

ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



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CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Human rights belong to every single one of us. They embody values like freedom, equality, respect and dignity. They are the things we all need for our wellbeing and to live a dignified life. Respect for human rights keeps our society fair and just.

Human rights are meant to protect all of us, whoever we are and wherever we come from. But the many gaps in human rights protection in Australian law and policy are felt most acutely by the vulnerable, by those whose voices aren't heard in public debates and by those whose interests are easily overridden by majoritarian will.

The Human Rights Law Centre works for an Australia where human rights are universally upheld, promoted and enforced. We work for an Australia that is a strong, principled voice for human rights around the world. This report outlines the concrete steps we have taken towards realising this vision, by both defending hard won gains and securing genuine progress.

We took legal action to get children as young as 15 out of the notorious maximum security Barwon adult prison. We helped to expose the horrors of Don Dale and influenced the Royal Commission's roadmap to fix broken youth justice systems.

We highlighted the rapid rise in the imprisonment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and supported the family of Ms Dhu to expose the failings that led to her death in police custody and ensure commitments to reform to avoid future tragedies.

We highlighted the ongoing cruelty in our offshore detention system, amplified the voices of the men on Manus and advocated for safety for all. We continued to prevent the deportation of close to 400 people back to harm on Nauru and Manus.

We helped to achieve a landmark High Court ruling to protect protest rights and defended the vital role of advocacy by charities and broader civil society.

We supported the campaign for marriage equality and played a vital role advising on and securing support for the consensus bill to deliver the reform. We helped to secure state apologies for laws that discriminated against LGBTI Australians and led work to achieve equality reforms across the country.

We investigated abuses by Australian companies overseas and pushed for reforms to strengthen corporate human rights accountability mechanisms.

We helped to roll out laws to stop the harassment and intimidation of women outside abortion clinics, supported the decriminalisation of abortion in the Northern Territory and continued the push for reform in NSW and Queensland.

We highlighted Australia's human rights failings at the UN, generating international pressure for change at home and we began laying the groundwork for a national Human Rights Act.

Our proven and effective model combines legal action, advocacy, research, education and UN engagement. Our close civil society partnerships strengthen our collective action. The commitment of our partner law firms and barristers allows us to draw on significant pro bono work. And the support we receive from individual donors and philanthropic foundations guarantees our independence and our ability to take principled action whenever necessary.

Thank you for your support for our work. Our success and impact is not possible without you.

Catherine Branson QC
Chair of the Board

Hugh de Kretser
Executive Director

LGBTI RIGHTS

Our Vision

No one should be treated unfairly or subjected to harm or abuse because of who they are or who they love. Together, we protect and promote the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Australia and beyond.



Australia says YES to Marriage Equality

Every Australian should be treated equally under the law and that includes being able to marry the person they love. In November, the Australian people voted overwhelmingly for fairness and equality in the marriage equality postal survey. And in December, the Australian Parliament did too. Now all Australians can have their committed relationships treated equally under the law.

This victory is the culmination of more than a decade's work by supporters of equality. For years, the Human Rights Law Centre has

been working with our LGBTI allies to achieve this historic win. We've worked in the courts, with MPs from across the board, through various parliamentary processes, and with the Australian community.

Respect for human rights and equality should never be held at the whim of public opinion. When the Government decided to conduct a postal survey instead of having a free vote in Parliament, we listened to the voices of LGBTI community and challenged it in the High Court as an inappropriate and harmful mechanism for delivering equality.



@mm_bennett

#LoveWins!
Congratulations, well done and thanks to all who worked so hard to make #MarriageEquality a reality. A great win for fairness and equality.



When the High Court ruled that the postal survey could go ahead, we expanded our support for the 'Yes' campaign, providing personnel, resources, expert legal advice and conducting effective advocacy in the national media.

November 15 was a momentous day for human rights in Australia. The joy of the LGBTI community, their friends and families was felt around the nation. The LGBTI community didn't ask for a national poll on their dignity and worth, but it delivered a strong endorsement of fairness and equality for all Australians to be able to marry the person they love.

"Australians responded to the postal survey in numbers that are overwhelming and with efforts that are both touching and beautiful. This campaign was made up of many millions of individual acts of bravery. Whether it be having difficult conversations with family, wearing a YES t-shirt, or putting up a poster at work, so many Australians stood up to be counted."

–Lee Carnie, Lawyer

"Our community has a long history of asserting and protecting our rights with resilience, and pride. From Stonewall, to Mardi Gras – the 15th of November can now be added to the list of times when our community changed history."

–Anna Brown delivering her speech to the Yes Results Event in Sydney, 15 November 2017.

We were proud to play a pivotal role in ensuring the passage of the legislation to deliver marriage equality.

Since the historic Senate inquiry consensus report earlier this year, we have been resourcing MPs from across party lines to translate the findings of the report into a fair marriage equality Bill. One that allows same-sex couples to marry while protecting the religious celebration of marriage for people of faith.

The day after the 'Yes' result, our LGBTI rights experts were on the ground in Canberra as debate started on the Bill, and they were there for the two intensive weeks of debates to make sure the Bill passed without amendments that would back anti-discrimination protections.

We ensured a principled human rights approach in the debates and were pleased that the legislation which ultimately delivered marriage equality reflected the consensus Bill which we had endorsed and which was supported by cross-party MPs.

"After decades of campaigning, all loving couples in Australia will finally be treated with the same dignity and respect."

–Anna Brown,
Director of Legal Advocacy

The Human Rights Law Centre's Lee Carnie, Adrienne Walters, Michelle Bennett and Shahleena Musk at the announcement of the result of the marriage equality postal survey.

LGBTI RIGHTS

Righting Historical Wrongs

Erasing unjust criminal convictions

When Tasmania finally repealed its gay sex laws in 1997, it ended the criminalisation of homosexuality in Australia. What didn't end, was the stigma and shame for thousands of men and some women who had been convicted under homophobic laws across Australia. Not only were these convictions a matter of principle, they also created significant barriers to work, travel and volunteering.

In 2014, the Human Rights Law Centre began advocating for states and territories to right these historical wrongs. Our work has played a pivotal role in the introduction of schemes in six states and territories that allow people convicted under these unjust laws to apply to have their criminal record erased.

We continue to deliver our free legal advice and support service, staffed by LGBTI lawyers including our board member Jamie Gardiner, which assists individuals across Australia to clear historical homosexual convictions from their criminal records.



Bon's Story

Imagine living your life under the cloud of an unjust criminal conviction just because you are gay.

In 1958, Peter 'Bon' Bonsall-Boone was convicted of two criminal offences for consensual homosexual acts when he was just 20 years old. For Bon, these offences cut short his chosen career and spelled a lifetime of stigma. Forty-three years later Bon's record still haunted him when he was refused a job teaching English to adults in 2001.

I met Bon and his partner of 50 years Peter de Waal in 2014 when the Human Rights Law Centre worked closely with the NSW LGBTI Parliamentary Working Group to pass legislation to erase historical homosexual convictions in NSW.

This legislation allowed us to clear Bon's first conviction from his record, but not his second conviction. Bon had been convicted on an obscure charge under the Vagrancy Act and it wasn't one of the charges covered by the Bill.

When Bon was diagnosed with terminal cancer, it was his dying wish to finally have his record cleared. This year, we made that happen.

