



Human Rights
Law Centre



Annual Report

2011/12

www.hrlc.org.au



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How we work

The Human Rights Law Centre is an independent, non-profit, non-government organisation committed to promoting and protecting human rights in Australia and through Australian foreign policy.

The HRLC uses a proven methodology to achieve individual justice and systemic human rights reform.



Strategic partnerships

The coalitions we coordinate harness the resources and expertise of leading lawyers, community organisations and human rights experts.



Integrated tactics

We advance human rights through a tactical combination of research, evidence-based advocacy and strategic litigation.



High-level influence

Our tactics directly engage powerful decision makers and actors, including Ministers and senior officials, superior courts, the media and the UN.

Systemic human rights reform

Our work results in justice for individuals, changes in policy and practice, and stronger protection of human rights in law and on the ground.

Joint Statement from Chairperson and Executive Director

As partners, activists and supporters of the Human Rights Law Centre in 2011/12, you made a crucial contribution to human rights reform.

Whether you supported us as a donor or pro bono lawyer, a political advocate or policy maker, a community partner or volunteer, this report highlights some of the achievements that your activism and support has made possible this year.

Together, we ensured the passage of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act, which requires that all new Commonwealth laws be assessed for their compatibility with Australia's international human rights obligations. We also secured law reform to safeguard against Australian officials extraditing or exposing a person to torture or the death penalty overseas.

At the state level, we helped save the Charter of Human Rights and, in doing so, prevented Victoria from becoming the first state in the developed, democratic world to repeal a human rights act.



Together, we secured bipartisan support for Australia to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Torture Convention and to ensure that all places of detention are subject to independent monitoring and inspections.

Working with community partners, government and the police, we contributed to the reform of police training so that police are equipped to engage more effectively with young people and people experiencing mental illness. As the coronial inquest into the tragic death of 15 year old Tyler Cassidy found, such an approach can save lives.

Thank you for contributing to these significant human rights achievements.

All of these reforms demonstrate the effectiveness of the HRLC model of social change in which you've invested.

Of course, our human rights impact is only made possible thanks to the passionate and generous contributions of our supporters. With a substantial decline in state and Commonwealth Government funding this year, our dedicated donors and pro bono partners have ensured that our human rights work has not only been sustained, but strengthened.

By supporting us over the coming year, you'll contribute to principled, proven and effective human rights change.

We'll work to ensure that Australia is held to account for its international human rights obligations, both at home and abroad. Your support will enable us to prepare major reports on Australia's human rights record for the UN Committee against Torture and the UN Human Rights Committee. We'll also conduct research and advocacy to ensure that human rights are given greater priority in Australian foreign policy, whether in Jakarta or Geneva.

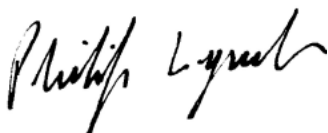
We'll advocate for police accountability and for police to be regulated and trained to use force only where it is reasonable and proportionate. Your support will also help ensure that the investigation of police-related deaths is fully independent.

We'll engage in research and policy development to develop a human rights-based approach to violence against women. Your support will help prevent and remedy a human rights violation experienced by more than one in three Australian women.

We'll advocate and litigate to ensure that conditions of detention comply with international human rights standards and that places of detention are subject to independent oversight and inspections. Your support is crucial to challenge indefinite detention, inadequate access to healthcare and the grossly disproportionate incarceration of Indigenous peoples.

We'll work to advance the principles set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Your support will help ensure that the principles of self-determination, land and cultural rights, and participation in decision-making processes are reflected in Australian law, policy and institutions.

Thank you for standing with us to achieve individual justice, government accountability and systemic human rights reform.



Phil Lynch
Executive Director



Ros Grady
Chairperson

Strengthening human rights law

Our work

There is strong evidence that the legal recognition and protection of human rights contributes to the practical realisation of human rights on the ground.

In 2011/12, our work in this area focused on saving the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and ensuring effective implementation of Australia's Human Rights Framework.

We also ran a series of High Court and Federal Court test cases to uphold the rights to freedom of speech and peaceful protest.



“The ability to vindicate human rights in our independent courts and tribunals is essential for access to justice and the rule of law.”

- Phil Lynch, 'Keeping Charter of Human Rights a victory for Victorians', Herald Sun

Our impact



Saving the Victorian Charter of Human Rights

In a victory for evidence-based policy and accountable government, the Victorian Government announced in March 2012 that it would retain the Charter of Human Rights. Rejecting the recommendations of a parliamentary committee, which said the Charter should be weakened or repealed, the Government accepted the HRLC's evidence that the Charter has "tangible benefits" and that there's a critical "place for courts in upholding rights".



Enhancing human rights-based policy development

4 January 2012 was an historic day for human rights in Australia, marking the entry into force of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act. The Act requires that human rights are taken into account in the development of Commonwealth law and policy and establishes a new Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, both of which were longstanding recommendations of the HRLC and our key partners.



