employees will have a choice of providers for the above designated services (##) at no cost to themselves. Service providers shall include FVIU nominated organisations with preference given to South Australian providers.

Clause 23   TIME OFF TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT

For those employees accessing redundancy payment, reasonable paid time off to attend job interviews will be granted by local Management upon prior notification and proof of attendance. Time off in lieu will be available to shift work employees who attend outside their shift hours, however, the "no 10 hour break" award provision will not apply under this clause.

Clause 24   EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

a) The parties recognise the significant impact the closure announcement has had on employees. The parties therefore acknowledge that as a result, some employees may participate in and/or display unacceptable behaviour which may require the use of professional councillors.

b) In recognition of the above, the Company will involve the appropriate Union Organiser/ Senior steward/ local steward in all disciplinary matters requiring the involvement of Plant HR. The appropriate Union organiser will make themself available to address such issues in a timely manner.

c) The primary function of these arrangements will be to counsel and correct any behavioural problems thereby avoiding the need to resort to more serious measures, individual matters will be handled based on their level of seriousness.

Clause 25   JOINT REVIEW MECHANISM

a) A joint review mechanism will be established of equal Company and Union representation to examine on a case by case basis the application of this agreement to individual employees.

b) The Joint Review Committee shall consist of a local management representative, a Human Resources representative and FVIU nominated employee representatives, the number of members of this committee will be a maximum of 6 (3+3).

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c) The Joint Review Committee shall conduct its function in a manner consistent with the principles contained within this agreement and shall conduct its reviews in the following manner:

    i. Transfer to an alternative position or departure will be treated in accordance with the conditions of this agreement.

    ii. When considering the validity of the employee's impediments for transfer, the Joint Review Committee will take into consideration the following personal circumstances:
        * A suitable vacancy must exist at Tonsley Park.

        * Suitability of new job to individuals physical capacities

        * Ability/suitability for retraining and role familiarisation.

        * Employee performance is at an acceptable level; ie attendance, discipline record, attitude

d) Should a disagreement arise amongst the Joint Review Committee concerning any matter arising out of reviews under this clause that disagreement shall be referred to Corporate Human Resources and the relevant Union Organiser for resolution.

e) The Joint Review Committee shall be responsible to address with local management at Tonsley Park any matters raised by the transferred employee.

f) The parties to this agreement support the concept of permanent employees having preference of employment over non permanent employees, as such where contractors, casuals, or temporary employees exist within the Tonsley Park site the parties will examine these positions to determine whether Lonsdale employees who elect to maintain their employment with the company can be transferred. This will be subject to skill and operational requirements.

g) Where matters cannot be agreed the Award dispute resolution process shall be followed.

Clause 26   CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Employees departing Mitsubishi under the terms of this Agreement will be issued with a Certificate of Service

Preference in re-employment will be given to those employees whose employment is terminated due to these arrangements, all things being equal.

Clause 27   SUPERANNUATION

For point of clarification, superannuation payments on redundancy will be as follows;
Superannuation will be paid in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Trust Deed, that is;

a) Accumulation Section Members
    Employees will be paid their full entitlement in their Accumulation accounts.

b) Defined Benefit Section Members
    i. Employees under 55 years of age will receive two times their Defined Benefit member contributions plus interest.
    ii. Employees 55 years or older will be paid an amount determined by their Accrued Multiple x the Final Average Salary.
    iii. All Defined Benefit section members will also receive the full balance of their Accumulation Section accounts.

Clause 28   BANK CHARGES

The Company has established a procedure to make all payments electronically. Where this is utilised, the Company agrees to meet the costs of the bank transfer charge associated with the final severance payment.

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Clause 29   TOOLS

a) Where the Company determines that employee "tool kits" will not be required to support the ongoing operations of the Company, employees may have the option of purchasing their tool kits on termination.

b) The value of the "tool kits" will be fairly determined by the Business Unit Manager.

c) Where an employee wishes to purchase his/her "tool kit", the employee will, in conjunction with the area Section Manager, compile a complete list of all items to be purchased. This list will be considered by the Business Unit Manager and a value will be advised to the employee prior to his/her separation. This inventory will be reconciled at the time of departure.

d) The Business Unit Manager in consultation with the relevant Union will assess at the time of pending area closure the availability for employees to purchase equipment used as part of their normal daily functions.