Our tenacious advocacy led to the NSW Attorney-General introducing regulations that allowed Bon's second conviction to be extinguished. At 79, Bon passed away knowing he no longer had a criminal record.

I am proud to have worked beside Bon, and many other courageous people we have assisted through our advocacy and expungement legal service.

—Anna Brown,
Director of Legal Advocacy

Our Advocacy Brings in Change

VIC	NSW	ACT	QLD	TAS	WA
Expungement Bill passes (14 October, 2014).	Expungement Bill passes (23 October, 2014).	Expungement Bill passes (18 November, 2015).	Expungement Bill passes (10 October, 2017).	Expungement Bill passes (21 November, 2017)	Expungement Bill tabled (1 November 2017).



“To LGBTIQ community members discriminated against in legislation, we offer you our unreserved and sincere regret and are sorry for these injustices.”

– Jay Weatherill,
Premier of South Australia

Historic State Apologies to LGBTI Australians

Laws that criminalised homosexuality and subjected generations of people to harm and abuse are a dark stain on Australia’s history. These laws fostered homophobia in law enforcement and Australian society at large. Across the country, men were arrested at gay beats, and at times in the privacy of their own homes, by undercover police officers.

In addition to our work pushing for schemes to erase unjust convictions for consensual gay sex, we also played a key role in securing formal state apologies in five states, with more to come. These moving and profound apologies have publicly affirmed the dignity and value of LGBTI people. They are important statements against homophobia and have helped to repair some of the harm caused by unjust laws.



Our Impact – Five State Apologies for the Criminalisation of Homosexuality

May 2016

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews delivered the landmark first state apology to people convicted under unjust laws that criminalised homosexual acts.

April 2017

Tasmanian Premier Will Hodgman delivered an apology to those affected by laws criminalising consensual homosexual activity and cross-dressing.

November 2017

West Australian Premier Mark McGowan delivered an apology for unjust laws which criminalised same-sex conduct and the harms they caused.

December 2016

South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill delivered a state apology for laws which discriminated against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer people.

May 2017

Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk delivered an apology to Queenslanders who suffered from prejudice as a result of discriminatory laws that criminalised homosexuality until 1992.

P.6: Peter de Waal with his partner of 50 years Peter Bonsall-Boone and Anna Brown.

P.7 Left: Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk signing the Queensland state apology.

P.7 Right: Premier Jay Weatherill on the day of the South Australian apology with MPs and the LGBTIQ community and advocates.

LGBTI RIGHTS

Our Impact: Vital LGBTIQ Equality Reforms in South Australia



P.8 Left: LGBTIQ South Australians gather at Parliament to support adoption equality reforms.

P.8 Right: 17 year old Ethan who advocated for changes to South Australia's birth certificate laws.

P.9 Left: Human Rights Law Centre client, Canon.

P.9 Right: Anna Brown with Alex Greenwich MP and Tiernan Brady of the Equality Campaign.



Our expert advocacy was pivotal to the introduction of ground-breaking South Australian reforms that removed discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer people from the law.

Adoption and IVF Equality

Our advocacy played a critical role in ending discrimination that blocked South Australian LGBTIQ couples from starting a family. South Australian same-sex couples now have equal access to adoption, IVF, and legal surrogacy.

Relationship Recognition

When UK citizen David Bulmer-Rizzi died on his South Australian honeymoon in 2015, his husband Marco was told that he wouldn't be recognised as David's husband on his death certificate. This led to practical difficulties organising funeral arrangements and other sensitive matters at a time of great distress.

This tragic case prompted an important reform which now allows same-sex couples married overseas to have the legal certainty and dignity of recognition under state laws.

“Same-sex partners can be rendered invisible at the worst of times – when their beloved partner or spouse passes away. These changes provide legal certainty for same-sex couples married overseas to know that their relationship will be recognised on their loved one’s death certificate in South Australia. From now on, no spouse will have to face the indignity of having their relationship denied.”

–Lee Carnie, Lawyer

Birth Certificate Reform

Our advocacy led to an important reform that allows trans, gender diverse and intersex people to change the sex or gender identity on their birth certificate without having to undergo surgery or being forced to divorce their spouse.

“I realised when I was about three or four, and even though I didn’t know what trans was I just couldn’t relate to being a girl. I can’t wait to have my birth certificate reflect my true gender. I won’t have to be scared or worried about my high school certificate saying that I’m a girl, or people finding out when I apply for a job.”

–17 year old Ethan speaking out on the importance of having a birth certificate reflecting his true gender.



Tackling Centrelink Discrimination Against Trans & Gender Diverse People

Canon's story

Gender diverse people face problems accessing services and facilities that most Australians use without thinking twice. Because their identity documents often do not match the gender they live as, trans and gender diverse people are subjected to embarrassing questions, fraud accusations and the wrongful suspension of services and support.

We helped our client Canon to pursue a discrimination complaint against Centrelink, which led to training for Centrelink staff and the creation of new policies that no longer discriminate against trans and gender diverse customers.

"I was able to take steps to affirm my gender identity at university but not with Centrelink. Every semester when they would check my enrolment they would get a mismatch – my university title was 'Mr' but my Centrelink title was 'Ms' – and I would get my payments suspended and have to chase around to get them reinstated.

Those initial stages of affirming my gender identity in public were difficult and scary and had a toll on my mental health at the time.

The Department has now published the policies in a more visible way. Centrelink also committed to providing training within the Department to support gender diverse people.

Having the support of the Human Rights Law Centre, and working together over a number of years, achieved a lot more than I would have been able to do by myself. I'm proud of what we were able to achieve."

–Canon,
Human Rights Law Centre client

Victorian AIDS Council President Award

In November, our LGBTI rights team received the Victorian AIDS Council's President's Award in recognition of our work to end LGBTI discrimination in the law and protecting and promoting the rights of LGBTI people.

"25 years ago, no one would have believed that we would now live in a community where you didn't have to hide your love for the most important person in your life. A community where millions of Australians would flock to the streets to join the LGBTI community in its distinct history of celebration, pride and resilience.

November 15 was a once in a lifetime moment in history. A seismic shift in how Australia views the LGBTI community. The majority of Australian voters said Yes to fairness and equality."

–Anna Brown delivering the Victorian AIDS Council's 25th Keith Harbour address.



ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES' RIGHTS

Our Vision

Equality and self-determination are essential to achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Australia's legal system must respect and uphold human dignity and human rights.

Fixing Broken Youth Justice Systems

“The children who suffered in Don Dale, the children who have been abused in youth jails across Australia, deserve to know that our governments will listen to their calls and take action.”

–Shahleena Musk,
Senior Lawyer

Exposing the abuses of Don Dale

Within moments of seeing the haunting image of teenager Dylan Voller being hooded and strapped to a barbaric restraint chair in the Don Dale prison, the nation erupted in disbelief.

The public rightly demanded to know how scenes that belonged in a horror-show had made their way into a contemporary youth justice system. How children could be left to languish in solitary confinement; how the abuses in Don Dale went unchecked for so long.

The subsequent Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory has provided many of the answers.

This is a moment of reckoning for justice in Australia. The test for our governments will be in how they respond to the vital policy recommendations.

We worked hard with other lawyers and journalists to expose a system rotten to its core.