Fighting for freedom of speech and the right to protest

We were deeply disappointed with the High Court's decision in *Wotton v Queensland*, a case regarding the parole conditions of an Aboriginal activist convicted in association with the Palm Island riots that followed the death of Mulrunji Doomadgee in police custody. By upholding the constitutionality of a law that makes it a criminal offence for a journalist to interview a prisoner, the Court missed a major opportunity to uphold the rights to free speech and freedom of the press. Despite this setback, we are continuing to agitate the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and protest in the *Occupy Melbourne* case in the Federal Court. According to ABC News, the *Occupy* case, which we are running together with Fitzroy Legal Service, Allens and Ron Merkel QC, "is being watched closely around the world" in light of its implications for peaceful protest and participatory democracy.

Looking ahead

The HRLC will:

- Work with the Federal Government to develop a robust, concrete and measurable National Human Rights Action Plan.
- Lobby the Victorian Government to further strengthen and streamline the Charter of Human Rights.
- Continue to lead the campaign for a comprehensive Human Rights Act. Australia is the only modern developed democracy not to enshrine human rights in a national law.
- Conduct strategic litigation to strengthen legal and constitutional protection of human rights and the rule of law.

Promoting equality and addressing discrimination

Our work

In 2011/12, our research, analysis and advocacy focused on the development of comprehensive national legislation that promotes equality and addresses systemic discrimination.

Together with key partners, we also lobbied for the establishment of a National Children's Commissioner to better promote children's rights and the amendment of legislation to strengthen protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

“For the first time in history, the President of the United States has acknowledged the dignity of the commitment of gay and lesbian people to one another, and his belief that their relationships be accorded the same respect as heterosexual couples”

– US Ambassador to Australia, Jeffrey L Bleich, in an official statement he released through the HRLC's social media channels



“A national children's commissioner would ensure that the government must take into account the rights of children in Australia, ranging from unaccompanied minors to Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory subject to the intervention policies.”

– Ben Schokman of the HRLC as quoted in The Age

Our impact



Establishing a National Children's Commissioner

Together with partners such as the National Children's and Youth Law Centre and Save the Children Australia, our advocacy played a crucial role in the passage of the Australian Human Rights Commission Amendment (National Children's Commissioner) Act.

The National Children's Commissioner will help to promote and protect the human rights of children and young people and ensure that the best interests of children are taken into account in the development and review of national law and policy. The Commissioner will also contribute to the domestic implementation of Australia's international human rights obligations, particularly those arising under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.



Strengthening disability rights

For over three years, the HRLC and the Office of the Public Advocate raised concerns about a provision of the Disability Act 2006 (Vic). The law provides that a person with intellectual disability can be detained for up to 28 days for assessment purposes without any right of representation or review. This infringes the rights to liberty, freedom of movement, freedom from medical treatment without consent, and to a fair hearing.

With the pro bono assistance of Fiona McLeod SC and Elizabeth Bennett of Counsel, the HRLC and OPA drafted proposed amendments to the Act, which were introduced to parliament in February 2012 by the Community Services Minister in the form of the Disability Amendment Bill 2012. According to the Minister, "The Bill provides for a person to seek a review of the decision to make an assessment order. This promotes the right to a fair hearing and the right to liberty and security of the person."



Advocating for marriage equality

Following US President Obama's historic declaration of support for the legal recognition of same-sex marriage, the HRLC worked with the United States Ambassador to Australia, Jeffrey Bleich, to develop an official statement of support for marriage equality. The US Ambassador's statement was exclusively released via the HRLC's website and Facebook page and recognised that marriage equality is a basic human right.

Looking ahead

The HRLC will continue to undertake research, policy development and advocacy to strengthen and modernise Australia's anti-discrimination regime.

While it is desirable that the current review process streamlines laws, removes inconsistencies and reduces the regulatory burden, the key measure of success will be the effectiveness of the revised laws in preventing and remedying discrimination and promoting substantive equality.

Holding Australia to account at the UN

Our work

The HRLC undertakes research and advocacy, and prepares briefings and reports, to ensure that Australia engages positively and constructively with United Nations human rights bodies and respects and implements its international human rights obligations.

Our impact



Implementing our international human rights obligations on the ground

In 2011, the HRLC led a coalition of NGOs which prepared reports, and engaged in lobbying and advocacy, for the Universal Periodic Review of Australia by the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. That review resulted in Australia receiving 145 recommendations from over 50 countries to better promote and protect human rights. In 2012, the HRLC continued that work, advocating for the Government to make a concrete commitment to implementing UPR recommendations by incorporating them in the National Human Rights Action Plan.



Strengthening access to remedies for violations of international human rights

In October 2011, a coalition of leading human rights NGOs, coordinated by the HRLC, the Mental Disability Advocacy Centre and the Open Society Justice Initiative, prepared a report for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on strengthening access to remedies for violations of international human rights. The report was prepared as a key input to the UN human rights treaty body strengthening process initiated by the High Commissioner in 2009. The strengthening process is intended to make the work of treaty bodies more coordinated and effective and to enhance the fulfilment of human rights on the ground.



