



Human Rights  
Law Centre

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14



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**STAND WITH US**

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<b>2</b>	Message from Chairperson and Executive Director
<b>6</b>	Effective laws against racial vilification
<b>8</b>	Democratic freedoms
<b>9</b>	Refugees and asylum seeker rights
<b>12</b>	Beyond our borders
<b>14</b>	Lesbian gay bisexual transgender and intersex rights
<b>17</b>	Women's rights
<b>18</b>	Police and prisoners
<b>19</b>	Indigenous rights
<b>22</b>	Amplifying our impact
<b>24</b>	Fundraising
<b>25</b>	Thank You
<b>27</b>	Financials
<b>28</b>	Board and Staff



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# Human Rights Law Centre

ANNUAL REPORT 2013–14

The **Human Rights Law Centre** protects and promotes human rights in Australia and in Australian activities abroad through a strategic combination of legal action, advocacy, research, education and capacity building.

Whether it's litigation in the High Court, evidence-based advocacy with key decision makers or in the media, holding Australia to account at the United Nations or producing timely and practical human rights resources, our proven model of high-level action and influence delivers results.

Our work changes policies and practices, secures stronger legal protections for human rights and delivers both justice for individuals and systemic change.

Our unique contribution to Australia's human rights landscape is built on partnerships.

The strong pro bono assistance we receive from Australia's leading law firms and barristers means for every \$100 we receive in donations, we leverage around \$500 worth of expert legal services.

We also work closely in partnership with other NGOs to lend our expertise, extend our impact and advance shared goals.

The support from philanthropic organisations and private donors is crucial to our success. This year less than 6 percent of our funding will come from government.

In 2013, the donations that established the Human Rights Law Centre were ranked as one of Australia's 'Top 50 Philanthropic Gifts' of all time.

An investment in the Human Rights Law Centre is an investment in strategic, principled and effective human rights leadership.

Stand with us.

[www.hrlc.org.au/donate](http://www.hrlc.org.au/donate)

# Message from the Chairperson and Executive Director

Despite our relative wealth, security and freedom, human rights still matter deeply in Australia.

If you are a migrant, being racially abused on public transport, the sporting field or at work, human rights matter.

If you are a woman being abused and intimidated while trying to access lawful reproductive health services, human rights matter.

If you are living in a remote Aboriginal community, witnessing alcohol abuse, violence, grossly inadequate housing, over-imprisonment, and your family and friends dying too early, human rights matter.

If you are in a deeply loving same-sex relationship and want to marry, but can't, human rights matter.

If you are an asylum seeker locked indefinitely on Manus Island in appalling conditions, despairing for your future and fearing for your safety, human rights matter.

Regardless of your situation, the reality is that human rights matter to everyone. Human rights are a cornerstone of our democracy and are vital in our society's ongoing pursuit of freedom, respect, dignity and equality.

The Human Rights Law Centre protects and promotes human rights in Australia and in Australian activities overseas. We do this using a strategic mix of legal action, advocacy, research and capacity building.

We are very deliberately not a high-volume service delivery organisation. We focus on strategic legal matters carefully chosen to maximise their systemic impact by

Michael Kingston  
**Chairperson**



highlighting injustice, securing favourable higher court rulings and changing law or policy.

Our proven track record of success highlights the important role that our unique model of legal action and advocacy has to play in securing human rights. We are proud of our work over the last year which demonstrates this impact.

We launched Supreme Court action seeking to ensure that women can safely access reproductive health services without being harassed and intimidated.

We participated in the PNG National Court's inquiry into the human rights of asylum seekers detained on Manus Island, witnessed first-hand the appalling conditions there and helped to shine a light on some of the darkest corners of Australia's immigration detention network.

We secured an unprecedented commitment from key national organisations to work together to address the social crisis of Aboriginal over-imprisonment.

We successfully argued in the High Court that the Federal Parliament has the power to pass laws for marriage equality, removing any legal uncertainty.

We made important contributions in another High Court case that gave vital legal recognition to the reality of gender diversity.

We published a ground breaking report underlining the dangers of Australia's cooperation with the Sri Lankan military in the pursuit of 'stopping the boats'.

We spoke out against Australia's first voter identification laws that threaten to suppress the vote of Indigenous, homeless, young and elderly Queenslanders – and helped to mitigate the worst aspects of the new laws.

And we played a leading role in successful advocacy to prevent changes that would have effectively abolished Federal racial vilification protections.

None of this was done by us acting alone.

Every single piece of work involved a partnership with one or more NGOs and with leading law firms and barristers acting pro bono.

Hugh de Kretser  
**Executive Director**





The Human Rights Law Centre is blessed with many tremendously productive partnerships. It's our model of strategic partnerships that multiplies our impact, that is fundamental to our success and that is unique.

We thank all of the organisations and individuals who have worked together with us over the past year to advance shared goals.

Because of our partnerships, the financial support we receive goes a long way.

The majority of our funding comes from philanthropic trusts and foundations. So it was pleasing that the philanthropic support that established the HRLC was recognised this year as one of Australia's Top 50 Philanthropic Gifts of all time.

Private donations make up a large and increasingly important share of our funding base. Government funding will make up less than 6% of our income in 2014/15.

The philanthropic grants and donations we receive enable us to be truly independent, responsive and effective.

As other organisations that rely heavily on government funding feel constrained about speaking out against government policy, our independent funding allows us to speak plainly and strongly whenever necessary to defend human rights.

We sincerely thank all of our financial supporters over the past year.

The HRLC has extremely talented, committed staff, supported by a strong board and advisory committee who lend their great expertise on a voluntary basis. We thank our staff, board and advisers for their hard work over the past year.

The need for strong, principled and independent action for human rights in Australia is as pressing now as it has ever been.

Our job is to make sure that fundamental human rights are upheld in Australia. Our job is to speak up for a fairer, safer, stronger and more compassionate society.

We are confident that the HRLC is well-placed to build on our successful work over the past year and extend our impact in the coming twelve months.

We look forward to your continued support to help us achieve this.

Effective laws against racial vilification

Police & prisoners

Democratic freedoms

Refugees & asylum seeker rights

Women's rights

Beyond our borders

Indigenous rights

Lesbian gay bisexual transgender & intersex rights

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# **ACTION AREAS**

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# Effective laws against racial vilification

## AT A GLANCE:

Played a leading role in preventing the repeal of Federal racial vilification laws

Prominent advocacy role in the media

Coordinated joint statements with over 120 organisations

Produced a widely read information paper and submission guide

Explained the laws at packed community forums

Played vital coordination and accountability roles

Racial vilification causes serious harm to individuals and society, increasing the likelihood of discrimination and racist violence. Strong and effective legislation against racial vilification is an important tool in the fight against racism and racially motivated violence.