We engaged strategically and deeply with the resulting Royal Commission, ensuring the findings reflect best practice human rights standards.

When the Royal Commission delivered its report we were back in the media putting pressure on the Northern Territory Government to implement every recommendation.

We are engaging with governments across Australia to ensure they learn from the lessons of Don Dale and fix our broken youth justice systems.



Youth justice systems across Australia must comply with human rights standards. All children should have the chance to thrive and succeed in their lives. Our advocacy is now focused on:

- Raising the age of criminal responsibility across Australia so that primary school aged children are not behind bars.
- Ending the harmful practices of solitary confinement and routine strip searches on children.
- Advocating for youth justice facilities to be small, home-like and close to communities.

“When primary school aged kids get in trouble, rather than drop them into the quicksand of the criminal justice system, our focus should be on helping them learn from their mistakes. Australia needs to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14 years.”

–Ruth Barson,
Director of Legal Advocacy

P.10: Miss Dhu’s grandmother Carol Roe outside the coronial inquest.

P.11: Ruth Barson with Wayne Muir of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service.

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES' RIGHTS

Kids out of adult prisons

As a society, we should never give up on kids.

When the Victorian Government decided to send children from youth detention centres to the notorious Barwon maximum security adult prison, we knew we had to stop it.

Having helped to expose the horrific abuse that occurred in the Don Dale prison, our lawyers were only too aware that adult jails are unfit for kids.

Within hours of the first child being transferred, we partnered with the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and an exceptional team of pro bono barristers to take legal action in the Victorian Supreme Court. In Victoria, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 11 times more likely to be detained than non-Indigenous children.

After six months of intensive litigation, including an additional legal challenge with Fitzroy Legal Service, we secured a decisive Supreme Court victory that saw all children moved out of Barwon adult jail and into lawful youth justice facilities.

Consistent with our model, a key part of our work was advocacy in the media to counter the misinformation and demonisation of the children the Government sent to Barwon. We worked hard to make sure the voices and perspectives of the children were heard in the public debates about their futures.

The final Supreme Court ruling not only vindicated the human rights of the children, it set a critical child rights precedent and realised the potential of Victoria's Charter of Human Rights.

“The focus must be on showing these kids that better options exist and giving them pathways to become productive members of our community.”

–Alina Leikin,
Lawyer

- Children as young as 15 locked in small concrete cells for 23 hours a day
- Handcuffed out of their cells
- Denied access to proper education
- Threatened with tear gas

“I spent almost two months locked up at Barwon adult prison. For me, it was the worst place I have ever been. Locked up in my tiny cell for days. Sometimes, I could hear and speak to adult prisoners in the next unit. I was just thinking that my future was just over that wall. What was the point of trying?”

–17 year Caleb was imprisoned in Barwon for two months.

P.12 Illustration courtesy of Amnesty International.

P.13 Left: Ruth Barson with Wayne Muir from the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service.

P.13 Right: Alina Leikin and Hugh de Kretser outside the Victorian Supreme Court Barwon hearing.

P.13 Bottom: Adrienne Walters, Human Rights Law Centre.





“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people know the solutions to the challenges their communities face. This is why supporting Aboriginal-led coalitions, like Change the Record, is central to our work.”

–Shahleena Musk,
Senior Lawyer

Scrapping a Racially Discriminatory Welfare Program

Making people work more hours for the same pay is clearly unfair, but that’s exactly what an Australian Government ‘work for the dole’ program requires of people living in remote communities who are predominantly Aboriginal. They have to work up to three times as many hours a year than people living in cities, for the same basic social security payment, and are far more likely to be penalised and have support cut.

As soon as this racially discriminatory program was introduced, we partnered with Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT to explore challenging the laws. Through media advocacy, two Senate inquiries, and meetings with MPs, we’ve urged the Government to abandon the program for a better alternative. We supported the launch of the Aboriginal-led alternative model that would foster fair work and strong communities.



“This is a racially discriminatory government program that is displacing waged work, seeing families go hungry and young people disengaged.”

–Adrienne Walters,
Director of Legal Advocacy



ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES' RIGHTS

Cutting Police Lock Up Rates and Reducing the Risk of Deaths in Custody

Western Australia

In 2014, Ms Dhu, a 22 year old Yamatji woman with her whole life ahead of her, was locked up for unpaid fines. Three days later, she died a cruel and inhuman death in police custody.

Working with the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia and supporting Ms Dhu's mother and grandmother, we secured the release of the harrowing footage that proved that Ms Dhu was hideously mistreated in her final hours. Ms Dhu's family wanted the world to know the truth about her death. The footage highlighted the critical need to prevent future deaths in custody.

The coronial inquest into Ms Dhu's death provided strong findings that sparked the beginning of major law reform in Western Australia. This will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to a life-saving custody notification system, and are not needlessly locked up for unpaid fines.

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory has the highest prison rates in Australia. Around 85 per cent of people in prison in the NT are Aboriginal. The rate is worse in youth justice centres. Discriminatory practices and excessive police powers have a disproportionate impact on Aboriginal people.

Working with the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, our legal action in the NT targeted some of the worst police practices, while our advocacy highlighted that better policy approaches exist.

Building on our previous work reining in the NT's "paperless arrest" laws, we challenged the NT's alcohol prohibition laws in the Supreme Court and protective custody powers in the High Court. These powers are used around 10,000 times each year and over 90 per cent of people locked up are Aboriginal.

Our strong advocacy and legal challenges highlighted the inherent injustice and danger of such practices and paved the way for the incoming NT Government to repeal of some of the most harmful alcohol laws. This will mean far fewer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are forced into police cells.

"Criminalising drinking is dangerous, ineffective and disproportionately imprisons Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory, exposing them to harm, including deaths in custody."

–Shahleena Musk,
Senior Lawyer



Justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women

“Jailing vulnerable people like a breastfeeding mother simply because they can’t afford their fines is utterly perverse. It compounds inequality.”

–Ruth Barson,
Director of Legal Advocacy

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women’s imprisonment rates have soared by nearly 150 per cent since the 1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, with profound impacts on children and families.

With governments continuing to overlook the harm this causes, we co-authored a landmark report with Change the Record, Over-Represented and Overlooked: *The Crisis of Aboriginal Women’s Growing Over-Imprisonment* to highlight 18 policy changes to improve justice outcomes for women.

As part of our efforts to ensure these policy changes are implemented nation-wide, we’ve met with numerous politicians and decision makers in Western Australia, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Vickie’s Story

I spent many years in and out of the courts, children’s homes and jails. I faced a lot of challenges. I was stolen generation and my mum was too. I was taken when I was two years old. Child welfare and the police held me responsible for things that kids at home with their families never would have been. I never learned “normal” relationships. I was on my own by the age of 13.

When I was 17, I went to adult prison for self-administering heroin and returned shortly after. I then found some stability in my life and managed to stay on the “right” side of the fence for the next 10 years. When I did go back inside, it was after losing my son in a bitter custody dispute with a violent ex-partner, other violent relationships and sexual assault.

While in prison, I fought to be allowed to study philosophy, sociology, literature and writing. I’ve always been an avid reader and had a strong sense of justice. While education in prison was important for me, what would have been more helpful would have been not being criminalised at a young age. I needed support, stable housing and healing when I was young, not punishment.