Protecting the rights of non-citizens and their families

When Stefan Nystrom was deported from Australia on “character grounds” he had spent all but 27 days of his 32 years here. He was deported to a country where he did not speak the language, had no friends or close family and where his health deteriorated. The HRLC took Mr Nystrom’s case to the UN Human Rights Committee, which held that Australia arbitrarily deprived Mr Nystrom of the “right to enter his own country”. This is the first time that an international court or tribunal has found that this right applies to non-nationals with “special ties” to a country. According to leading international jurist the Hon Elizabeth Evatt AC, “This decision is highly significant. It establishes that in certain circumstances a person may be able to claim protection against arbitrary deportation by a state even though not a citizen of that state.”

“Australia’s mounting track record of rejecting the decisions of UN treaty bodies lays us open to the charge of speaking with a forked tongue on human rights.”

– Rachel Ball of the HRLC as quoted
in the Sydney Morning Herald



Looking ahead

The HRLC will:

- Prepare major reports on Australia’s human rights record for the UN Committee against Torture and the UN Human Rights Committee.
- Campaign for the Government to ratify key international human rights treaties to which Australia is not party, particularly the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families.
- Advocate for the Government to implement decisions of UN human rights bodies fully and in good faith. The Australian Government’s consistent refusal to accept and implement decisions of the UN Human Rights Committee is incompatible with Australia’s obligations under the ICCPR and its First Optional Protocol and undermines the international rule of law.

Protecting the rights of people in detention

Our work

The HRLC conducts research, advocacy and litigation to ensure that detention is used only as a last resort and that people in detention are treated with dignity and respect.

In 2011/12, our work focused on strengthening independent monitoring and oversight of places of detention and ensuring that children are not held in adult detention facilities.

Our impact



Preventing ill-treatment in places of detention

In June 2012, the powerful Joint Standing Committee on Treaties recommended that the Federal Government ratify and implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. This international treaty requires that all places of detention are subject to independent monitoring and inspections. As the HRLC has said in submissions to Government, testimony to parliamentary committees and opinion pieces in the mass media, it is not only in the interests of persons deprived of liberty, but also the broader community, that all detention facilities respect human rights and dignity. Independent inspections and oversight are critical in this regard.



Releasing Indonesian children from detention

In 2011/12, one of the key situations of human rights concern was the prolonged detention of persons accused of people smuggling. Overwhelmingly, the accused were poor Indonesian fishermen or children, some as young as 12. Many were detained for extended periods in adult prisons. Following extensive research, documentation and advocacy by organisations such as the HRLC, Victoria Legal Aid and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, the Commonwealth Attorney-General announced a review of the detention of Indonesian persons in Australian detention who claimed to be minors. By the completion of the review in June 2012, 15 Indonesians had been released from prison after the Commonwealth accepted they may have been children.



Challenging mandatory sentencing

During 2011/12, the HRLC also undertook extensive research and advocacy in relation to mandatory sentences for people smuggling offences. As the HRLC's Rachel Ball testified to a parliamentary committee, mandatory sentences undermine human rights and the rule of law, echoing the words of one judge who said the laws impose "savage penalties upon the ignorant, who are simply being exploited by organisers". In response, Labor and Coalition Senators recommended that the Australian Government review mandatory sentences and strengthen protections for children and young people suspected of involvement in people smuggling.

“Making places of detention more open, transparent and accountable helps to ensure that persons deprived of liberty – whether people with psychiatric illness, prisoners, people with disability or asylum seekers – are treated with basic dignity and respect.”

– Phil Lynch, ‘Detention treaty in everyone’s interests’, Herald Sun



Exposing major failings in Victoria’s prison system

The Ombudsman’s report into the death of Carl Williams at Barwon Prison highlighted systemic failings in Victoria’s prison system. Among these failings, the Ombudsman was highly critical of the lack of independent monitoring or oversight of prisons. The report, which was tabled in parliament, quoted extensively from an HRLC briefing paper, that said:

“Victoria does not have an independent body responsible for monitoring and oversight of prisons and other places of detention. The Victorian Office of Correctional Services Review, an internal business unit within the Department of Justice which reports to the Secretary of the Department, is not sufficiently independent, empowered or publicly accountable to undertake this function. The OCSR’s lack of independence is exacerbated by the fact that it does not publicly publish its reports or findings.”

Following the release of the report, the Victorian Premier announced that the Government will review the corrections system and that former Australian Federal Police commissioner Mick Palmer will audit and benchmark implementation of the Ombudsman’s 57 recommendations.

Looking ahead

The HRLC will:

- Continue to advocate for the ratification and implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture to ensure that all places of detention are subject to monitoring and inspection by fully independent, adequately resourced and appropriately mandated bodies.
- Brief UN treaty bodies, including the Human Rights Committee and the Committee against Torture, on the extent to which conditions of detention in Australia comply with international human rights standards.
- Continue to lobby and advocate for legislative reform to codify in law that asylum seekers may be detained only where strictly necessary and as a last resort, that children can not be held in detention, that immigration detention be subject to time limits, and that all detainees have access to judicial review of their detention.
- Conduct strategic litigation to ensure that people in detention are treated with dignity and respect, including through access to adequate healthcare.