The Human Rights Law Centre played a vital role in the campaign to prevent the effective repeal of Federal racial vilification laws.

Central to the debate around reforming the laws was the question of where to draw the line between protecting free speech and protecting against the serious harm that can come from some speech.

The HRLC wasn't opposed to a genuine review of the laws to look at how they had been operating and how they might be improved. The Federal Government's review however was driven by an ideological view that it needed to prevent any repeat of the *Eatock v Bolt* case.

After months of conjecture, in March the Government finally released a radical proposal that would have almost effectively abolished the current Federal racial vilification protections, sending an appalling signal about the Government's views on racial tolerance.

The proposal was framed by the Attorney-General's assertion that people "have rights to say things that other people find offensive or insulting or bigoted."

The HRLC played a key role in helping to mobilise leading community, Indigenous, ethnic and human rights organisations against the changes.

Because the Government failed to produce a discussion paper explaining the changes, we produced and widely distributed our own paper, along with a guide to making submissions.

Because the Government failed to publish any of the 5,000-plus submissions it received in response to its proposal, we published key submissions on our website. We also worked with leading discrimination law academic, Professor Simon Rice, to publicise his analysis based on details obtained through freedom of information laws, that showed strong opposition in the submissions to the changes.

The HRLC coordinated two joint statements against the changes that were endorsed by over 120 organisations across the country. We explained the changes at packed community forums and we played a prominent advocacy role in the national media.

*"The challenge is where to draw the line between protecting free speech and protecting against the serious harm that can come from some speech. It's clear that racial vilification causes serious harm to individuals and society, increasing the likelihood of discrimination and racist violence."*

HUGH DE KRETSEK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, **THERE'S A CAUSE FOR AMENDMENT, BUT NOT REPEAL,**  
THE HERALD SUN

The positive outcome – the Government abandoned its proposed amendments in August – highlights what can be achieved through effective collaboration, education, capacity building and human rights action.

## KEY PARTNERS, ALLIES AND FUNDERS IN THIS AREA:

- Peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services
- Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia
- Amnesty International Australia
- Australian Council of Social Service
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, ethnic, community, legal and human rights organisations across Australia
- Indigenous Rights Unit funders



Anyone with a blog, megaphone or a twitter account will seemingly be given a licence to racially vilify @HughdeKretser



**LEFT:** Actor, Menik Gooneratne at a HRLC press conference to discuss the importance of laws tackling racial vilification. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** The HRLC's Rachel Ball and Hugh de Kretser spoke at community forums on the need for strong and effective laws against racial vilification.



*“Discrimination often lies at the heart of human rights violations and explains why some people are more likely to have their rights violated than others.”*

RACHEL BALL, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS, *WHO'S LESS FREE: ANDREW BOLT, OR CHILDREN IN DETENTION?* THE GUARDIAN AUSTRALIA

*“The most serious human rights violations – genocide, slavery, apartheid – cannot be understood as simple intrusions on an individual’s physical integrity and property rights... These atrocities are driven and characterised by discrimination. We should take with a grain of salt the views of people who stand atop a mountain of privilege and declare that privilege is irrelevant.”*

RACHEL BALL, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS, *WHO'S AFRAID OF EQUALITY?* THE DRUM







# Democratic freedoms

## AT A GLANCE:

Helped to mitigate the worst aspects of Queensland's voter ID laws through research, coalition building and advocacy

Worked to reform Federal electoral laws that unfairly exclude some people with cognitive disabilities from voting

Opposed excessive police powers and offences that unreasonably restrict free speech and protest rights

Explained international human rights law on free speech in our public advocacy

Democratic freedoms in Australia are being eroded on a number of fronts and the Human Rights Law Centre has taken legal action and pursued policy and law reform to defend them.

Building on our successful voting rights work in the *Roach* and *Rowe* High Court cases, the HRLC advocated strongly against proposed voter ID laws in Queensland, which threatened to make voting difficult for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as well as people experiencing homelessness, young people, old people and people with disability.

Together with GetUp! we brought together a network of community legal centres, academics, unions, disability, Indigenous and church groups. Following our targeted advocacy and submissions, the Queensland Government removed the worst aspects of the proposal in the legislation that was passed. The HRLC is continuing to monitor the implementation of laws and the Liberal Party's proposal to introduce national voter ID laws.

*“Voter ID laws are an American obsession we do not need to import. They are a solution in search of a problem, which if passed will create new problems, especially for Queensland’s most vulnerable.”*

EMILY HOWIE, QUEENSLAND’S VOTER ID LAWS ARE AN UNNECESSARY EXPERIMENT, THE BRISBANE TIMES



Instead of excluding people who wish to vote, the law should ensure that people are assisted to exercise their democratic rights @EmilyHowie



The HRLC was also involved in ongoing work to reform and modernise discriminatory Federal electoral laws that prohibit people 'with unsound mind' from voting.

We continued to stand against unreasonable restrictions on protest and free speech. In Queensland, we opposed the sweeping police powers and vague offences created under the G20 legislation, which created real risks of stifling and criminalising peaceful protest.

Likewise in Victoria, we were a leading voice against new legislation to extend already excessive 'move-on' powers that unreasonably limit free speech and protest rights.

This year also saw a ruling from the Federal Court on the 'Occupy Melbourne' case about free speech and protest rights that the HRLC was involved in. Whilst overall the decision highlighted the lack of legal protections for free speech and protest rights, it did find that a small number of notices issued were unlawful, providing some vindication to the protestors who brought the case to court.

*"It takes vigilance to ensure we don't become complacent and let governments unnecessarily limit our rights because it's easy or convenient. But sometimes it's fair to draw a line. For example, do we think that hate groups should be allowed to disrupt the funerals of fallen soldiers in the name of free speech?"*

ANNA BROWN, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND STRATEGIC LITIGATION, **HOW DO WE DRAW THE LINE ON FREE SPEECH?** NEW MATILDA

**KEY PARTNERS, ALLIES AND FUNDERS IN THIS AREA:**

- Get Up!, Caxton Legal Centre, Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (Qld), Queensland Advocacy Incorporated, People with Disability Inc, Australian Lawyers Alliance
- Victorian Trades Hall Council, Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre, Liberty Victoria, Maurice Blackburn, Robert Stary Lawyers, Victorian Federation of Community Legal Centres
- Fitzroy Legal Service
- Allens
- United Voice, Together
- Professor Graeme Orr, University of Queensland
- Ron Merkel QC
- Matt Albert
- The Myer Foundation

# Refugee and asylum seeker rights

**AT A GLANCE:**

Worked with Amnesty International to participate in the PNG National Court's inquiry into the detention of asylum seekers on Manus Island, bringing vital transparency and legal scrutiny

Inspected the Manus Island Detention Centre as part of the inquiry and highlighted the appalling conditions through media and other advocacy

Published a landmark report on the dangers of Australia's cooperation with the Sri Lankan military to intercept people fleeing persecution

Brought Australia's policies before the UN Human Rights Council for scrutiny

Exposed and challenged the Department of Immigration's shortcut 'screening' practices that heighten the risks of returning people to harm

Clearly and consistently advocated in the mainstream media against harsh deterrent-focused policies

Provided expert evidence to parliamentary committees and inquiries

Highlighted the deteriorating state of the rule of law in Nauru

Put forward human rights compliant policy alternatives to provide safe pathways to protection in our region

Australia's increasingly cruel and punitive refugee and asylum seeker policies are producing unprecedented levels of suffering and violate international human rights law in numerous ways.