Too many of our women are trapped in an unresponsive criminal justice system. We need alternatives that are healing, not punitive. You need to respect women’s dignity, but so often the criminal justice system takes that away.

–Vickie Roach,
former prisoner, writer, activist and advocate for reducing the imprisonment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



P.14 Left:
Carol Roe

P.14 Right:
Shahleena Musk,
Human Rights Law Centre

P.15: Vickie Roach

Photo credit:
Mahala Strohfelt, courtesy
of Change the Record

DIGNITY FOR PEOPLE IN PRISON

Our Vision

People in prison must be treated humanely and with respect for their human dignity. Prisons must be transparent and accountable.

Ending Degrading Strip Searching Practices in Women's Prisons

The Human Rights Law Centre launched *Total Control: Ending routine strip searching of women in Victoria's prisons* to expose the widespread harm caused by routine strip searches of women in Victorian prisons.

We analysed six months of data obtained through freedom of information laws which revealed that women in Victorian prisons were strip searched over 6,000 times during the period. Only seven items of were found in the searches. Most were tobacco products. There was nothing found that could constitute a significant threat to prison security.

Strip searches are invasive and humiliating and can be extremely traumatising for the many women in prisons who are victims of family violence and sexual assault.

Routinely strip searching women violates Victoria's Human Rights Charter. There are modern, less-invasive search methods available. Our report calls for the Victorian Government to abandon the routine strip searching of women in line with reforms successfully implemented in the ACT and the UK.

"Being strip searched, I absolutely felt that I was being violated sexually."

–Female prisoner on being strip searched.

"You can never get used to stripping naked in front of people, no matter what age you are. I'm 74 next month, and to me it's still another world... I never really undressed even in front of my husband."

–Female prisoner on being strip searched.

Australia Finally Commits to the UN's Anti-Torture Protocol

The Human Rights Law Centre has urged successive Australian Governments to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) that aims to prevent mistreatment and promote humane conditions in places of detention by establishing systems for independent monitoring and inspection.

Our advocacy helped to secure a commitment from the Australian Government to finally ratify the treaty by the end of 2017. Implemented properly, OPCAT will reduce the risks of abuse and deaths in custody in all places of detention including youth justice centres, prisons and immigration detention.

“From the mistreatment of children at Don Dale to the death of Ms Dhu in police custody, we’ve seen how things can go tragically wrong. This treaty is all about preventing mistreatment through independent inspection and monitoring.”

–Hugh de Kretser,
Executive Director



P.17: In the wake of the child abuse scandal in the Northern Territory's Don Dale youth prison, the Human Rights Law Centre's Tom Clarke delivered a statement to the UN Human Rights Council calling for ratification of OPCAT and reforms that would prevent primary school aged children going to prisons.

DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS

Our Vision

Australia must maintain a strong and healthy democracy where people are free to join together and speak out on issues they care about; where public debate is diverse, informed and robust; where the media is free and independent; and where strong oversight institutions and the rule of law ensure government transparency and accountability.



@TomHRLC

Democracy doesn't just happen by itself - it's up to all of us to participate in it and to vigilantly defend it



Challenging Excessive Anti-Protest Laws

Bob Brown's successful High Court challenge to Tasmania's anti-protest laws

Freedom of speech and the right to protest are absolutely essential for a healthy, vibrant democracy. From the eight-hour working day, to voting rights for women, to saving the Franklin River, public protests have been central to the progress we all benefit from today and often take for granted.

In 2016, Dr Bob Brown was arrested on a public road while filming a video about a controversial logging project in Tasmania's native Lapoinya forest. Jessica Hoyt, a nurse who grew up in the area, was also arrested under similar circumstances.

When Bob and Jessica courageously challenged the excessive anti-protest laws that led to their arrests, we intervened in support of their case, providing expert legal submissions to the High Court.

In a big win for Australian democracy, the High Court emphatically struck down the laws, ruling that they violated the freedom of political communication in the Australian Constitution.

Tasmania's anti-protest laws were part of a disturbing pattern of state governments pursuing excessive laws designed to stifle and criminalise peaceful protest. This important High Court ruling will help rein in this worrying undemocratic trend.



“These laws sought to prevent and punish protest that affects business. They were too broad, too harsh and too vague. They were thoroughly undemocratic.”

–Hugh de Kretser,
Executive Director

“Free expression and the right to peaceful protest are essential ingredients for a healthy democracy. Governments shouldn’t be able to just sell off our democratic rights in order to protect business interests.”

–Emily Howie,
Director of Legal Advocacy

DEFENDING CIVIL SOCIETY VOICES

The Human Rights Law Centre has consistently resisted government attempts to stifle the voices of charities and civil society more broadly.

Safeguarding independent community voices

Our *Defending Democracy: Safeguarding independent Community Voices* report outlined a series of attacks on independent civil society voices and the practical policy steps that governments should take to ensure community organisations remain free to participate in vital public discourse.

“Governments may find criticism inconvenient, but that’s part and parcel of a healthy democracy. Instead of shutting down debate, governments should be enabling vibrant, robust discussions and debate.”

–Emily Howie,
Director of Legal Advocacy

The report was endorsed by 15 of Australia’s best known non-government organisations and launched at the Progress conference by outgoing President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, Professor Gillian Triggs.

“This timely report suggests valuable initiatives to protect the community’s right to advocate for the environment and human rights.”

–Professor Gillian Triggs

Protecting access to international philanthropy and environmental advocacy

Governments should be encouraging vibrant public debate, not restricting the rights of charities to engage in debate.

We joined a coalition of leading charities to push back against the Government’s attempts to ban registered charities that receive international philanthropy from engaging in public debate.

The proposed ban is misguided, unnecessary and undemocratic. It would deprive health, aid and development, environment and medical research charities of vital funds and stifle their ability to speak up on the issues they were established to address.

We also successfully supported environmental groups to respond to sustained government attempts to stifle their advocacy through attacks on their ability to fundraise.

A Human Rights Act for Australia

Australia is the only Western democracy without a national human rights act or bill of rights. This makes it easier for governments and parliaments to undermine our fundamental rights and freedoms. A national Human Rights Act will help to make Australia fairer and more just for all.

Working with civil society partners, we began laying the groundwork for a national Human Rights Act that protects human rights in Australian law. We also supported the campaign for a Queensland Human Rights Act, helping to secure a commitment from the Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk to introduce legislation based on the Victorian Human Rights Charter model. We will push for the Premier to deliver on this commitment. We also advocated with the Northern Territory Government to introduce a Human Rights Act to help avoid future abuses like those exposed in its youth justice system.

“A national Human Rights Act will give power to people in Australia to protect their rights. It will make our society better and fairer.”

–Hugh de Kretser,
Executive Director



Metadata Laws Undermine Press Freedom

“Metadata retention laws damage press freedom in Australia by jeopardising journalists’ ability to keep sources confidential. Australia’s digital dragnet is in desperate need of reform.”

–Emily Howie, Director of Legal Advocacy

We are pursuing action to claw back Australia’s metadata retention laws that allow law enforcement authorities to access telecommunications metadata without a warrant or any prior review. We engaged with a Parliamentary inquiry to call for reform and we’re actively exploring potential legal action. Our advocacy with a United Nations expert committee on the issue resulted in the UN confirming that Australia’s metadata laws go too far and recommending that they be wound back.

