

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework

Question on notice taken by Mr Daniel Ng, Executive Group Manager, Legislation Policy and Programs, Justice and Community Safety Directorate ACT, 12 May 2023

Senator GROGAN: ...You appear to invest quite heavily in making sure that your public servants and officials are well across human rights issues and how they are supposed to interact. Do you do any training or awareness raising with schools, community and anything at all?

Ms Cheyne: Yes.

Senator GROGAN: Can you take us through that?

Ms Cheyne: Well, with public servants, yes.

Senator GROGAN: I get the Public Service bit. I'm really only interested in the other bit.

...

Mr Ng: I would say that the majority of the public education activities are run by the Human Rights Commission. Certainly my office, as you've identified, and probably since you will hear from me a lot on this stuff, is focused on supporting internal government operations and considerations of other members of the bureaucracy. The Human Rights Commission would more globally deal with the external face and education activities. I'm happy to engage with them and provide some further information about their activities on notice, if that's useful.

Senator GROGAN: Thank you. That would be lovely.

Information provided by the ACT Human Rights Commission, as at 1 June 2023

The ACT Human Rights Commission undertakes a broad range of outreach activities reflecting the broad range of stakeholders and community members who interact with and access our services and benefit from information about the services provided.

The Commission runs information stalls at community events including National Reconciliation Day, National Multicultural Festival, COTA Seniors Expo, Careers Xpo and Law Week, providing information to members of the public on human rights and Commission services and supports. Other annual community events include a Commission-run [public forum in December each year](#), to celebrate international human rights day; and Children's Week, when the Children and Young People Commissioner presents an award.

Commissioners engage with school and university students, giving guest lectures, online seminars and webinars; and conducting school visits to educate children about their rights. In recent years this has included [guest lectures on cultural rights at the ANU](#) and presentations at the University of Canberra, Charles Sturt University and the Australian Catholic University; an address to a national schools constitutional convention; presentations to the Australian Lawyers Alliance and Law Council of Australia Committee; and speaking at public events with Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Commissioners also appear at ACT and Federal parliamentary committee hearings and Royal Commission hearings, which are usually public or live-streamed. Commissioners also participate in panels and symposiums on particular areas of expertise such as elder abuse, discrimination law, conversion practices and best practice regulation.

The Commission does some targeted paid advertising in the mainstream media (print and radio); and runs public service announcements in multiple languages on local community radio, on topics including racism, discrimination, disability rights, and services and supports for older people. Social media posts also inform people about their rights; and to contact the Commission for advice, support and services. For example, this recent [animation for older people](#) has been shared on social media and with stakeholders such as COTA. The Commission's [Humanity newsletter](#) is sent to over 400 subscribers, and includes information about human rights-related issues and events. The Children and Young People Commissioner engages with children and young people with surveys, via social media platforms, its [Young Thinker Forum](#) and the monthly [RightsinACTion newsletter](#). This year, Commissioner Jodie Griffiths-Cook consulted with over 2,400 children and young people about their experiences of [racism](#) and over 300 students about what wellbeing means to them.