When the Australian Government announced its 'PNG Solution' in July 2013, the Human Rights Law Centre unambiguously warned of the human rights abuses that would flow from a policy that ultimately seeks to outsource



Ensuring safety and security around the G20 is a legitimate purpose, but this Bill gets the balance completely wrong  
@HughdeKretser



Australia's refugee obligations to a country without Australia's resources, stability or security.

Throughout the year, we identified a litany of serious human rights problems with Australia's refugee policies and have worked to shine a spotlight on them and advocate for practical remedies.

In February, the PNG National Court launched a powerful inquiry into whether the indefinite detention of asylum seekers in Australia's detention centre on Manus Island was in breach of PNG human rights laws. The inquiry commenced immediately and the HRLC moved quickly to assemble a pro bono legal team to assist Amnesty International to gain permission to participate.

The inquiry provided a rare opportunity to penetrate the veil of secrecy surrounding Australia's offshore processing arrangements. The HRLC's Director of Legal Advocacy, Daniel Webb, inspected the Manus centre along with the first Australian and PNG journalists ever to be allowed in to see the excessively cramped conditions and witness the tense atmosphere of despair.

*“Australia has gone to great lengths and great expense to put these asylum seekers beyond the reach of the rule of law; this inquiry is about taking the rule of law to them.”*

DANIEL WEBB, HRLC DIRECTOR OF LEGAL ADVOCACY,  
SPEAKING TO THE GUARDIAN AUSTRALIA.

The HRLC highlighted the appalling conditions in the Manus centre through media and other advocacy. We also held packed public briefings in Melbourne and Sydney about the conditions inside Manus and PNG National Court's inquiry. The panel discussion featured our Daniel Webb and Rachel Ball, King & Wood Mallesons' Ben Kiely, Amnesty International's Graeme McGregor and Kate Schuetze, the ABC's Liam Fox and AAP's Eoin Blackwell. (Audio of the event can be found online at [www.hrlc.org.au/events](http://www.hrlc.org.au/events))

The HRLC has continued to challenge the Immigration Department's practice of consigning refugees to indefinite detention in a legal limbo on the basis of secretive and non-challengeable ASIO decisions. We have also highlighted significant problems of sending gay asylum seekers to a country where homosexuality is illegal.

*“Sri Lankans arriving by boat in Australia are subject to a different and inferior screening process to other boat arrivals. The process is an administrative shortcut in which asylum seekers are not provided legal advice or independent review of decisions about their cases. Sri Lankans are returned to situations where their lives and safety may be at risk.”*

EMILY HOWIE, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY & RESEARCH  
ADDRESSING THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL.

We've continued to advocate against the Department of Immigration's flimsy 'screening' process that is used to sidestep international obligations in order to return Sri Lankan asylum seekers without properly assessing their claims for protection.

We opposed legislative changes that would make it easier for the government to return people to risks of death and torture and persistently reminded politicians of Australia's protection obligations under the Refugee Convention, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture.

*“The real threat to the Australia we know isn't a few people seeking our protection, it's the undemocratic, unlawful and cruel measures the Immigration Minister is using to stop them.”*

DANIEL WEBB, DIRECTOR OF LEGAL ADVOCACY,  
AUSTRALIA MUST NOT SEND ASYLUM SEEKERS TO  
PLACES WHERE THEY RISK TORTURE OR DEATH,  
THE HERALD SUN

#### KEY PARTNERS, ALLIES AND FUNDERS IN THIS AREA:

- Amnesty International
- King & Wood Mallesons
- Charles Scherri QC, Ron Merkel QC, Craig Lenehan
- Allens
- Slater & Gordon
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- The Myer Foundation
- Australian Communities Foundation



Deaths at sea are an absolute tragedy. Punishing survivors is not a necessary, humane or lawful policy response.  
@TomHRLC

**LARGE PHOTO & BOTTOM LEFT:** The HRLC's Daniel Webb with members of the PNG legal team, Maya Peipul and Simon Ketan, and Amnesty International's Kate Schuetze and Charles Scherri QC. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** King & Wood Mallesons' Ben Kiely speaks at the HRLC's public briefing about the inspection of Australia's detention centre on Manus Island.





*“While successive governments have described Manus as a ‘processing centre’ and the agreement underpinning it as a ‘regional resettlement agreement’, the inescapable fact is that in 19 months more asylum seekers have been killed and injured on Manus than have been processed and resettled.*”

DANIEL WEBB, HRLC DIRECTOR OF LEGAL ADVOCACY, GIVING EVIDENCE TO SENATE COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING VIOLENCE AT AUSTRALIA’S DETENTION CENTRE ON MANUS ISLAND.





# Beyond our borders – foreign policy & business and human rights

## AT A GLANCE:

Held Australia to account at the United Nations

Scrutinised and warned of the dangers of Australia's cooperation with the Sri Lankan military

Urged the UN to investigate Australia's role in the US's drone program of extrajudicial killings

Advocated for a more principled approach to Australia's relationship with Indonesia

Prepared legal actions against Australian businesses violating human rights overseas

Urged the Australian Government to adopt a national action plan on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Australia's human rights obligations don't end at our borders. The Human Rights Law Centre seeks to ensure Australia's foreign policy promotes and protects human rights and that Australian businesses operating overseas respect human rights.

In its one-eyed pursuit of 'stopping the boats' the Australian Government has become increasingly willing to overlook serious human rights problems in return for assistance from neighbouring nations such as Sri Lanka.

In March, the HRLC produced a ground breaking report *Can't flee can't stay: Australia's interception and return of Sri Lankan asylum seekers* that found Australia's police and military co-operation with Sri Lanka to prevent would-be-refugees from seeking protection is riddled with human rights risks and should be stopped immediately.

In November, we were a prominent critic of Australia's regression in human rights diplomacy during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Colombo.

Isolating Australia from key allies such as the UK and Canada, Australia's PM Tony Abbott appeared to excuse Sri Lanka's well documented use of torture during the civil war. The HRLC collaborated with other human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to issue joint statements and pursue a campaign of high profile media coverage.