Clause 30   MEDICAL TESTS

Employees who request a medical assessment will be provided with an assessment consistent with the standard medical testing programs already in place for Lonsdale employees, or as agreed between the Company and Unions following consultation with an agreed independent 3rd party specialist. The results of that medical assessment will be provided to a medical practitioner of the employees' choice subject to a signed medical release by the employee.

Employees may request a copy of their medical records be provided to either themselves or a medical practitioner of the employees' choice subject to a signed medical release by the employee.

Any matters dealing with the health and welfare of employees at Lonsdale shall be referred to the Lonsdale Business Centre joint OH&S committee and communication shall occur to all employees.

Clause 31   NO DISADVANTAGE

a) Employees on maternity / paternity leave, work cover, journey accident, and income protection, will be provided the opportunity to access these arrangements with their period of absence calculated as periods of service.

b) Employees who have transitioned from Adecco Pty Ltd to MMAL, shall have their Adecco service included for the purposes of this agreement but excluding the first 12 months of that Adecco service.

Clause 32   COMPASSIONATE PAYMENTS

a) If an employee becomes deceased post the 21st of May 2004, and prior to their job being closed, the provisions of this agreement shall be paid to the estate of the deceased employee.

b) Where an employee is forced to discontinue employment prior to job closure due to non work related medical grounds, or is required to become a full time care giver for a direct family member because of that family members ill health. The employee shall receive the provisions of this agreement.

Clause 33   HIGHER DUTIES

a) Where an employee is undertaking higher duties at the time of job closure and had been undertaking those higher duties for a period of 12 months prior to job closure, the employee will be entitled to the provisions of this agreement at the higher rate of pay.

OR

b) Where an employee was undertaking higher duties at the 21st of May 2004, having undertaken those higher duties for a period of 12 months and would have remained in those higher duties if it were not for the wind down and closure of the Lonsdale Plant. That employee will be entitled to the provisions of this agreement at the higher rate.

SIGNED for and on behalf of
MITSUBISHI MOTORS AUSTRALIA LTD
(ACN 007 870 395) by its authorised
representative on   25/08/ 2004 in the
presence of :-

....
Signature of representative
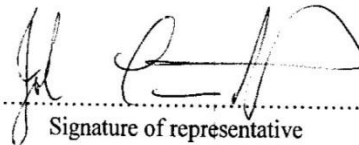
....
Signature of Witness

...... RICHARD B. CORBETT ....
Name of representative

.... Alyssa Keane ....
Name of Witness

..... MGR. CORPORATE EMPLOYEE RELATIONS
Position of representative

SIGNED for and on behalf of
AUTOMOTIVE, FOOD, METALS,
ENGINEERING, PRINTING AND
KINDRED INDUSTRIES UNION
By its authorised representative on
                    2004 in the presence of:

....
Signature of representative

....
Signature of Witness

..... JOHN CAMILLO
Name of representative

.... Di Rowe ....
Name of Witness

..... State Secretary
Position of representative

SIGNED for and on behalf of
COMMUNICATION, ELECTRICAL
ELECTRONIC, INFORMATION,
POSTAL, PLUMBING AND ALLIED
SERVICES UNION OF AUSTRALIA
By its authorised representative on
                    2004 in the presence of :

....
Signature of representative
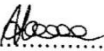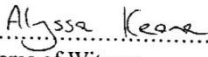
..... JP 21925
Signature of Witness

..... R.J. GERAGHTY
Name of representative

GEOFFREY WILLIAM HILLMAN
Name of Witness

..... SECRETARY
Position of representative

285

SIGNED for and on behalf of
AUSTRALIAN MUNICIPAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE, CLERICAL
AND SERVICE UNION
By its authorised representative on
                    2004 in the presence of:
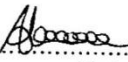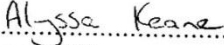
....
Signature of Witness