Australian Complicity in War Crimes

For a number of years, we have been raising serious concerns about the role Australian personnel at the Pine Gap security facility perform in supporting the USA’s drone program, which includes illegal assassinations in countries that neither Australia nor America is at war with.

Our strong media advocacy played an important role in amplifying an investigation published by the ABC and The Intercept, which revealed

for the first time the function of the Pine Gap facility and the extent of Australia’s involvement. According to documents obtained from the National Security Agency whistleblower Edward Snowden, the base is an important ground station from which US spy satellites are controlled and communications are monitored across several continents.

We’ll continue to pursue greater transparency and the adoption of human rights compliant practices.

“Our Government needs to come clean and explain to the Australian public exactly what role our security personnel play in extrajudicial killings through the US’s deadly drone strikes program.”

–Emily Howie,
Director of Legal Advocacy

WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

P.21: Adrienne Walters, Director of Legal Advocacy

Our Vision

Australian laws, policies and practices must respect women's rights to make reproductive health decisions about their own bodies and to safely and privately access their doctor.

A Woman's Right to Choose

Sadly, in many Australian states abortion has yet to be decriminalised or is only partially decriminalised. We've partnered with women's groups and medical experts across the country to support the push for decriminalisation and to provide expert advice on possible legal reforms.

In the Northern Territory, we provided detailed analysis to the Parliament on the law reform that improved access to abortion and allowed provision of the "abortion pill" outside of hospital settings. The new law was a step

in the right direction but failed to fully decriminalise abortion and fell short of accepted medical practice and community values.

In Queensland, we supported the campaign to remove abortion from the Criminal Code where it has remained unchanged since 1899. The Queensland Government has referred the question to a Law Reform Commission inquiry to establish a suitable path forward. We are also working with partners in NSW to push for reform.

Safe and Private Access to Abortion

Building on our success in Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT, we supported successful efforts in the Northern Territory to create 'safe access zones' around abortion clinics to ensure that women can access medical treatment without being harassed and intimidated. We're supporting advocacy for similar laws in NSW.

"Nobody is saying that anti-abortionists don't have a right to express their views, only that they must do so in a way that respects women's rights to safely and privately access their doctor, without running the gauntlet of abuse."

–Emily Howie,
Director of Legal Advocacy

"Women know what is best for their bodies and lives. The Government should seize this opportunity to pass a law that empowers women to choose what is right for them, rather than telling them that they can't be trusted to make decisions."

–Adrienne Walters,
Director of Legal Advocacy



ASYLUM SEEKER & REFUGEE RIGHTS



Our Vision

Australia must treat all people seeking asylum with decency, compassion and respect for their human rights. Australia must play a pivotal role in providing safe pathways to protection within our region.

“For four and a half years our Government’s refugee policies have steadily destroyed the lives of innocent people. Even now, after years filled with fear and violence and suffering and death - there are still 2000 men, women and children trapped in a painful limbo on Nauru and Manus Island. These are innocent human beings. They deserve to be treated with decency and respect and to have the chance to rebuild their lives in freedom and safety.”

–Daniel Webb,
Director of Legal Advocacy

Abdul Aziz Muhamat is a refugee who has been held on Manus Island for over four and a half years.

Photo credit:
Matthew Abbott

#BRINGTHEMHERE

Amplifying the voices of the men on Manus

The broader refugee policy debate in Australia is characterised by its focus on borders, boats, sovereignty and smugglers – everything but people. The debate has been deliberately dehumanised over many years.

Our advocacy has focussed on breaking down the secrecy around the offshore camps to share the stories and amplify the voices of the men being held on Manus Island. We know that if the Australian public can connect with the people trapped in Australia’s offshore detention centres and understand the terrible human toll, most will respond with compassion and decency.

In late 2016, our Director of Legal Advocacy, Daniel Webb, travelled to Manus Island for a third time with a photographer from GetUp!. Daniel spent time with the men who have been languishing there for the last four years, to hear about their lives, their experiences and their hopes for the future to share their stories with the Australian public.

“I love writing. I wasn’t a writer before I came here, in fact I didn’t really speak any English. But after four years, my book is almost finished. But I have not yet written the last chapter. The last chapter will be about the country where I go to in the future. I am saving the last chapter for that.”

–Imran Mohammad,
a Rohingya refugee who sought safety in Australia when he was 19 years old, but has been held on Manus for nearly five years.

The interviews and portraits gathered became the heart of the #BringThemHere campaign, which we ran in partnership with GetUp!. The campaign and its predecessor #LetThemStay shifted public opinion and the Prime Minister’s refugee deal with the USA followed shortly after.

We built strong relationships with men such as Behrouz Boochani, Imran Mohammad, Abdul Aziz Muhamat and Amir Taghinia and helped build and facilitate their profile as spokespeople in the world’s media. Through courageously sharing their stories, these men have become exceptional and effective advocates who now communicate directly with the Australian public about the suffering they endure because of the Australian Government’s cruel policies.

ASYLUM SEEKER & REFUGEE RIGHTS

Preventing the Deportation of People to Offshore Detention

Over the last two and a half years, we have prevented the deportation of around 400 vulnerable people back to harm in offshore detention on Nauru and Manus Island.

After suffering serious harm in offshore detention, these people were evacuated from Nauru and Manus and brought to Australia for urgent medical treatment. Our clients include men violently attacked on Manus, women sexually assaulted on Nauru, and children so traumatised by offshore detention they have needed urgent psychiatric care.

Current Australian law and policy seeks to force these vulnerable people back to Manus or Nauru. Our goal is to make sure that doesn't happen and to ensure they are never sent back to danger.

We assembled and led a coalition of 19 pro bono law firms and ten barristers to file a series of urgent legal proceedings in the High Court of Australia for every one of these people and worked closely with the Refugee Advice and Casework Service and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre to coordinate legal and welfare support.



P.24 Left: Abdul Aziz Muhumat with Daniel Webb and Aadir* on Manus Island.

P.24 Right: Imran Mohammad has been held on Manus Island for nearly five years.

Photo credit: Matthew Abbott

P.25: Daniel Webb in Canberra with the daughter of a man held on Manus.

P.25 Right: Lawyers, Arif Hussein and Amy Frew





@ArifHRLC Oct 17

Manus is a crisis of our own making. We must honour our international obligations and provide the men there with safety immediately.

Thanks to our ongoing legal action and our effective public advocacy with our partners, this group of around 400 people remain in safety in Australia instead of trapped indefinitely on Manus and Nauru. More than 50 babies born in Australian hospitals have taken their first steps and spoken their first words in parks around the country instead of in a tent on a remote island.

In addition to our work preventing deportation, we are providing the group with ongoing advice and support around their refugee claim process and the US deal. In August, we also responded to the cruel announcement that income support payments for many in the group would be immediately cut and that they had three weeks to leave their accommodation. We worked closely with our pro bono and NGO partners to lead the response to these cuts which were designed to make people choose between deportation and destitution. We coordinated with welfare organisations to ensure that everyone had food and shelter.