*"If we don't stand against war crimes and crimes against humanity resulting in the death of 40,000 people, what do we stand for?"*

EMILY HOWIE, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY & RESEARCH,  
CRAVEN FOR TONY ABBOTT TO ATTEND CHOGM  
WITHOUT RAISING SRI LANKA'S HUMAN RIGHTS  
CONCERNS, THE AGE

When Australia undermined US-led efforts at the UN Human Rights Council to establish an independent investigation into Sri Lankan war crimes, the HRLC was there to ensure the Government's unprincipled and counter-productive stance did not go unnoticed. Despite Australia's failure to support it, the resolution passed and the war crimes inquiry has commenced.

Also at the UN, the HRLC delivered a number of addresses to the Human Rights Council on Australia's human rights track record – focusing on Australia's treatment of asylum seekers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Directly and through media appearances, we urged Australia to come clean about its role in the controversial American armed drone program that has resulted in countless extrajudicial killings – including of two Australian citizens – and called for an investigation by the UN's Special Rapporteur on Counter-Terrorism.

*"Personnel at Pine Gap do not fire the drones' weapons, but they show drone operators where to point their barrels."*

EMILY HOWIE, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY & RESEARCH,  
AUSTRALIA MAY BE COMPLICIT IN KILLING ITS OWN  
CITIZENS AND MANY OTHERS, THE AGE



Australia's human rights obligations don't simply stop at our borders  
@RachelHRLC



As the rule of law in Nauru collapses, Australia remains silent. We've become a nation that condones what we ought to condemn @DanielHRLC





Australia's policy of turning asylum seeker boats back to Indonesia is not only counter-productive to efforts to secure a genuine regional solution providing safe alternative pathways to protection, it also diminishes the Government's ability to play a leadership role on human rights in our region.

*“PM Abbott’s promise of a more Jakarta-centric approach to foreign policy should be matched with an appetite for frank and forthright dialogue between friends.”*

**TOM CLARKE, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, IT’S TIME FOR SOME STRAIGHT TALKING ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN PAPUA, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD**

The HRLC has highlighted human rights topics during diplomatic visits. We’ve urged Australia to take a stand on the lack of political freedoms in Indonesia’s Papuan provinces and to support greater access for international media. We’ve also continued to call for human rights safeguards to minimise the risk of Australian policing or military assistance supporting human rights violators.

During Indonesia’s presidential elections, the HRLC hosted public events in Melbourne and Sydney exploring

the implications for human rights and Australia’s foreign policy. In addition to Human Rights Watch’s Elaine Pearson and the University of NSW’s Dr Clinton Fernandes, we brought out Rafendi Djamin, a leading Indonesian human rights advocate and Indonesia’s Representative for the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights to participate in the panel discussions. Audio from the events can be found online at [www.hrlc.org.au/events](http://www.hrlc.org.au/events)

Like governments, businesses must be held to account when they violate human rights. The HRLC has become increasingly active in focusing its model of advocacy, capacity building, and legal action on business and human rights.

In November our Director of Advocacy and Campaigns, Rachel Ball, travelled to the Philippines to assist the International Federation of Human Rights and the Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates in a fact-finding mission to an Australian-owned gold mine.

Closer to home, the HRLC has assisted NGOs and community organisations to better understand and utilise both judicial and non-judicial accountability mechanisms to hold Australian companies accountable for their overseas activities.

We’ve also called on the Australian Government to be

**THIS PAGE:** Indonesia’s Representative for the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights’ Rafendi Djamin, Human Rights Watch’s Elaine Pearson, University of NSW’s Dr Clinton Fernandes and Sydney University’s Dr Vanessa Hearman at the HLRC’s event about Indonesia’s presidential elections, human rights and Australian foreign policy. **LEFT:** The HRLC’s Emily Howie presents to the UN Human Rights Committee in Geneva.



more active in this space, including by preparing a background briefing paper on the need for an Australian national action plan on the implementation of the UN *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights*, and making a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade on the importance of ensuring that aid projects that involve partnering with the private sector do not result in human rights violations.

We presented at multi-stakeholder initiatives working towards this goal, including the inaugural *Australian Dialogue on Business and Human Rights* convened by the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Global Compact Network Australia and Oxfam Australia's *Sustainable Mining Symposium on Protecting Human Rights in High Risk Environments*.

*“Human rights are not just about law, policy and practice. Human rights are also about power – who has it, and how it is exercised and how it is protected and shared.”*

RACHEL BALL, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS,  
SPEAKING AT THE OXFAM AND MELBOURNE BUSINESS  
SCHOOL SUSTAINABLE MINING SYMPOSIUM.

We've also worked with NGOs and law firms to scope and prepare for potential legal action against a number of Australian businesses involved in human rights violations overseas.

**KEY PARTNERS, ALLIES AND FUNDERS IN THIS AREA:**

- International Service for Human Rights
- Human Rights Watch
- Oxfam Australia
- Allens
- International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH)
- Amnesty International Australia

# LGBTI rights

**AT A GLANCE:**

Secured a landmark commitment to legislative reform to erase leftover criminal convictions from when homosexual sex was illegal

Assisted the High Court in a case which has cleared the way for Federal Parliament to deliver marriage equality

Participated in a landmark High Court case rejecting outdated notions of gender

Highlighted unique problems faced by LGBTI asylum seekers

Continued to support the No To Homophobia campaign working to change attitudes within Australia's leading sporting codes

The Human Rights Law Centre made significant progress in promoting the rights of lesbian gay bisexual transgender and intersex (LGBTI) Australians during the year.

In Victoria, we secured a landmark commitment to legislative reform to erase unjust criminal convictions imposed when homosexual sex was still illegal. The reforms, announced by the Premier in January, were the result of many months of hard work and constructive advocacy with politicians, working in coalition with LGBTI organisations.

Behind the announcement was our work with a number of clients in Victoria and NSW who continue to be affected by the stigma and prejudice of unjust convictions for homosexual sex prior to decriminalisation. We placed their stories at the heart of our advocacy on the issue, researched options for reform to address the ongoing injustice and worked closely with Victorian MP Clem Newton-Brown to progress that reform.

We published a detailed paper exposing the problem and highlighting solutions. Following the Premier's announcement, we were closely involved in the development of the legislative mechanism to allow affected men to apply to erase their convictions. We also worked successfully to replicate the achievement in NSW.



High Court ruling in CTH v ACT means that #marriageequality is now only a matter of political will @AnnaHRLC





*“In practical ways, lifting the burden of these convictions, means that men can apply for jobs and volunteering opportunities without this shadow of a conviction hanging over their heads.”*

ANNA BROWN, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND STRATEGIC LITIGATION, TALKING TO ABC NEWS.

We also provided vital legal support to the movement for marriage equality in Australia.