Promoting human rights through Australian foreign policy

Our work

It is in the national interest that human rights are given greater priority and focus in Australian foreign policy and that Australia commits to good international citizenship and human rights leadership.

In 2011/12, our research, policy and advocacy work focused on developing and promoting a human rights-based approach to foreign policy and briefing Ministers and senior officials on human rights issues, initiatives and opportunities.



Looking ahead

The HRLC will:

- Continue to lobby and advocate for Australia to develop a comprehensive strategy on human rights and foreign policy.
- Work with Government and AusAID to further prioritise the promotion and protection of human rights through Australia's aid and development program.
- Conduct research, policy analysis and advocacy to ensure that human rights objectives and safeguards are incorporated into relevant agreements, processes and organisations of which Australia is a part.
- Monitor and report on the human rights impacts of Australian foreign policy, particularly in the areas of aid, trade, investment, and military and security cooperation.

Our impact



Promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls

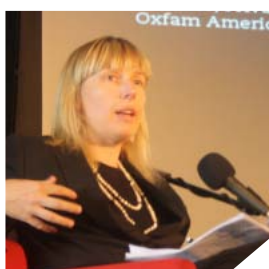
Our advocacy, together with that of key partners such as Amnesty International Australia and the Australian Council for International Development, led to the appointment of Australia's first Global Ambassador for Women and Girls in September 2011. The Ambassador now plays a crucial role in coordinating and promoting Australia's work to eradicate violence against women, protect women and girls in conflict zones, and increase the representation of women in leadership roles.



Upholding basic civil and political rights in the region

Together with Human Rights Watch, through both private briefings and the mainstream media, HRLC has called on the Australian Government to urge Indonesia to respect fundamental civil and political rights in West Papua. Responding to these calls, Foreign Minister Bob Carr raised human rights concerns with his Indonesian counterparts and called on Indonesia to enhance media access and press freedom in West Papua.

Also with HRW, the HRLC urged the Australian Government to raise concerns with Sri Lankan officials about the alleged arbitrary arrest and torture of people who were refused asylum and sent back to Sri Lanka. The HRLC's calls were widely reported in the Australian, Sri Lankan and international media.



Strengthening protection from torture and other serious human rights violations

Complementary protection is the duty owed by a State to not return people to face torture or other serious human rights violations in their country of origin, even if their cases do not fall within the scope of the Refugee Convention. Such cases could include people at risk of female genital mutilation, honour killings, extrajudicial executions and the death penalty. In September 2011, working with organisations including the Australian Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International, the HRLC secured the passage of the Migration Act Amendment (Complementary Protection) Act 2011. The Act entrenches international complementary protection obligations under Australian law and is a crucial legal safeguard against Australia exposing people to serious human rights violations abroad.

“Australia has a critical leadership role on human rights in Asia and the Pacific and should take a principled and proactive stand on human rights with a key partner such as Indonesia.”

– Tom Clarke, ‘It’s time for Rudd to take a stand for basic rights in West Papua’, *The Australian*

Police accountability

Our work

It is in the interests of both community and police safety that police are adequately trained, regulated, resourced and accountable.

In 2011/12, our research, advocacy and strategic litigation focused on ensuring that the police use of force and the investigation of police-related deaths are consistent with international human rights standards.

Our impact



Reforming police training to better respect and protect rights

Working with community partners such as Youthlaw and Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre, the HRLC has contributed to reform of police training so that it equips police to engage more effectively with young people and people experiencing mental illness. As the coronial inquest into the tragic death of 15 year old Tyler Cassidy found, in which the HRLC intervened with the support of Allens and Brian Walters SC, such an approach can save lives.

