

# ABOUT THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONSULTATION

Human  
Rights



# THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONSULTATION

Human rights are about equality and fairness for everyone. A society that commits to human rights, commits to ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect. In Australia, values such as freedom, respect, fairness, justice, democracy and equality, stem from a commitment to human rights – or a ‘fair go for all’.

The National Consultation is about sharing your views on human rights in Australia.

## WHAT IS THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONSULTATION ABOUT?

The Consultation will bring together a range of views across Australia about the protection and promotion of human rights in Australia.

The National Consultation will look at three key questions:

- which human rights (including corresponding responsibilities) should be protected and promoted?
- are these human rights currently sufficiently protected and promoted?
- how could Australia better protect and promote human rights?

While some may consider that human rights are already sufficiently protected and promoted, others may suggest changes. Those who suggest changes may have some ideas about how:

- we build upon our existing democratic institutions to better integrate human rights considerations
- human rights legal frameworks could be strengthened, or
- a stronger human rights culture could be developed.

## HOW THE CONSULTATION WILL BE RUN

An independent committee will conduct the Consultation. The task for the Committee will be to listen to the community’s views on this important issue for Australia’s future.

From 10 December 2008 until 29 May 2009 you will be able to make written submissions on the key questions for the Consultation.

From February to May 2009 the Committee will also host a series of community roundtables throughout regional and rural Australia as well as in the capital cities.

Following this, the Committee will report to the Australian Government on what they hear, to give the Government a better understanding of what the community thinks about human rights. The Committee has been asked to provide its report by 31 July 2009.

## HOW YOU CAN SHARE YOUR VIEWS

You can make a submission to the National Human Rights Consultation individually or on behalf of a group or organisation. You can make an online submission at [www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au](http://www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au)

Alternatively, you can post your submission to:

**The National Human Rights  
Consultation Secretariat  
Attorney-General’s Department  
Robert Garran Offices  
BARTON ACT 2600**

Submissions can be made at anytime up until the closing date of 29 May 2009.

**All submissions will be treated as public unless the author clearly indicates to the contrary. A request made under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* for access to a submission marked confidential will be determined in accordance with that Act.**

## Community roundtables

The times and locations of the community roundtables will be available on the Consultation website at [www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au](http://www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au). The community roundtables will also be advertised in local newspapers.

To attend a community roundtable between February and May 2009 you will need to register online at [www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au](http://www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au). Alternatively you can ring the Secretariat on 1800 086 134.

## FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONSULTATION

You can log on to the Consultation website at [www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au](http://www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au). Consultation updates will be posted on the website throughout the Consultation.

You will also find a range of human rights information on the website including a Background Paper for the Consultation and a range of fact sheets. Information will also be available in a range of community languages, and formats including Braille and large print on request.

You can ring the Consultation Secretariat on 1800 086 134.

Our email address is: [humanrightsconsultation@ag.gov.au](mailto:humanrightsconsultation@ag.gov.au)

## NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONSULTATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Australian Government is committed to the promotion of human rights—a commitment that is based on the belief in the fundamental equality of all persons.

The Government believes that the protection and promotion of human rights is a question of national importance for all Australians. The National Human Rights Consultation Committee will undertake an Australia-wide

community consultation into how best to for protect and promote human rights and corresponding responsibilities in Australia.

The Government has given the Consultation Committee the following terms of reference:

1. The Committee will ask the Australian community:
  - Which human rights (including corresponding responsibilities) should be protected and promoted?
  - Are these human rights currently sufficiently protected and promoted?
  - How could Australia better protect and promote human rights?
2. In conducting the consultation the Committee will:
  - consult broadly with the community, particularly with those who live in rural and regional areas
  - undertake a range of awareness raising activities to enhance participation in the consultation by a wide cross section of Australia's diverse community
  - seek out the diverse range of views held by the community about the protection and promotion of human rights
  - identify key issues raised by the community in relation to the protection and promotion of human rights, and
3. The Committee will report to the Australian Government by 31 July 2009 on the issues raised and the options identified for the Government to consider in relation to the future protection and promotion of human rights. The Committee will set out the advantages and disadvantages (including social and economic costs and benefits) and an assessment of the level of community support for each option it identifies.

The options identified should preserve the sovereignty of the Parliament and not include a constitutionally entrenched bill of rights.

**SHARE  
YOUR  
VIEWS**



**[www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au](http://www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au) 1800 086 134**

National Human Rights Consultation Secretariat | Attorney-General's Department  
Central Office, National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600