We assisted Australian Marriage Equality to obtain legal opinions from leading High Court barristers and constitutional experts that confirmed that proposed marriage equality laws in Tasmania and New South Wales would be constitutionally valid. We published the opinions and briefed state politicians.

When the Federal Government launched a High Court challenge against marriage equality laws passed in the ACT, we formed a pro bono team to represent AME and were granted permission to intervene as a friend of the court in the case.

While the laws were struck down as was likely given their drafting, our participation in the case played an important role in convincing the court to rule that the Federal Parliament has the constitutional ability to legislate for marriage equality, removing any legal uncertainty. We also continued to work with AME to support the inclusion of transgender and intersex people in the marriage equality movement.

In another High Court appearance, we formed a pro bono team to represent A Gender Agenda, an organisation representing gender diverse and intersex people, which was granted permission to intervene as a friend of the court in the landmark *Norrie* case. Our intervention played an important role in highlighting how current laws impact on gender diverse and intersex people on a day to day basis.

The Court's judgment for the first time recognised sex other than male or female. It meant that Norrie, an androgynous person, could be registered by the NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages as 'non-specific' sex. More broadly, the case was a major victory for Australia's gender diverse and intersex people, who simply want to be recognised for who they are.

At the international level, the HRLC alerted the UN Human Rights Council to the particular dangers posed to LGBTI asylum seekers by Australia's offshore processing policies. For example, in Papua New Guinea homosexuality is illegal – presenting obvious problems for people seeking protection from persecution due to their sexuality.

We continued our education role in this area, with the HRLC's Director of Advocacy and Strategic Litigation Anna Brown representing the No To Homophobia campaign and in particular working with high-profile ambassadors to address homophobia in sport.

During Human Rights Week, we hosted a panel discussion on promoting LGBTI rights globally with Charles Radcliffe, the Head of Global Issues at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the HRLC's Director of Advocacy and Strategic Litigation Anna Brown and the Castan Centre's Associate Professor Paula Gerber.

**KEY PARTNERS, ALLIES AND FUNDERS IN THIS AREA:**

- Victorian Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby
- Australian Marriage Equality
- A Gender Agenda
- Transgender Victoria
- Victorian AIDS Council
- Gay & Lesbian Health Victoria
- National LGBTI Health Alliance
- OII Australia
- Perry Herzfeld, Chris Young, Bret Walker SC, Jeremy Kirk SC
- Liz Bennett, Kris Walker
- Allens
- Clem Newton-Brown, Victorian MP
- Bruce Nottley-Smith and Trevor Kahn, NSW MPs
- Martin Foley, Victorian MP
- NSW Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby
- ACON
- The Myer Foundation
- Australian Communities Foundation
- Kaleidoscope Australia



**FAR LEFT:** The HRLC's Anna Brown and Paula Gerber, Associate Professor at Monash Law School, discuss the promotion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights worldwide at HRLC event. **LEFT:** The legal team and A Gender Agenda's Executive Director Sam Rutherford outside the High Court for the *Norrie* case.

**ABOVE:** Gay & Lesbian Health Victoria's Liam Leonard, Liberty Victoria's Jamie Gardiner, Victorian Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby's Corey Irlam, Victorian Premier Denis Naphine, Clem Newton-Brown MP, HRLC's Anna Brown and Victoria Police's Matt Dixon at Parliament House following the passage of legislation allowing gay men unfairly convicted for having gay sex to have their criminal records erased.





# Women's rights

## AT A GLANCE:

Launched legal action to ensure women can safely access medical services

Assisted with law reform to create 'safe access zones' around Tasmanian abortion clinics

Briefed politicians on balancing rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly against the rights of women to safely access health services

Published resources for community organisations tackling violence against women

Contributed to the development of a major upcoming NGO report to the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

The Human Rights Law Centre has continued to employ a human rights-based approach to tackling violence against women and advancing women's rights more broadly.

The HRLC took action to address the ongoing harassment and intimidation of women accessing reproductive health services. Melbourne's Fertility Control Clinic has been beset for decades by members of an anti-abortion group who harass and intimidate patients and staff, and regularly try to stop people accessing the clinic.

The HRLC formed a pro bono legal team and launched legal action on behalf of the clinic seeking to compel Melbourne City Council to enforce existing laws that would protect the clinic's patients and staff.

*"Women shouldn't need to launch legal proceedings in order to safely access medical services – we're simply asking the council to do its job."*

RACHEL BALL, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS,  
TELLS TRIPLE J'S HACK PROGRAM.

The legal action in Victoria followed our law reform work in Tasmania which saw the establishment of 'safe access zones' around health services to ensure women can access legal health services without fear of harassment and intimidation.

The HRLC supported the aims of the reforms but argued that the original proposal went too far in excessively limiting other rights such as freedom of expression and assembly. We successfully argued for a more proportionate, tailored response that better balanced those rights with the privacy, safety and dignity of female patients and staff.

Violence against women is one of the most widespread human rights violations in Australia – with one in three women over the age of 15 having experienced physical or sexual violence.

The HRLC welcomed Victoria's review of the state's rape laws and encouraged further changes to ensure adjudication in rape trials is fair, impartial and free from gender stereotyping and discrimination.

We also raised concerns with the Victorian Attorney-General about the impact of the proposed laws that create a new 'failure to disclose' offence, which risks punishing women who are themselves victims of violence.

With support from the Legal Services Board, we produced and distributed factsheets that explain the state's human rights obligation to prevent and respond to family violence and ensure women's right to non-discrimination. The factsheets have been one of our most popular resources and we delivered a number of training sessions to domestic violence and women's organisations using the content.

The HRLC is a member of an advisory group that is coordinating reporting under the UN's Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for a network of Australian women's organisations. We also delivered training on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

## KEY PARTNERS, ALLIES AND FUNDERS IN THIS AREA:

- Maurice Blackburn
- Peter Hanks QC, Claire Harris, Therese McCarthy
- Legal Services Board
- The Myer Foundation

**TOP LEFT:** Maurice Blackburn's Lizzie O'Shea speaks at a joint press conference regarding legal action aimed at ensuring women can safely access health services. **LEFT:** HRLC's Rachel Ball speaks at the launch of her study looking at the ethics and effectiveness of storytelling in human rights advocacy – a project funded by the Victoria Law Foundation.



Freedom of speech is one thing. Preventing women from accessing health services is another thing entirely @tomhrlc

# Human rights in prisons and policing

## AT A GLANCE:

Opposed regressive youth justice changes and brought them to the attention of the UN

Urged the Australian Government to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture

Progressed legal strategies to promote proper access to healthcare in prisons

Worked to stop the transfer of children and young people into adult prisons

Advocated for the retention of a strong and effective parole system

Stressed the ongoing need for independent investigations into police-related deaths

The Human Rights Law Centre works to ensure that conditions in all forms of detention - including prisons, police cells, immigration detention centres, youth justice centres and secure psychiatric facilities – comply with international human rights standards. We also work to promote police practices that comply with human rights.