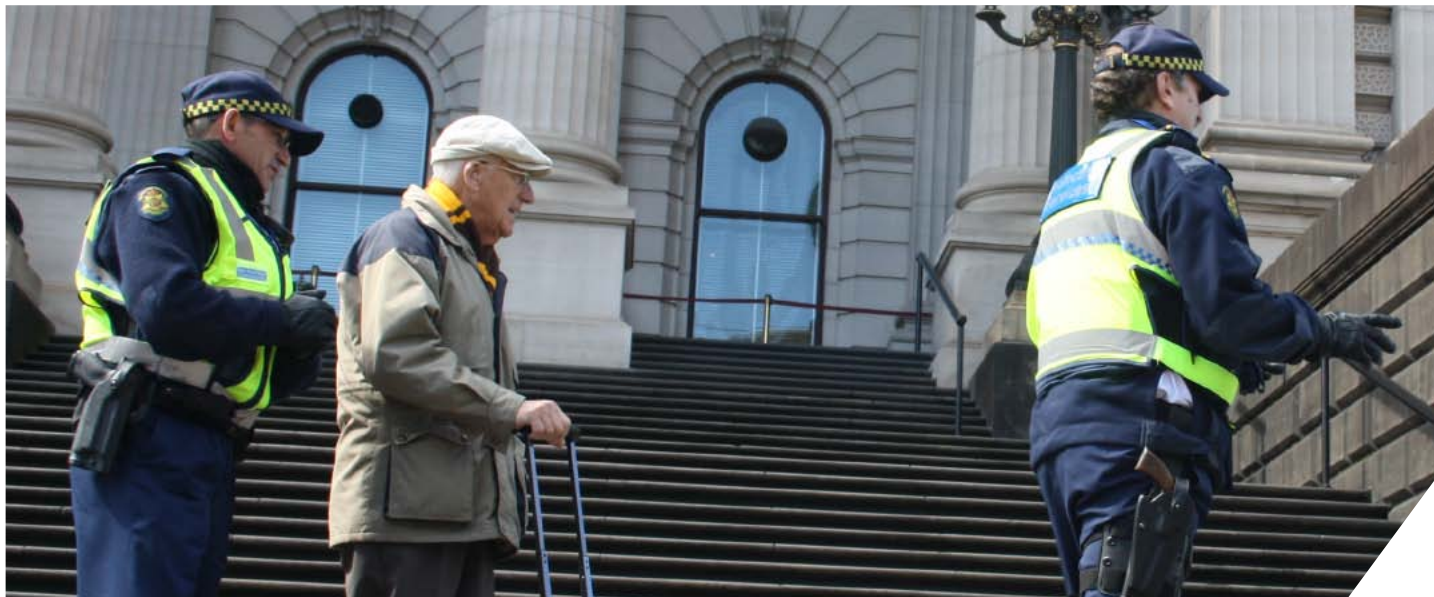


Monitoring and regulating police use of force

Victoria Police use force, on average, every 2.5 hours. There have been at least 12 people shot dead by Victoria Police in the last decade, while numerous others have died in police custody. In September 2011, the HRLC produced a major report, "Upholding Our Rights", which found that human rights-compliant regulation, training and monitoring of Victoria Police would reduce the incidence of the use of force, provide better guidance and support to police in enforcing the law and protecting the community, and increase public confidence in policing. The report was based on an extensive survey of international best practice in human rights-compliant policing, together with consultations with people with mental illness, Indigenous peoples, young people of African descent, and the Chief Commissioner of Police.

“Police officers should only use force as a last resort and only when strictly necessary. It should be used with the utmost restraint and in a manner that minimises damage and injury.”

– Anna Brown, ‘Civil rights and crossing the line’, The Age



Looking ahead

The HRLC will:

- Work towards implementation of the recommendations in our major report, “Upholding Our Rights”, to ensure that police are regulated and trained to use force only where it is reasonable and proportionate.
- Continue to work with governments, police, police integrity commissions and coroners to ensure that the investigation of police-related deaths is undertaken by a body that is fully independent of police, as required by international human rights law. The current system of police investigating police is inadequate and undermines human rights, accountability and trust in the police.
- Conduct strategic litigation, both in Australian courts and through UN human rights bodies, to ensure that the police use of force and the investigation of police-related deaths is consistent with international human rights standards.

Advancing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Our work

The HRLC provides legal and policy advice and assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, to promote and protect human rights in areas identified as significant or systemic by those communities.

Our impact



Reforming the Constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

In January 2012, the Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples released its landmark report. As we set out in our submission to the Panel, guaranteeing the right to racial equality and non-discrimination is a key element of Australia's international human rights obligations. Combined with the overwhelming evidence that a majority of Australians support fairness, recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, it is incumbent on all political parties to show principled leadership and support the Expert Panel's recommendations for constitutional reform.



Upholding the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples provides a framework to recognise, respect and protect the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In 2012, the HRLC developed a resource for the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) about how to use the Declaration to advance the human rights of Indigenous children. SNAICC has used the paper to underpin its advocacy at the international level, including at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York, and at home.



Opposing the Intervention in the Northern Territory

The HRLC was very disappointed that, in June 2012, the Australian parliament extended the intervention into Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory through the passage of the "Stronger Futures" legislation. Together with key partners such as the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples and the Australian Council of Social Service, the HRLC made submissions opposing the measures to a range of parliamentary committees and inquiries. The inquiries also heard evidence from Aboriginal Elders about the deleterious and disempowering impacts of the Northern Territory Intervention on their communities.

“The Stronger Futures Bills will undermine democracy, further damage the government’s relationship with Aboriginal peoples and be ineffective in addressing Aboriginal disadvantage.”

– Ben Schokman of the HRLC as quoted by AAP

Looking ahead

Working with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, the HRLC will conduct research, advocacy and strategic litigation to enshrine the principles set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – including the principles of self-determination, land and cultural rights, and participation in decision-making processes – in Australian law, policy, practice and institutions.



Preventing and redressing violence against women

Our work

One in three Australian women has experienced physical or sexual violence. Violence against women impacts the physical and mental wellbeing of victims and their families and the health, cohesion and prosperity of society as a whole.

In 2011/12, the HRLC engaged in consultations, research and policy development to promote a human rights-based approach to violence against women and to ensure that governments and public authorities fulfil their legal obligations to prevent and remedy violence.



“With the Federal Government currently reviewing and reforming Australia’s national anti-discrimination laws, Australia has an opportunity to strengthen the law and prohibit discrimination against women who are victims of domestic violence.”