ASYLUM SEEKER & REFUGEE RIGHTS

Four Years Too Many

We have kept the public spotlight firmly on the cruelty inflicted by the Australian Government on the people trapped in its offshore camps. In order to ensure that the community remained aware of the ongoing and intractable situation for the over 2000 men, women and children held on Manus and Nauru, on the four year anniversary of the start of our current offshore processing regime, we launched *Four years too many: Offshore processing on Manus Island and Nauru*.

The report, jointly produced with GetUp!, drew on weeks of interviews we conducted with men on Manus and captured their experience of the last four years – the things they’ve lost, the things they’ve missed and the things they still hope for.

Four years too many generated nationwide media coverage and provoked comments from former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, successfully re-focussing public and media attention on the plight of those left behind on Manus and Nauru.

#EvacuateNow Vigils

To further mark this four-year anniversary, on 19 July 2017 nationwide vigils were held at over 50 locations across Australia and overseas.

Working with Getup! and Iranian journalist and refugee held on Manus Behrouz Boochani, we developed a video featuring interviews with a number of the men still detained on Manus. This video was screened at events around Australia, ensuring the voices and images of the men on Manus were beamed directly to the Australian community. Daniel Webb spoke at the Melbourne vigil.

“These men are scared, they are exhausted and they are despairing. After four and a half years of limbo and uncertainty they still have nowhere safe to go.”

–Amy Frew,
Lawyer



Families Permanently Split by Australia's Offshore Detention Regime

One of the most acute, arbitrary and unnecessary injustices caused by the mandatory offshore detention regime is the permanent separation of a handful of families – families who have been ripped apart simply because they arrived in Australia and sought asylum on different dates.

We travelled to Canberra with the daughter of one of the men indefinitely trapped on Manus to show members of the Government, Opposition and Senate Crossbench firsthand the human impact of the government's punitive refugee policies.

We have shared the stories of several of these split families with domestic and international media and in Parliamentary inquiries. We've led public advocacy on this issue, including in response to recent condemnation from the UN refugee agency of the Government's refusal to reunite the families it has separated. Our work to have these families reunited continues.

“Our government has a decision to make. It can needlessly rip apart families. Or it can do the sensible and compassionate thing and allow these families to be back together.”

–Daniel Webb,
Director of Legal Advocacy



P.26:
Mamud el Hassoon has been stranded on Manus for over four years.

Photo credit: Matthew Abbott

P.27 Above:
Naysir Ahmed has been held on Manus, separated from his family for nearly five years.

Photo credit: Matthew Abbott

P.27 Right:
Daniel Webb receiving the Global Pluralism award in Canada.

Recognition of Our Work

Global Pluralism Award

Daniel Webb, Director of Legal Advocacy, was recently awarded the inaugural Global Pluralism Award for his work defending the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum.

Daniel was nominated by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights regional office and was selected from over 200 nominations from 43 countries by an independent jury of former world leaders.

The award is worthy recognition of Daniel's work, the gravity of the cruelty we are working against and the rising tide of international condemnation at the way our Government is deliberately mistreating people seeking safety.

“By protecting asylum seekers from horrendous detention and changing the public conversation about refugees from deterrence to opportunity, Daniel Webb is paving a way for other global leaders.”

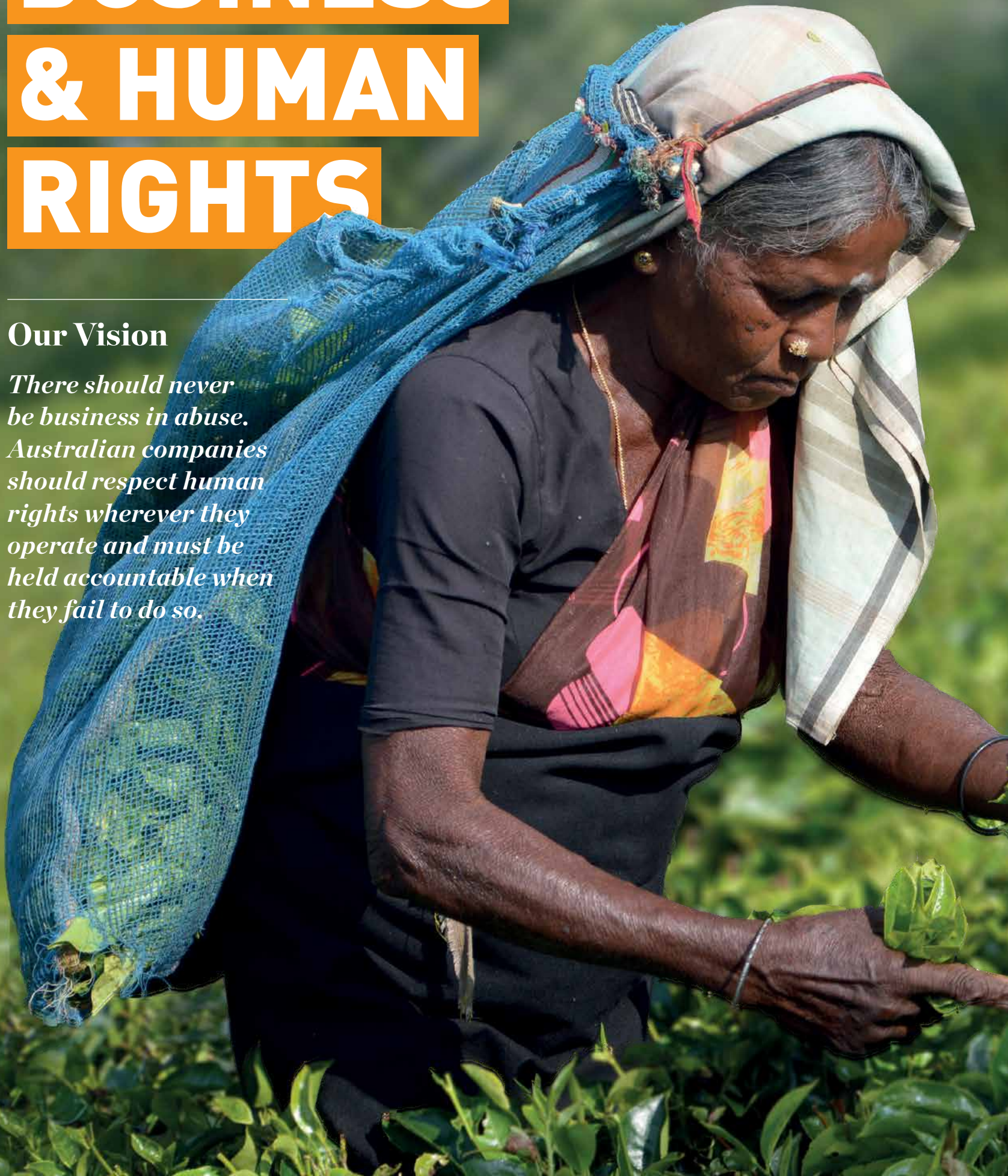
–Rt. Hon. Joe Clark,
former Prime Minister of Canada



BUSINESS & HUMAN RIGHTS

Our Vision

There should never be business in abuse. Australian companies should respect human rights wherever they operate and must be held accountable when they fail to do so.



Improving Regulatory Systems and Holding Businesses to Account

Australian business operating overseas should be held to the same standards that we expect them to uphold at home. The Human Rights Law Centre is pursuing legislative reform, building strategic partnerships, and taking legal action to ensure businesses are better held to account for human rights violations.