The HRLC strongly opposed new Queensland laws that introduced a range of harmful measures for children and young people who offend including “naming and shaming”, boot camps and removing the principle of detention as a last resort.

Working in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (Qld), the HRLC requested the United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Rights to intervene against changes to Queensland laws that will make it easier for children to be imprisoned.

We also continued to push for better independent monitoring of places of detention, including by calling on the Australian Government to ratify the UN’s Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture which would ensure places of detention are subject to independent inspections, external monitoring and oversight. We welcomed Northern Territory, ACT and Tasmanian draft legislation

to establish systems to facilitate the ratification of the Optional Protocol and recommended changes to the NT bill to improve compliance with human rights standards.

*“There’s no point having a complaints based system about corrections staff where you have to complain to those very corrections staff. This system of independent monitoring will serve to prevent ill treatment from happening in the first place.”*

BEN SCHOKMAN, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY, TALKING TO ABC NEWS RADIO AFTER A QUEENSLAND PRISON WORKER WAS CHARGED WITH RAPING PRISONERS.

In the wake of a high profile murder in Victoria, the state government moved to dramatically dismantle the existing parole system. During the often heated public debate, the HRLC provide a calm, clear and accessible voice in the mainstream media warning of the danger of such changes.

*“It’s better to release prisoners gradually with monitoring and conditions than simply letting them go unsupervised. That is what parole is all about. It allows offenders to be released from prison under supervision.”*

HUGH DE KRETZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, **STRONG PAROLE SYSTEM WILL BENEFIT COMMUNITY**, THE HERALD SUN

We continued to progress strategies to promote proper access to health care for prisoners being denied access to Hepatitis C treatment, needle and syringe programs, methadone treatment and mental health services. We also collaborated with community and legal organisations to advocate against the practice in several Australian states of detaining children and young people in adult prisons. Significant policy work has been undertaken in Victoria to ensure that this practice stops.

The HRLC continued to push for the independent investigation of police-related deaths and serious misconduct. We supported efforts to address racial profiling by Victoria Police, delivered training for Victoria Police Superintendents and advocated against overly broad police powers in protest situations.



Evidence shows inflicting unreasonable & harsh conditions on prisoners will increase the risk of reoffending once they are released @BenHRLC



Not only does racism cause damage to individuals but racial profiling by police harms efforts to combat crime @HughdeKretzer



*“People around the country who are interested in ensuring effective accountability of police will be following this case because at its heart, it’s about should we have police investigating serious allegations of police misconduct or should those investigations be taken out of police hands and put in the hands of an independent effective oversight agency.”*

HUGH DE KRETZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TELLS ABC’S PM PROGRAM

**KEY PARTNERS, ALLIES AND FUNDERS IN THIS AREA:**

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (Qld)
- Prisoners Legal Service
- Penington Institute
- Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre
- Reichstein Foundation
- The Myer Foundation
- Emeritus Professor Arie Freiberg

# Indigenous rights

**AT A GLANCE:**

Established an unprecedented multi-stakeholder national coalition to tackle the crisis of Aboriginal over-imprisonment and advocated to address the crisis

Opposed harsh and counterproductive youth justice reforms in Queensland

Advocated against cuts to Indigenous legal services

Helped to raise public understanding of the need for constitutional recognition

Played a leading role, working with Indigenous organisations, to successfully advocate against changes that would have effectively abolished Federal racial vilification laws

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to experience significant disadvantage and discrimination, with many of their human rights unrealised. The Human Rights Law Centre partners with Indigenous organisations, leaders and communities to proactively address key human rights issues affecting Indigenous people in Australia and also respond to requests for assistance.

*“Tony Abbott’s promise of being a “Prime Minister for Aboriginal Affairs” didn’t start well, with announced cuts of \$42 million to Aboriginal legal services. If Aboriginal people can’t access decent legal representation they are more likely to go to jail and for longer.”*

HUGH DE KRETZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, **HOW TO BREAK THE CRUEL CYCLE OF INDIGENOUS IMPRISONMENT**, THE AUSTRALIAN.

Working closely with National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, the HRLC established an unprecedented national coalition of organisations to tackle the shocking over-imprisonment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The coalition is developing a campaign to show the extent of the crisis and to advocate for



NT has highest incarceration rate with over 85% of the adult & 95% of the youth prison population being Aboriginal @RuthHRLC



evidence-based solutions, highlighting best practice on what works to reduce over-imprisonment and promote community safety.

The HRLC helped the coalition to secure three years of funding to recruit a full time staff member to run the campaign, which will look beyond the justice system to develop strategies to address the social, health and financial drivers of high Indigenous imprisonment.

In a boost for our work in this area, the HRLC's Ben Schokman was selected to undertake a prestigious Myer Innovation Fellowship to investigate new approaches to cutting Indigenous over-imprisonment and promoting community safety. The fellowship effectively doubled the HRLC's capacity in this area, allowing us to recruit senior lawyer Ruth Barson to manage our work in this area.

*“Aboriginal Victorians are 13 times more likely to be in jail and good work to reduce this rate under the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement is being undone by the sentencing reforms.”*

HUGH DE KRETZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STATE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM IS ALREADY FAILING, THE AGE

The HRLC joined with the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency to condemn new laws to oversee the Northern Territory's prison system that will not address the endemic over-imprisonment rates and fail to respect basic rights.

In Queensland, we worked with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service in an attempt to prevent the introduction of 'naming and shaming' of children between the ages of 10 and 16 and the automatic transfer of 17 year olds to adult prisons.

*“Children don't belong in prison. Locking children up should only be done in the most exceptional circumstances and as a measure of absolute last resort. These reforms turn that principle on its head and will result in prison being the norm, rather than the exception.”*

BEN SCHOKMAN, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY TELLS THE GUARDIAN AUSTRALIA.

With law firm DLA Piper, we hosted a public panel discussion event with Bill Armstrong AO from Indigenous Community Volunteers and Professor Kerry Arabena, the Chair of Indigenous Health and Director, Onemda VicHealth Koori Health Unit regarding efforts to include recognition of Australia's first peoples in the Australian Constitution.