– Rachel Ball, ‘Employers have a role in ending domestic violence’, ABC The Drum

Our impact



Protecting women and children from domestic violence

When the Victorian Government proposed laws that would punish women who failed to take action if their children were abused by a violent partner, the HRLC made a submission saying that measures to address child abuse should be appropriately adapted to achieve this aim and should not punish women who may themselves be victims of violence. A subsequent inquiry into “protecting Victoria’s vulnerable children”, tabled in parliament, endorsed the HRLC’s views and expressed concern that, if enacted, the law “might have a dampening effect on help-seeking behaviour and the reporting of abuse”.



Building sectoral capacity to adopt a human rights-based approach

In April 2012, together with the Australian Human Rights Commission, the HRLC brought together key women’s rights and domestic violence organisations to meet with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women. The consultations built sectoral capacity and understanding in relation to a human rights-based approach to violence against women, and also enabled the Special Rapporteur to hear first-hand evidence about the human rights situation for women in Australia.



Improving access to services for Indigenous women

Building on our expertise at the UN and in relation to Indigenous rights, the HRLC provided assistance to the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Service to prepare a complaint to the UN Human Rights Council regarding the lack of access to specialist domestic violence services for Indigenous women in urban areas in Australia.

Looking ahead

The HRLC will:

- Continue to conduct research and build sectoral capacity regarding the use of international human rights laws and mechanisms to prevent and remedy violence against women.
- Undertake law reform and policy advocacy to amend federal and state equal opportunity laws to protect women from discrimination on the basis that they are victims of domestic violence.

Expanding our reach and magnifying our impact

As a lean and nimble organisation, one of the HRLC's key strengths is our ability to work rapidly and responsively.

This is critical to preventing and remedying human rights violations in a dynamic and constantly evolving environment. We work with our pro bono partners, and through both mainstream and social media and the internet, to expand the reach of our work and magnify its impact.



Mainstream media coverage

109 articles

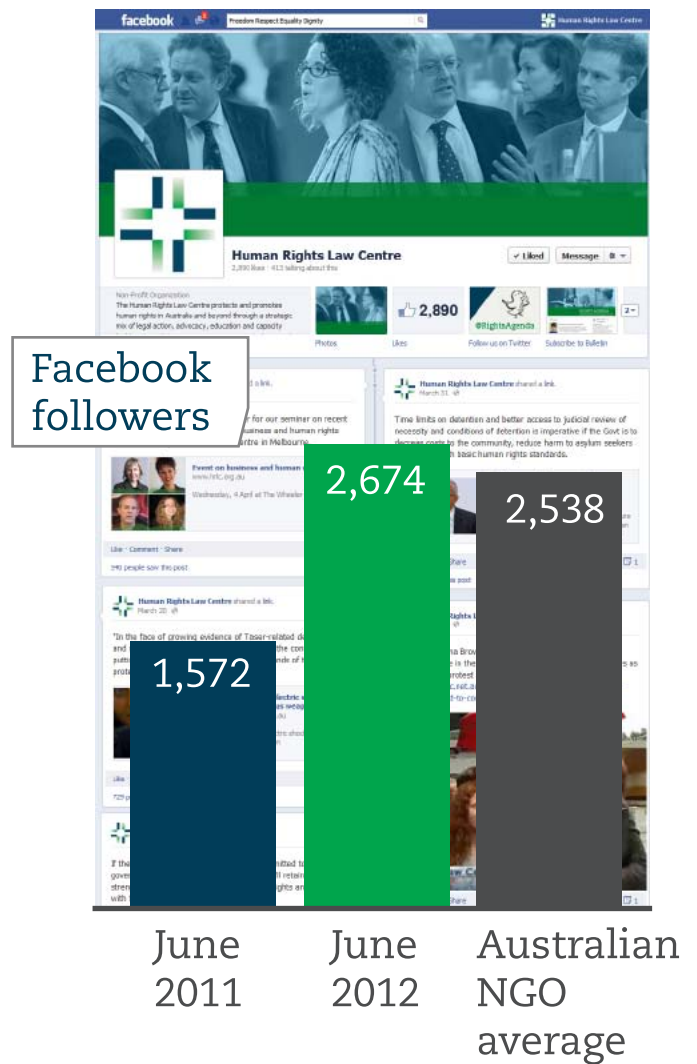
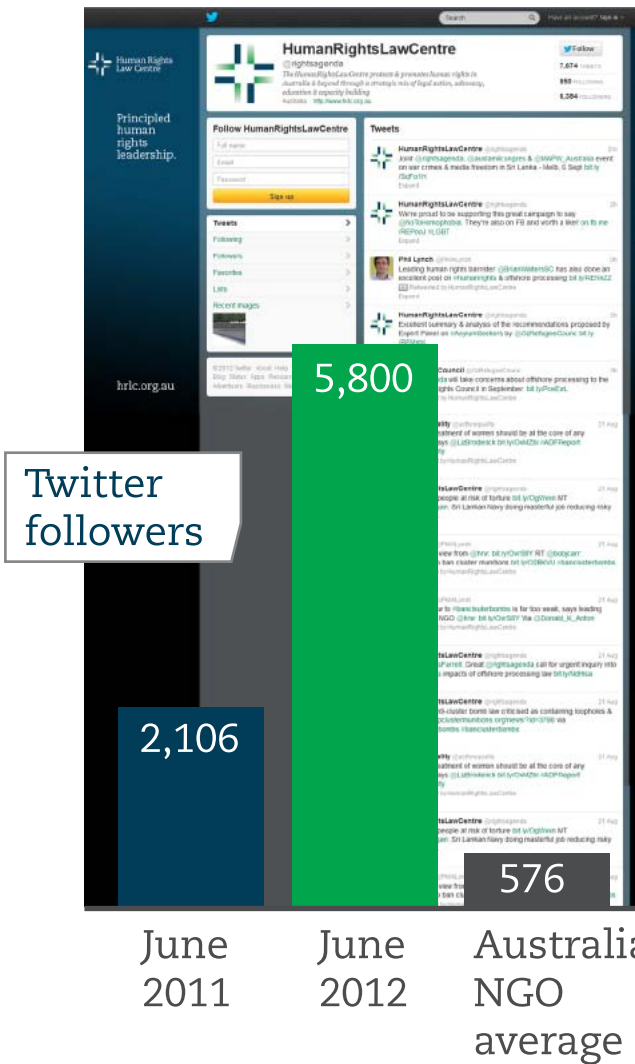
143 articles

