

Appendix A Terms of reference

The Australian Government is committed to the protection and 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 for protecting and promoting 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 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 [30 September 2009] on the issues raised and the options identified for the Government to consider to enhance the protection and promotion of human rights. The Committee is to 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.