**KEY PARTNERS, ALLIES AND FUNDERS IN THIS AREA:**

- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services
- National Congress of Australia's First Peoples
- Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care
- Indigenous Doctors Association, National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services
- National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee
- National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- First Peoples Disability Network Australia
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda
- Oxfam Australia
- Australian Council of Social Service
- Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation
- Amnesty International Australia, Sisters Inside and the Federation of Community Legal Centres
- North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
- Allens
- King & Wood Mallesons
- DLA Piper
- Victorian Bar
- Landers & Rogers
- Ashurst
- The Trust Company (Perpetual Trustees), SKAR Foundation, Reichstein Foundation, Trawalla Foundation, Ron Merkel & Beth Charles, Rae & Peter Gunn Foundation, Shulu Foundation
- The Myer Foundation

It's important that our nation's founding document be updated to promote equality & recognise the rich contribution of our First Peoples @BenHRLC



**ABOVE:** The HRLC worked closely with National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services to establish an unprecedented national coalition to tackle the crisis of Aboriginal over-imprisonment. **LEFT:** The HRLC's Ben Schokman and Professor Kerry Arabena discuss the need for Constitutional recognition of Australia's First Peoples.



A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit and a checkered shirt, stands at a black podium with a microphone, addressing an audience. The audience, consisting of people of various ages and ethnicities, is seated in the background, looking towards the speaker. The setting appears to be a conference room or a hall with modern lighting.

Amplifying  
our impact

Fundraising

Annual Human  
Rights dinner

Thankyou

Financials

Human Rights  
Law Centre

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**ORGANISATION**

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# Amplifying our impact

The Human Rights Law Centre has built a strong media profile with over 370 appearances in mainstream media outlets in Australia during 2013/14.

In addition to our growing profile on television, print and radio, our reach on social media is also extending and proving to be an effective way to engage support for our work.



The six principal law firms we worked with over the past year provided over **8,200 hours of pro bono legal work** to support the HRLC, including casework, research, casenotes and secondments. The value of this work was \$3.3 million.



**Leading barristers** at the Victorian, NSW and Queensland Bars as well as volunteers and interns provided substantial additional support.



We worked on over **40 major ongoing human rights matters** including High Court cases, UN complaints and a range of other legal cases.



We delivered **23 submissions** to Parliamentary and other inquiries on topics ranging from police powers to voter ID laws to immigration law changes.



Our advocacy and news reached over **15,000 followers via Twitter** and over **6,000 Facebook supporters**. Our website received over **155,000 visits**.



We distributed our bulletin Rights Agenda to over **3,600 subscribers each month** plus many thousands more via our website and social media.



Our work received international, national and local media attention in over **370 media reports, articles and interviews**.



There are now over **700 key human rights case summaries** available to the public for free on our website.



We convened or spoke at **67 human rights seminars and events**.

# Fundraising

The Human Rights Law Centre is proudly independent. Our ability to advocate without fear – to speak plainly and strongly where needed – is directly linked to our independent, sustainable funding.

In the next financial year, just 6% of our budget will come from government.

The vital support we receive from philanthropic trusts and foundations is complemented by private donations. Each year we run two major fundraising appeals, during Human Rights Week in December and at the end of the financial year.

These independent, sustainable sources of funding are simply critical to our impact.

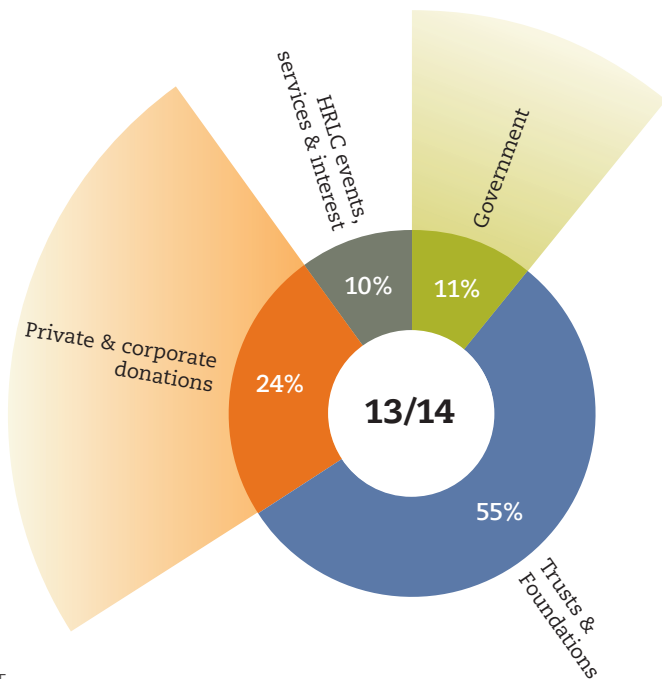
# Annual Human Rights Dinners

For this year's Human Rights Dinners, which were held in both Melbourne and Sydney for the first time, the HRLC was honoured to host Hina Jilani as our international keynote speaker.

Ms Jilani is a pioneering international human rights lawyer, a pro-democracy campaigner and a leading activist in Pakistan's women's movement. Ms Jilani founded Pakistan's first all-women law firm, its first legal aid centre and its national Human Rights Commission. She was awarded the Millennium Peace Prize for Women in 2001 and was the UN's Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders between 2000-2008. Last year Ms Jilani, a board member of the International Service for Human Rights, was elected to join the International Commission of Jurists and she is also a member of the group of respected global leaders known as The Elders founded by Nelson Mandela.

The dinners are fantastic nights for people passionate about human rights and access to justice to celebrate recent achievements and renew our collective energy to tackle the challenges that lie ahead. They are also important fundraisers for the HRLC and Justice Connect, the organisation we co-host the events with.

Thanks to Qantas for generously assisting with Ms Jilani's flights.



# Thank you | Our donors and funders

## **\$25,000+**

Legal Services Board  
of Victoria  
Myer Foundation  
Oak Philanthropy  
Reichstein Foundation  
SKAR Foundation  
The Trust Company  
Victorian Government:  
Department of Justice

## **\$10-25,000**

Allens  
Australian Communities  
Foundation  
Ros Grady  
King & Wood Mallesons  
Ron Merkel & Beth  
Charles  
RE Ross Trust  
Andrew Sisson  
Trawalla Foundation  
Jon Webster

## **\$5,000-9,999**

Peter Hanks QC  
Michael Kingston  
Alison Lansley  
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## **\$1,000-4,999**

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Kate Connors  
Mary Crock  
Andrew Davies  
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Hugh de Kretser  
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Leana Papaelia  
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Georgina Perry  
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Chris Povey  
Charles Radcliffe  
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Susanna Ritchie  
Mike Salvaris  
Jane Sanders  
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Gordon Spence  
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Phuong Tang  
Samuel-Thambiah  
Thaninayakaputhra  
Joel Townsend  
Sam Ure  
Kristen Walker  
Catherine Wood  
Brodie Woodland

## **PRO BONO SUPPORT**

Major law firm pro bono  
supporters  
Allens  
Ashurst  
Clayton Utz  
DLA Piper  
King & Wood Mallesons  
Lander & Rogers  
Maurice Blackburn  
Shine Lawyers

## **PRO BONO BARRISTER SUPPORT**

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Jacob Fajgenbaum QC  
Sarala Fitzgerald  
Kathleen Foley  
Frances Gordon  
Peter Hanks QC  
Claire Harris  
Perry Herzfeld  
David Hume  
Jeremy Kirk SC  
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Charles Scerri SC  
Michael Stanton  
Kristen Walker  
Bret Walker SC  
Professor George  
Williams  
Jay Williams  
Neil Young QC





# Financials

This is an extract of the HRLC's audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2014.