2011

2012



Social media



At the HRLC we know that the most effective human rights advocacy is done in coalition.

We were delighted to bring together over 20 of Australia's leading human rights advocates to set out their views on a human rights agenda and priorities for the Attorney-General in 2012.

You can see what human rights leaders such as former Australian Human Rights Commission President Catherine Branson QC, Amnesty International head Claire Mallinson, National Congress of Australia's First Peoples Chair Les Malezer and refugee lawyer David Manne had to say at:

<http://www.hrlc.org.au/content/a-human-rights-agenda-for-the-new-attorney-general/>

Our governance, staff and supporters



The HRLC is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. We have been endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office as a public benefit institution attracting deductible gift recipient status.

The HRLC is governed by a Board of Directors and has established an Advisory Committee to provide strategic assistance and advice.

In 2011/12, we welcomed three new Board members: Ros Grady, Michael Kingston and Jon Webster. We also farewelled two outstanding Board members: Robert Jamieson, our Chairperson of three years, and foundation Board member Alexandra Richards QC after six years of distinguished service.

Staff

Philip Lynch

Executive Director

Rachel Ball

Director of Policy and Campaigns

Anna Brown

Director of Advocacy and Strategic Litigation

Tom Clarke

Manager of Communications and Media

Emily Howie

Director of Advocacy and Strategic Litigation
(on leave of absence)

Ben Schokman

Director of International Human Rights Advocacy
(on secondment from DLA Piper)

Seconded Lawyers

Gavan Blau

Lander & Rogers

Michael Griffith

King & Wood Mallesons

Heath Paynter

Russell Kennedy

Emma Purdue

Lander & Rogers

Frank Deans

Accountant

Board and officers

Name	Position	Term of office	Meetings attended
Rosamund Grady Chief Executive Officer and Professor, Centre for International Finance and Regulation	Chairperson (Appointed 23.11.11)	23.11.11 -	5/5
Robert Jamieson Partner, Ashurst	Chairperson (Resigned 23.11.11)	10.10.08 – 23.11.11	1/2
Jamie Gardiner Vice-President, Liberty Victoria	Director	26.11.10 –	7/7
David Manne Executive Director, Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre	Director	11.12.06 –	5/7
Fiona McLeay Executive Director, Public Interest Law Clearing House	Director	10.10.08 –	6/7
Alexandra Richards QC Queen's Counsel	Director (Resigned 23.11.11)	25.01.06 – 23.11.11	2/2
Melanie Schleiger Manager, Equality Law Program, Victoria Legal Aid	Director	10.10.08 –	6/7
Diane Sisely Director, Australian Centre for Human Rights Education	Director	03.01.06 –	5/7
Michael Kingston Chief Legal Officer, Australian Securities and Investments Commission	Alternate Director (Appointed 16.04.12)	16.04.12 –	2/2
Jon Webster Partner, Allens	Alternate Director (Appointed 23.03.12)	23.03.12 –	2/2
Philip Lynch Executive Director, Human Rights Law Centre	Company Secretary	03.01.06 –	7/7

Advisory Committee

Jenny Leong
Campaign Coordinator, Tactical
Campaigns Unit, Amnesty International

Vanessa Lesnie
Director of Strategic Projects, Australian
Human Rights Commission

Fiona McLeay
Executive Director, Public Interest Law
Clearing House

Nicolas Patrick
Pro Bono Partner, DLA Piper

Alexandra Richards QC
Senior Counsel, Victorian Bar

Chris Sidoti
International Human Rights
Expert and former Australian
Human Rights Commissioner

