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**ASeTTS: Association for Services  
to Torture and Trauma Survivors**  
Address:  
286 Beaufort St,  
Perth, WA 6000  
Telephone: 08 9227 2700

**Companion House**  
Address:  
41 Fairfax Street,  
O'Connor, ACT 2602  
Telephone: 02 6247 7227

**Phoenix Support Service for  
Survivors of Torture and Trauma**  
Address:  
49 Molle Street,  
Hobart, TAS 7000  
Telephone: 03 6234 9411

**QPASTT: Queensland Program of  
Assistance to Survivors of Torture  
and Trauma**  
Postal Address:  
PO Box 6254,  
Fairfield, QLD 4103  
Telephone: 07 3391 6677

**STARTTS: Service for the  
Treatment and Rehabilitation of  
Torture and Trauma Survivors**  
Postal Address:  
PO Box 203,  
Fairfield, NSW 2165  
Telephone: 02 9794 1900

**STTARS: Survivors of Torture and  
Trauma Assistance and  
Rehabilitation Service**  
Address:  
12 Hawker Street,  
Bowden, SA 5007  
Telephone: 08 8346 5433

**Melaleuca Refugee Centre: Torture  
and Trauma Survivors Service of  
the Northern Territory**  
Postal Address:  
PO Box 1226,  
Nightcliff, NT 0814  
Telephone: 08 8985 3311

**VFST: Victorian Foundation for  
Survivors of Torture**  
Address:  
6 Gardiner St  
Brunswick, VIC 3056  
Telephone: 03 9388 0022

**Peter Hallahan**  
Committee Secretary  
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee  
Department of the Senate  
Via email: LegCon.Sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Hallahan,

The Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (FASSTT) welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission to the Inquiry into the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Test Review and Other Measures) Bill 2009.

In particular, FASSTT commends the inclusion of a provision that certain applicants may be eligible for citizenship without sitting the citizenship test if, at the time of application, they have a physical or mental incapacity that is as a result of suffering torture or trauma outside Australia.

As the Citizenship Test Review Committee noted, the experience of torture and trauma may have a "severe impact on (survivors') ability to retain and recall information." FASSTT affirms this on the basis of its considerable experience providing specialist torture and trauma rehabilitation services to people from refugee or refugee-like backgrounds throughout Australia. FASSTT agencies collectively deliver services to approximately 13,000 people each year.

While individuals so affected may be unable to pass a formal test, they are not incapable of understanding and respecting the responsibilities of citizenship. To exclude them from the rights of citizenship is profoundly unfair.

FASSTT recommends that the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs endorse the amendment.

Yours sincerely,



**Paris Arisotle AM**  
Director, VFST  
Executive Member, FASSTT