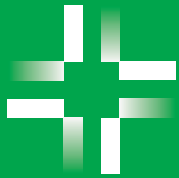
For a full version visit [www.hrlc.org.au](http://www.hrlc.org.au)

## Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the Year ended 30 June 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
<b>INCOME</b>		
Victorian Department of Justice	78,480	90,000
Legal Services Board of Victoria - Major Grants	150,603	92,400
Legal Services Board of Victoria - Equality Grant	29,207	66,600
R E Ross Trust	10,000	20,000
Reichstein Foundation - Detention Grant	-	30,000
Australian Communities Foundation	15,000	50,000
Victoria Law Foundation CLC Fellowship	3,175	35,918
The Myer Foundation	62,400	67,200
Other Grant Income	3,809	-
Private Donations	121,378	101,524
Corporate Donations	63,431	68,838
Indigenous Rights Unit - funded by: The Trust Company; Ron Merkel and Beth Charles; SKAR Foundation; Reichstein Foundation; Trawalla Foundation; Rae and Peter Gunn Family Foundation; Shulu Foundation	134,667	124,667
Interest	16,997	21,053
Event Registrations	4,164	9,391
Annual Dinner	20,827	43,705
Training and Teaching Services	3,500	1,691
Refunds & Reimbursement	8,096	3,758
Other Income	5,168	2,629
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>730,902</b>	<b>829,374</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Occupancy expenses	29,580	40,212
Operational and administration expenses	125,651	172,644
Employee benefits	691,146	508,646
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>846,377</b>	<b>721,502</b>
<b>Total Comprehensive Income</b>	<b>- 115,475</b>	<b>107,872</b>

## Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2014

<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	444,459	635,585
Trade and other receivables	41,976	27,636
Total current assets	486,435	663,221
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>486,435</b>	<b>663,221</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	38,827	23,305
Provisions	53,441	56,434
Grants received in advance: - (1) Legal Services Board - Major Grant \$34,997	34,997	95,978
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>127,265</b>	<b>175,717</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Provisions	8,044	20,903
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>8,044</b>	<b>20,903</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>135,309</b>	<b>196,620</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>351,126</b>	<b>466,601</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Retained earnings	351,126	466,601
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>351,126</b>	<b>466,601</b>



# Human Rights Law Centre

## Board Members

**Chairperson:** Michael Kingston, Solicitor (*On board since 2012*)

Ilana Atlas, Non-Executive Director (*On board since 2012*)

Catherine Branson, Former President Australian Human Rights Commission (*On board since 2013*)

Jamie Gardiner, Vice-President, Liberty Victoria (*On board since 2010*)

David Manne, Executive Director, Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (*On board between 2006 and 2014*)

Fiona McLeay, Executive Director, Public Interest Law Clearing House (*On board since 2011*)

Melanie Schleiger, Equality Law Program Manager, Victoria Legal Aid (*On board since 2008*)

Jon Webster, Partner, Allens (*On board since 2012*)

## Staff

**Executive Director:** Hugh de Kretser

**Director of Advocacy and Campaigns:** Rachel Ball

**Senior Lawyer:** Ruth Barson

**Director of Advocacy and Strategic Litigation:**

Anna Brown

**Director of Communications:** Tom Clarke

**Director of Advocacy and Research:** Emily Howie

**Director of International Human Rights Advocacy:**

Ben Schokman

**Director of Legal Advocacy:** Daniel Webb

**Finance Manager:** Frank Deans

## Secondee Lawyers

Rowan Minson – King & Wood Mallesons

Madeleine Forster – DLA Piper

Louise Brown – King & Wood Mallesons

Emily Christie – DLA Piper

Ashlea Hawkins – Lander & Rogers

## Volunteers, interns and practical legal training placements

Big thanks to everyone who volunteered or interned with us throughout 2013/14

- Miranda Webster
- Sam Drummond
- Candice Van Doosselaere
- Jane Doyle
- Rebecca MacKinnon

## Advisory Committee

Chris Sidoti (International human rights consultant and former Australian Human Rights Commissioner)

Daniel Creasey (Special Counsel, Colin Biggers & Paisley)

Vanessa Lesnie (Impact Investing Australia)

Professor John Tobin (University of Melbourne Law School)

## Our Founding Executive Director

Big thanks also to Phil Lynch, Director of the International Service for Human Rights. Phil was the driving force behind the founding of the HRLC and led the organisation until 2013. His leadership, vision and dedication were integral to the HRLC's success and he remains an important source of advice and support, in addition to generously financially supporting our work with his wife Lucy McKernan.





The **Human Rights Law Centre** protects and promotes human rights in Australia and in Australian activities abroad. We do this through a strategic combination of legal action, advocacy, research and capacity building.

**OVER THE PAST YEAR WE HAVE:**

launched a legal action to ensure women can safely access reproductive health services without being harassed and intimidated;

brought vital transparency and accountability by participating in the PNG National Court's inquiry into the human rights of asylum seekers on Manus Island;

addressed the UN's Human Rights Council on how Australia's asylum seeker policies violate international law;

established an unprecedented coalition of national organisations to tackle the shocking over imprisonment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;

successfully argued in the High Court that the Federal Government has the power to pass laws for marriage equality;

produced a ground breaking report highlighting the dangers of Australia's cooperation with the Sri Lankan military in the one-eyed pursuit of 'stopping the boats';

made important contributions in a landmark High Court case that provided legal recognition of the reality of gender diversity in our society;

secured the commitment of the Victorian Government to erase the criminal records of homosexual men convicted for consensual sex prior to decriminalisation;

worked to expose Australia's role in extrajudicial killings by the USA's drone program;

played a leading role in retaining strong and effective protections against racial vilification;

contributed to numerous law and policy reform processes and parliamentary inquiries;

generated more than 370 mainstream media appearances taking a message of the importance of human rights to a wide audience.

We were able to do all this, and more, with just 9 staff because of partnerships. Whether it's pro bono partnerships with leading law firms and barristers; partnerships with other NGOs to advance shared goals; or partnerships with the individuals and organisations who support us financially; partnerships are simply critical to our success.

Thank you and stay in touch.

[www.hrlc.org.au](http://www.hrlc.org.au)

[www.twitter.com/RightsAgenda](https://twitter.com/RightsAgenda)

[www.facebook.com/HumanRightsLawResourceCentre](https://www.facebook.com/HumanRightsLawResourceCentre)



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Melbourne VIC 3000, Australia  
ABN: 31 117 719 267