Alyssa Keane
Name of Witness

....
Signature of representative

ANNE M'EWEN
....
Name of representative

ASU BRANCH SECRETARY
....
Position of representative

SIGNED for and on behalf of
THE AUSTRALIAN WORKERS'
UNION by its authorised representative
On 24 August   2004 in the presence of:

....
Signature of Witness

Alyssa Keane
Name of Witness

....
Signature of representative

WAYNE HANSON
....
Name of representative

AWU BRANCH SECRETARY
....
Position of representative

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Appendix 2: Longitudinal Housing, Home and Place Attachment Data by Research Instruments

Research instruments developed by Beer et al (2006)

\# - open-ended question

√- question repeated (with or without slight variation)

Wave 1 Survey March 2005 – Nov 2005	Wave 2 Survey Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Wave 3 Survey October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	Comparison Surveys (1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	1st in depth interviews Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	2nd in depth interviews October 2006 - July 2007
	Changed housing arrangement since last interview	Changed housing arrangements since last interview		Where you have lived since adulthood – where did you first live	
Type of residence	√	√	√		
Type of tenure	√	√	√	Does home mean financial security If renting,	If renting, - is redundancy

Wave 1 Survey March 2005 – Nov 2005	Wave 2 Survey Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Wave 3 Survey October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	Comparison Surveys (1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	1st in depth interviews Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	2nd in depth interviews October 2006 - July 2007
				- is redundancy different for home owners - Does renting provide flexibility for moving to jobs - Are you more vulnerable as renter re cost of rent	different for home owners - Does renting provide flexibility for moving to jobs - Are you more vulnerable as renter re cost of rent
Current cost for rent or mortgage	√	√	√		
Balance of mortgage	√	√	√		
Use of payout for mortgage	√ Since last interview	√		Use all or part of payout for mortgage	Use all of part of payout for mortgage

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Wave 1 Survey March 2005 – Nov 2005	Wave 2 Survey Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Wave 3 Survey October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	Comparison Surveys (1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	1st in depth interviews Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	2nd in depth interviews October 2006 - July 2007
	(# If yes *why*)	(# If yes *why*) (# If refinanced mortgage why)			
How long in current house and neighbourhood	√	√	√	Are your neighbours important ; Why/not; has this changed since payout Best aspects of living here Worst aspects of living here	Are your neighbours important ;Why/not; has this changed since payout Best aspects of living here Worst aspects of living here

Wave 1 Survey March 2005 – Nov 2005	Wave 2 Survey Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Wave 3 Survey October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	Comparison Surveys (1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	1st in depth interviews Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	2nd in depth interviews October 2006 - July 2007
Moves in last 10 years Ever lived outside of region (# main reason for moving to South)	√ Since last interview	√ Since last interview			
	Own a rental investment property (# *purchased since leaving MMAL*)	Own a rental investment property (# *purchased since leaving MMAL*)			
Moves since payout (# main reason for leaving)	√ Since last interview	√ Since last interview			
Expectations for moving since payout (# How will housing arrangements	√ Over next 12 months (# If **yes** *why will*	√	Expectations for a move	If you had to move house would that be difficult; why	Would it be hard to leave house for job in Northern Adelaide or interstate

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Wave 1 Survey March 2005 – Nov 2005	Wave 2 Survey Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Wave 3 Survey October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	Comparison Surveys (1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	1st in depth interviews Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	2nd in depth interviews October 2006 - July 2007
change if you have left MMAL and said yes to *expect to need to move*)	*housing arrangements change*)	(# If **yes** *why will housing arrangements change*		- kids - friends - lifestyle - cost - dwelling - job Would you refuse a job to stay in current home If you had to move in order to get a job, where would you be willing to move to: northern suburbs, Country SA, interstate	(30) Would you turn down a job if it meant you had to move If you had to move in order to get a job, where would you be willing to move to: northern suburbs, Country SA, interstate