Investigation into Human Rights Abuses in Papua New Guinea and the Congo

Our staff travelled to Papua New Guinea to investigate the involvement of an Australian company in a large forced eviction. We took testimonies from some of the many hundreds of people who have been left homeless and are exploring potential legal remedies for them to pursue. We also travelled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to investigate abuses by an Australian mining company.

Shaping Government Policy

We need better systems to encourage – and where necessary compel – businesses to lift their game and stamp out abuses. We engaged with the parliamentary committee examining proposed legislation to tackle forced labour practices known as modern slavery and conducted public advocacy on the issue. We focused on the need to include mandatory reporting requirements for businesses to tackle forced labour in their supply chains. We welcomed the Government's commitment to a reporting requirement for large businesses but called for the scope of reporting to be widened and for penalties to ensure compliance.

Our Keren Adams was also appointed to the Australian Government's multi-stakeholder advisory group on business and human rights which developed recommendations on a national action plan on business and human rights.

“Many Australians would be appalled to think that the prawns for their summer BBQ might have been produced off the back of Burmese refugees chained to Thai fishing boats, or that their latest ski jacket was made with child labour in places like North Korea. Yet that's the brutal reality for many supply chains linked to a number of Australian brands and businesses.”

–Keren Adams,
Director of Legal Advocacy

Australia's Inadequate Corporate Complaints Body

The Australian Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) National Contact Point, managed by the Department of Treasury, is charged with investigating complaints against Australian multinational companies by individuals or communities who claim to have been harmed by their activities. However, it is understaffed, under-funded and has a dismal record in carrying out its functions. It needs to be completely overhauled or replaced.

We partnered with OECD Watch to lodge a complaint to the OECD about Australia's poor handling of complaints against multinationals, particularly the serious abuses perpetrated by the businesses it engages to run its offshore detention facilities on Manus and Nauru.

We also engaged with a Government-initiated review to outline a series of improvements that should be made to the complaints system.

“For a Colombian farmer pushed off their land by an Australian mining company or a PNG community impacted by illegal logging, there are few avenues available to them to raise concerns or seek redress. The National Contact Point is supposed to serve that function, but currently it is a toothless tiger that rarely investigates and has never made a finding against an Australian company.”

–Keren Adams,
Director of Legal Advocacy

Australia Corporate Accountability Network

Working with civil society organisations, unions and academics from several universities, we played a key role in creating Australia's first civil society network on corporate accountability. The network facilitates collaborative work on campaigns, inquiries and hosts seminars and public events.

No Business in Abuse Campaign

We supported the No Business in Abuse campaign led by GetUp! that targets corporate involvement in the human rights abuses perpetrated in Australia's offshore detention camps. We jointly published a report highlighting the responsibilities of banks and investment funds that support companies operating the offshore camps.

Photo credit:
Asantha Abeysooriya, Unsplash

HOLDING AUSTRALIA TO ACCOUNT AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Our Vision

Australia should uphold the fundamental international human rights standards it has promised to comply with and should champion human rights on the world stage.



Australia on the UN Human Rights Council

We've got a seat at the table, but how will we use it?

In the lead up to Australia's election for a membership at the UN Human Rights Council, we engaged with the Australian Government to encourage positive commitments. This helped to secure Australia's commitment to finally ratify an important anti-torture treaty and to introduce modern slavery laws to reduce the risk of forced labour in the supply chains of Australian companies.

When France withdrew from the competitive election, Australia was elected unopposed and will serve on the council from 2018-2020. Australia has great potential to be a voice for decency and justice, but if we want to be a true human rights leader at the UN then we must lift our game and stand up for human rights at home and in our region.

The next three years are crucial to Australia's human rights record. We will be there holding Australia to account with staff on the ground at council sessions to influence Australia to be a strong and principled voice for human rights around the world and to highlight Australia's human rights failings at home.

Failing to Walk the Talk

Australia's deteriorating compliance with UN standards for civil and political rights

When the UN Human Rights Committee – a panel of independent experts – was tasked with assessing Australia's compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, we partnered with Kingsford Legal Centre to coordinate 56 non-government organisations to compile an authoritative report detailing a wide range of human rights problems in Australia.

We led the NGO delegation to Geneva to brief the Committee members, generating significant media attention and public scrutiny in the lead up to Australia's term on the UN Human Rights Council.

The Committee's findings were scathing of Australia's failure to comply with UN rulings and heavily criticized the Government's serious violation of international law in a number of areas.

“Australia can't continue with its head in the sand approach given the rising chorus of UN experts calling out the grave harm our deterrence-based approach our refugee policies inflict on the men, women and children that come here seeking asylum.”

–Amy Frew, Lawyer

Combatting Race Discrimination

“Racism is an ongoing and growing problem in Australia. It causes immense harm to racial and ethnic communities and threatens to tear our social fabric apart.”

–Adrienne Walters, Director of Legal Advocacy

With partners, we coordinated an NGO report and delegation when Australia's compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was reviewed by the UN. We highlighted Australia's cruelty to people seeking asylum and its continued failure to protect the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander people. This anti-racism work built on our work resisting the renewed attempts to water down our racial vilification laws. Through media advocacy, intensive briefing of politicians, resourcing other NGOs and giving evidence at two parliamentary inquiries, we helped to defend the laws once more against attack.

“The Australian Government's cruel treatment of refugees will continue to haunt and stymie Australia's efforts at the UN. It can't truly lead on human rights while it is blatantly breaching international law.”

–Emily Howie, Director of Legal Advocacy



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Pro bono support from leading law firms and barristers is crucial to our impact. Law firms we worked with over the 2016/17 financial year provided over 12,300 hours of pro bono legal work to support our work, including undertaking legal action, research, writing case summaries and seconding lawyers to us. The value of this work was over \$5.1 million. Barristers at the Victorian and NSW bars provided substantial additional pro bono support. These amounts are a testament to the extraordinary professional commitment of Australian lawyers to human rights, the rule of law and access to justice. We are incredibly grateful for this support and thank all the pro bono lawyers who worked alongside us.

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 Prue Bindon
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 Ron Merkel QC
 Ronald Webb SC
 Roshan Chaile
 Rudi Kruse
 Sarah Zeleznikow
 Sarala Fitzgerald
 Simona Gory
 Stephen Donaghue QC
 Surya Palaniappan
 Therese McCarthy
 Zelig Heger

In kind support

Thank you to the many other friends, family and organisations who provided in kind support for our Human Rights Dinners – donating auction items, agreeing to be auctioned, hosting events and much more.