John Tobin
Associate Professor, Melbourne
Law School

Thank you

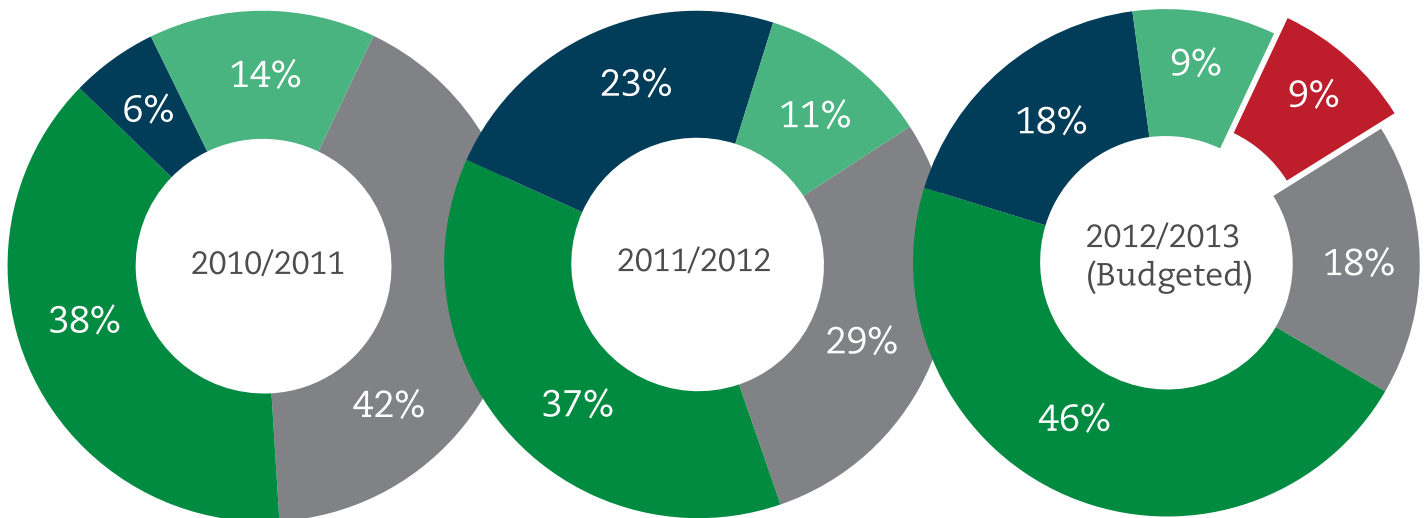


Our human rights impact is only made possible thanks to the passionate and generous contributions of our supporters.

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Your ongoing support will ensure we can continue our work for individual justice, government accountability and systemic human rights reform.

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*The additional donations we need from our dedicated supporters to sustain our work

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The substantial pro bono support provided by leading law firms and Counsel enables us to conduct strategic litigation and cutting edge human rights test cases in both national and international courts and tribunals.

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DLA Piper – in addition to providing expert pro bono support, DLA Piper has also seconded a Senior Associate, Ben Schokman, to the HRLC since 2007

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Financial Statements

Income Statement for the year ended 30 June 2012

Income	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Victorian Department of Justice	144,595	139,020
Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department - Human Rights Framework Grant	25,000	100,000
Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department - GAOP	-	20,000
Legal Services Board of Victoria - Major Grants	96,413	130,320
Legal Services Board of Victoria - Project Grant	-	32,625
Planet Wheeler Foundation	-	40,300
R E Ross Trust	50,000	49,200
Reichstein Foundation	-	2,000
Helen Macpherson Smith Trust	-	22,000
Story Street Fund	20,000	-
Other Grant Income	51,260	-
Private Donations	92,193	16,645
Corporate Donations	43,050	17,400
Interest	20,696	18,118
Event Registrations	8,887	9,209
Annual Dinner	17,511	13,735
Legal Costs	5,227	6,694
Training and Teaching Services	3,250	35,645
Refunds & Reimbursement	3,817	5,065
Other Income	5,308	150
Total income	587,207	658,126
Expenditure		
Occupancy expenses	36,087	36,875
Program and administration expenses	70,300	183,176
Employee benefits	380,810	321,428
Total Expenditure	487,197	541,479
Total Comprehensive Income	100,010	116,647

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	562,769	451,951
Trade and other receivables	57,038	7,757
Total current assets	619,807	459,708
Total assets	619,807	459,708
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	23,128	30,407
Provisions	72,421	48,391
Grants received in advance	164,107	121,012
Total current liabilities	259,656	199,810
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	1,422	1,179
Total non-current liabilities	1,422	1,179
TOTAL LIABILITIES	261,078	200,989
NET ASSETS	358,729	258,719
Equity		
Retained earnings	358,729	258,719
TOTAL EQUITY	358,729	258,719

This is an extract of the HRLC's audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2012. For a full version, visit www.hrlc.org.au



The Human Rights Law Centre is an independent, not-for-profit organisation which protects and promotes human rights in Australia and beyond through a strategic mix of legal action, advocacy, education and capacity building.

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Lawyers

Thanks also to UN Photo for the use of photographs by Devra Berkowitz & Paulo Filgueiras