Wave 1 Survey March 2005 – Nov 2005	Wave 2 Survey Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Wave 3 Survey October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	Comparison Surveys (1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	1st in depth interviews Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	2nd in depth interviews October 2006 - July 2007
Importance of home to you	√ and any change since last interview	√ and any change since last interview	√ and any change in last 6 months	Do you think of this place as home If so what does home mean to you Does home mean financial security for you Do you value your home because of the memories attached to it- perhaps in raising children or spending time with family and or friends	Has attitude to housing or home changed since you left MMAL – why Do you value your home because of the memories attached to it- perhaps in raising children or spending time with family and or friends
Importance of home	√ and any change since	√ and any change since	√ and any change in last 6	IF HOME OWNER	IF HOME OWNER

Wave 1 Survey	Wave 2 Survey	Wave 3 Survey	Comparison Surveys	1st in depth interviews	2nd in depth interviews
March 2005 – Nov 2005	Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	(1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	October 2006 - July 2007
ownership	last interview	last interview	months	Has it been a struggle to buy own home; has home purchase given you a sense of achievement What do you think people mean when they say the "Great Australian dream" Does this phrase mean anything to you at a personal level Do you think you will ever leave this house If so, where do you expect to move to and why	Has it been a struggle to buy own home; has home purchase given you a sense of achievement Do you think you will ever leave this house If so, where do you expect to move to and why

Wave 1 Survey March 2005 – Nov 2005	Wave 2 Survey Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Wave 3 Survey October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	Comparison Surveys (1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	1st in depth interviews Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	2nd in depth interviews October 2006 - July 2007
				Do you work around the house or garden much. Do you find that sort of work satisfying	Do you work around the house or garden much. AND Have you done any home improvements since leaving MMAL. Would you have done this anyway – or do you find yourself having more time or money to do these things now

Wave 1 Survey March 2005 – Nov 2005	Wave 2 Survey Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Wave 3 Survey October 2006 - Aug/Sep 2007	Comparison Surveys (1) Sep/Oct 2005 (2) July/Aug 2006 (3) Sep 2007	1st in depth interviews Nov 2005 – Feb 2006	2nd in depth interviews October 2006 - July 2007
Stress re housing costs	√ and any change since last interview	√ and any change since last interview	√ and any change in last 6 months		
	Ownership of rental investment prop (# if yes purchased since leaving MMAL)	Ownership of rental investment prop (# if yes purchased since leaving MMAL)			
Sought assistance re housing e.g. info/advice – type/source	√	√			
Received financial assistance re housing	√	√			

Appendix 3: Conceptualisation of Quantitative Data

Based on the surveys developed by Beer et al (2006)

Background information
Size of retrenchment package
Post code
Household size
Ethnicity
Gender
Participated in qualitative interviews
Age In Categories at 2006
Education level (w1)
Number of Years Worked at Mitsubishi in Categories
 What Is the Highest Level of School You Completed?
What Was Your Personal Income Before Tax Last Year - In Categories
What Best Describes Your Current Relationship Status
has your relationship status changed since the last interview?
Nature of Departure for Those Who Had Not Left By Interview
Have You Ever Lived Outside the Southern Region
To What Extent are the People You Know - From Your Neighbourhood
Occupation in Mitsubishi
Previous to your experience at Mitsubishi have you been made redundant before
How did you leave Mitsubishi

Labour market outcomes
Are You Currently Unemployed?
Unemployed since last survey

 How Long Have You Been Unemployed?
What is the Minimum Weekly Wage You Would be Willing - to Work For?/to make it worthwhile to work
Why Did You Decide to Retire Since Leaving Mitsubishi?
what is your current (employment) situation
Current Employment Situation (recoded)
Current employment status (recode with waiting)
Are you actively seeking employment
What is the Minimum Weekly Wage You Would be Willing to Work For?
Do You Expect Your Future Income to Be More or Less than Your Mitsubishi Income?