OUR TEAM

Our Staff



Hugh de Kretser
Executive Director



Emily Howie
Director of
Legal Advocacy



Anna Brown
Director of
Legal Advocacy



Daniel Webb
Director of
Legal Advocacy



Ruth Barson
Director of
Legal Advocacy



Keren Adams
Director of
Legal Advocacy



Aruna Sathanapally
Director of
Legal Advocacy



Michelle Bennett
Director of
Communications



Tom Clarke
Director of
Campaigns



Adrienne Walters
Acting Director of
Legal Advocacy



Shahleena Musk
Senior Lawyer



Amy Frew
Lawyer



Lee Carnie
Lawyer



Alina Leikin
Lawyer



Arif Hussein
Lawyer



Hannah Ryan
Lawyer



Rachel Richmond
Development
Manager



Anna Fordyce
Operations
Coordinator



Alycia Gawthorne
Communications
Officer



Beau Paterson
Paralegal



Rose Hyland
Administration &
Events Officer



Rachel Ball
Director of
Advocacy
(to January 2017)



Rowan Minson
Senior Lawyer
(to August 2017)



Rachael Hambleton
Fundraising
Coordinator
(to February 2017)



Laura Wilson
Lawyer
(to October 2016)



Kara Connolly
Paralegal
(to March 2017)



Madeleine Lynch
Paralegal
(to November 2017)



**Esther Faine-
Vallantin**
Administrator
(to December 2016)

OUR BOARD

Secondee Lawyers

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King & Wood Mallesons

Kelly Butler

King & Wood Mallesons

Ivy Keane

Ashurst

Aimee Cooper

Victoria Legal Aid

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PLT student

Gayatri Nair

Volunteer

Mara Papavassiliou

Intern

Olivia Harle

Intern

Kristen Roy

Volunteer

Samantha Rayner

Volunteer event coordinator

Fiona Macrae

Volunteer event coordinator

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(Chair from 1 December 2016),
Former President of the Australian
Human Rights Commission

Ilana Atlas,
Non-executive director

Carolyn Creswell,
Founder & Managing Director,
Carman's Fine Foods

Jamie Gardiner,
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Melanie Schleiger,
Equality Law Program Manager,
Victoria Legal Aid

Fiona McLeay,
CEO,
Justice Connect

Jon Webster,
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Allens

Michael Kingston,
Solicitor (to 1 December 2016)

Advisory Committee

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

Daniel Creasey,
Head of Pro Bono & Community,
King & Wood Mallesons

Vanessa Lesnie,
Human Rights Consultant

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Julie Ligeti

Verity Quinn

Jonathon Redwood

Leon Zwier

FINANCIALS

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year ended 30 June 2017

INCOME	2017 \$	2016 \$
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Rights Unit (Including: Australian Communities Foundation; BB & A Miller Foundation; Caledonia Foundation; Collier Charitable Fund; Gandel Philanthropy; Holmes Family Foundation, Jon Webster; Myer Family Company; Nordia Foundation, Perpetual Trustees; Rae and Peter Gunn Family Foundation; Reichstein Foundation; Ron Merkel and Beth Charles; Shulu Foundation; Trawalla Foundation; Vicki Standish Family Foundation; Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation)	412,973	305,580
Asylum Seeker & Refugee Rights Unit (Including: Allen & Overy; Andrew Sisson; Australian Communities Foundation; Fair World Foundation; Grenet Foundation; Guy Campbell; Planet Wheeler Foundation)	431,550	233,196
LGBTI Rights Unit (Including: Dennis Altman; Equity Trustees - Eric Ormond Baker Charitable Fund; Gary Singer; Henry Davis York; Joe Muraca; The Myer Foundation; La Trobe University; Leonard Vary & Matt Collins; Lyn Gilbert & Tania Sorrell; South Australian Government; Terry Kennedy; The United States Embassy Canberra)	232,926	73,754
Marriage Equality Campaign	540,595	
BB & A Miller Foundation International Human Rights Grant	100,000	
The Myer Foundation Strategic Litigation Grant	88,895	85,000
Sigrd Rausing Trust Business & Human Rights Grant	61,415	
Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation	55,000	54,998
Website redevelopment: RE Ross Trust & Collier Charitable Fund	39,000	
Equity Trustees - Phyllis Connor Trust	35,576	87,000
Victorian Legal Services Board	23,226	26,735
Other Grant Income	79,454	47,586
Individual Donations	221,270	307,101
Corporate Donations	99,881	142,391
Interest	26,092	14,371
Human Rights Dinners & other events	206,481	198,616
Other Income	13,811	20,313
Total Income	2,668,145	1,596,641
EXPENDITURE		
Occupancy expenses	17,984	35,982
Operational and administration expenses	1,039,883	370,126
Employee benefits	1,355,474	987,859
Total Expenditure	2,413,341	1,393,967
Total Comprehensive Income	254,805	202,674

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2017

	2017 \$	2016 \$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,148,534	1,786,481
Trade and other receivables	44,975	121,338
Total current assets	2,193,509	1,907,819
Total non-current assets	6,691	
Total Assets	2,200,200	1,907,819
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	75,153	75,638
Provisions	138,353	113,722
Grants received in advance	1,211,147	1,215,595
Total current liabilities	1,424,653	1,404,955
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provisions	45,749	27,869
Total non-current liabilities	45,749	27,869
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,470,402	1,432,824
NET ASSETS	729,798	474,995
EQUITY		
Retained earnings	729,798	474,995
TOTAL EQUITY	729,798	474,995

This is an extract of the HRLC's audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017. For a full version visit www.hrlc.org.au



**“THE LAW CANNOT
CHANGE THE HEART,
BUT IT CAN RESTRAIN
THE HEARTLESS.”**

- MARTIN LUTHER KING JNR



BE ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY

Become a Human Rights Defender

Human rights belong to every single one of us, whoever we are and wherever we come from. They embody values like freedom, equality, respect and dignity. They are the things we all need for our wellbeing and to live a dignified life.

We believe in a future where human rights are universally understood, upheld and protected. Stand with us against inequality, discrimination and abuse. Stand up for decency, compassion and respect and become a human rights defender today.

To remain fiercely independent, the vast majority of our funding is derived from donations and philanthropic grants. Our tenacious advocacy and strategic legal action is only possible because of partnerships with people like you, who understand the importance of brave and principled human rights leadership.

Promote and protect human rights.
Support the Human Rights Law Centre.

HRLC.ORG.AU/DONATE

Support the Human Rights Law Centre

The Human Rights Law Centre is a registered Australian charity and a deductible gift recipient. All donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

- I would like to make a donation of:
- \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500
- \$1,000 \$2,500 \$5,000 \$10,000
- Other: \$ _____
- I would like to make this a monthly donation

I am interested in:

- LGBTI Rights
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Rights
- Asylum Seeker & Refugee Rights
- Democratic Freedoms
- Dignity for People in Prisons
- Women's Reproductive Rights
- UN Engagement
- Business & Human Rights
- Human Rights Act

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- Cheque

Human Rights Law Centre
Level 17, 461 Bourke Street,
Melbourne VIC 3000

- I would like to discuss leaving a gift in my Will

- I would like my support to remain anonymous

ph: 03 8636 4450

online: hrlc.org.au/donate



PRINCIPLED HUMAN RIGHTS LEADERSHIP

Since 2006 the Human Rights Law Centre has been promoting and protecting human rights in Australia and beyond with our strategic mix of legal action, advocacy, research, education and UN engagement.

This report documents some of the highlights of our work between July 2016 and December 2017 and the impact it has had delivering justice for individuals and securing changes in law, policy and practice.

The Human Rights Law Centre is fiercely independent, and we intend to keep it that way. With your support we'll take a principled stance each and every time.



Human Rights
Law Centre

Melbourne
Level 17, 461 Bourke Street,
Melbourne VIC 3000

Sydney
Level 5, 175 Liverpool Street,
Sydney NSW 2000

hrlc.org.au
ph: 03 8636 4450

ABN: 31 117 719 267