Latent benefits of work
Were You Involved in Other Regular or Social Group Activities At or Through Work?
Do You Think the Changes at Mitsubishi Have Affected Your Social and Group Activities?
Have You Felt that You are Able to Play a Useful Part in Things?
Are You Seeking Similar Work, Or Is This a Chance to Do Something Different?
Overall, How Would You Compare Your Current Job to Your Job in Mitsubishi?
Since the Last Interview Have You Kept in Contact with Former Mitsubishi Workers?
Overall, How Would You Compare Your Current Job to Your Job in Mitsubishi? (if working F/T)
Would You Prefer to Be Working Full time?

Overall, How Would You Compare Your Current Job to Your Job in Mitsubishi? (If work p/t)
Would You Prefer to Be Working Full time?
Overall, How Would You Compare Your Current Job to Your Job in Mitsubishi? (If working casual)

Loss of material benefits and restriction on agency
How Would You Say You Have Been Managing - Since the Last Interview/Financially at the Moment?
I Feel In Control of My Life
I Feel Hopeful of the Future
Have You Sought or Been Provided with Financial Counselling
Are Your housing Costs a Worry to You?
Has the Importance of Housing Costs Changed Since the Last Interview?
Have you housing costs become more or less of a worry?
What Was Your Personal Income Before Tax Last Year - In Categories
What Was Your Household Income Before Tax Last Year - In Categories
Has Your Income Changed Since the Last Interview?

Health
In General How Would You Say Your Health Is?
Do You Think Your Health Has Been Affected by the Changes at Mitsubishi? /changes in your life
GHQ transformed (recoded)
Self-rated general health (recoded)

Impact of retrenchment on home and family
Has anyone in your household (inc. your partner or older children) had to take up extra work as a result of you leaving Mitsubishi
Are you spending more, less or the same amount of time with your home life
Are you spending more, less or the same amount of time with your children

Has Leaving Mitsubishi Changed Your Family Life?
Has leaving Mitsubishi made your family life - Better
Has leaving Mitsubishi made your family life - Worse
Has leaving Mitsubishi made you family life -Stayed the same
Has leaving Mitsubishi made your family life - Different

Increasing ontological security or reducing financial strain ?
Are You Planning To Pay Off Your Mortgage with Your Mitsubishi Payout
Since the Last Interview Have You Paid Your Mortgage with Your Mitsubishi Payment?
Since the Last Interview Have You Paid Your Mortgage with Your Mitsubishi Payment?

Change in housing tenure
Tenure
Since the Last Interview Have You Changed Your Housing Status?
Tenure
Since the Last Interview Have You Changed Your Housing Status?
Tenure type

Housing, place, neighbourhood, region
What Type of Residence
Tenure
How much do you pay in rent per week
How Much is Owing On Your Mortgage
Are You Planning To Pay Off Your Mortgage with Your Mitsubishi Payout
How Long Have You Lived in Your Current House
How Long Have You Lived in Your Current Neighbourhood

Have You Ever Lived Outside the Southern Region
Have You Moved Since Leaving Mitsubishi?/since last interview
Do You Think You Will Need to Move House or Change Your Housing Arrangements Over the Next 12 Months?

How Important is Your Home to You?
Has The Importance of Home Changed Since the Last Interview?
How Important is it To You To Own Your Own Home?
Has the Importance of Owning Your Own Home Changed Since the Last Interview?
Are Your housing Costs a Worry to You?
Has the Importance of Housing Costs Changed Since the Last Interview?

Do You Own a Rental Investment Property?
Have You Sought Assistance for Your Housing?
Received First Home Owners Grant
Received Commonwealth Rent Assistance
Received State Government Rental Assistance
Received Rental Bond Assistance
Received Other Housing Assistance

Journey to work
If You Are Employed, What is the Postcode of Your Current Place of Employment?

Job search effort
Could You Tell Us Some of the Problems You Faced Trying to Find Other Employment? - for those unemployed still looking
Would You Rather Be Working than Retired?
Could You Tell Us Some of the Problems You Faced Trying to Find Other Employment? - for those retired because unemployed

Are You Actively Seeking Employment?

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Job Network

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Other Employment Agencies

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Newspaper Searches

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Internet

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Other Formal Means

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Family

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Friends

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Previous MMAL Workers

What Means Are You Using to Seek Employment and How Often Do You use These Means? Other

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