

2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT



Foreword

Liberty Victoria has a long and proud history, campaigning for civil liberties and human rights for more than 70 years. Officially known as the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties Inc, its lineage extends back to the Australian Council for Civil Liberties ('ACCL'). The ACCL was formed in Melbourne in 1936 and was determined to offer 'a means of expression to those people in all parties who believe that social progress may be achieved only in an atmosphere of liberty.'

Throughout its history, Liberty Victoria has defended the right of individuals and organisations to free speech, freedom of the press and of assembly, and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or political belief. It has operated in accord with the ACCL's original platform, working not only to defend existing civil liberties and oppose their limitation, but to campaign for the 'enlargement of these liberties.' Liberty Victoria is now one of Australia's leading civil liberties organisations.

Through its Policy and Management Committees, Liberty Victoria influences debate at a State and Federal level. We are frequently asked for comment and guidance by media, politicians, law reformers and policy makers. We have staged a number of public events.

Many committee members are fully engaged in professional careers and networked support for our work is the way of the future.

The Young Liberty for Law Reform (YLLR) initiative has expanded our reach towards younger members and students and continues to go from strength to strength.

Liberty actively makes public statements, issues media releases, contacts and negotiates with federal and state government ministers in relation to a diverse and extensive array of matters of public interest.

Liberty Victoria relies on funding raised through memberships and donations and the tireless work of volunteer committee members. Thank you to our members for their support.

With limited funding, Liberty has been fortunate to have the voluntary support and expertise of a number of people who assist us in numerous ways. Maelor Himbury deserves particular mention – he has continued to assist with our daily media links. for which we and 349 subscribers are very grateful.

We have also been greatly assisted by our team of volunteers, and in the office, by Meah Wood and Fiona Field. Thank you too to Gillian Garner, our Executive Officer and Torunn Momtazi, our Executive Assistant.

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Hon Justice Jane Dixon, our Immediate Past President until her resignation in July 2015 on her appointment as a judge of the Supreme Court.

PRESIDENT: George A Georgiou SC SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT: Jessie E Taylor VICE-PRESIDENTS: Jamie Gardiner Thomas Kane Michael Stanton PAST PRESIDENT: Professor Spencer Zifcak PATRON: The Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG 2014 - 2015 Management **2014 – 2015 Policy Committee:** Committee: Matthew Albert Kevin Childs Michael Allen Michael Cohn David Barda Aggy Kapitaniak Stewart Bayles Reece Lamshed Julian Burnside QC Torunn Momtazi Gemma Leigh-Dodds Michael Webster Lucy Maxwell Adam MacBeth **Britt Myers** Anne O'Rourke Jillian Prior **Evelyn Tadros Andrew Vincent**

Associate members:

Tim Warner

Daniel Webb

Hugo de Kock and Leanne O'Donnell

George A Georgiou SC

President



There can be little doubt that the cause of civil liberties and human rights has suffered a serious set back in recent times. There are a number of reasons that have been offered for this. Some understandable, others not. It is, however, worth pausing to reflect that once gone those rights and liberties are very difficult to claw back.

Difficult, but not impossible.

And it is with this sense of optimism that the work of Liberty Victoria must continue in 2016. First, to defend those rights and freedoms from further erosion. Second, to advocate for the restoration of those rights and freedoms lost. The work of the committees in the last 12 months has been frenetic but provides a solid base for the challenges that lie ahead.

2015 has been an extremely busy year. In January we moved to our new office in Carlton. We are extremely grateful to Michael Drapac and the Drapac Group who, for a number of years, provided us with office space and who included us in their office move earlier this year.

One of Liberty Victoria's core functions, the making of submissions to various agencies and government bodies on proposed legislative change, has seen some 25 submissions being made in the year between July 2014 and June 2015. These include submissions to the Victorian Government's review of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, the Commonwealth's Inquiry into the Australian Citizenship (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015, Adoption of children by same sex couples, Constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, to name but a few. All of the submissions are found on Liberty's website (which is at long last being revamped) and shows the hard work and dedication of our Committee members and volunteers.

Once again, this year, Liberty Victoria worked collaboratively with our interstate colleagues on a number of submissions, and with our own Young Liberty for Law Reform (YLLR) on others. This collaborative work while itself an efficient way of best using our scarce resources, has also meant that we were exposed to different views and opinions of organisations with similar goals. We hope to continue this trend in 2016.

Not all submissions were in response to proposed legislation. For example, Liberty Victoria combined with the Australian Association for Unmanned Systems to prepare a paper "The Use of Drones in Australia; An Agenda for Reform". The release of this paper attracted widespread attention and was followed up with a public seminar on the topic. We were also proud to assist YLLR with its Age Determination Report, the submission on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) asylum seekers.

A number of events were held this year aimed at raising public awareness of the importance of current human rights issues. "Beyond Bars, Reflecting on the Rights of Victoria's Prisoners" at the Wheeler Centre drew a full house. This seminar sprang from a submission prepared by Liberty Victoria and YLLR to the Victorian Ombudsman for prison reform.

In August of 2014 we were fortunate to have our Patron, Michael Kirby AC CMG give the Alan Missen Oration at the Melbourne Writers Festival. This was 28 years after Michael gave the inaugural Alan Missen Oration in 1986.

This year our guest speaker at the 2015 Alan Missen Oration was lawyer and world-renowned human rights advocate Jennifer Robinson. Jennifer gave a powerful speech on the importance of human rights, against the backdrop of the Federal government's recently introduced Border Force Act.

Operation GAG was a night of light hearted entertainment and it was great to see so many members turn up for some great comedy. Liberty was also involved in the staging of the play "The Process" at La Mama theatre, a look at detention from the perspective of a refugee.

The 2014 Voltaire Award went to inspirational recipient, Yu Lipski, courageous whistle-blower.

This year's Voltaire Award was given to Peter Greste, Mohamed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed. The Age's Michael Bachelard was guest speaker. Not long after this event Fahmy and Baher were released from their Egyptian prison. However, it is worth remembering that hundreds of journalists worldwide continue to languish in prison, simply for reporting the news.

Robert Stary spoke at our 2014 AGM. The event was very generously hosted by Colin Biggers and Paisley who have continued to support our organisation and host our monthly Policy Committee meetings. We thank them for having us here once again.

The scourge of terrorism has seen some significant legislative responses in the last year that have impacted on our rights and liberties. There will be more to come. The cruel and inhumane detention of asylum seekers on Nauru and Manus Island continues. The high

and disproportionate incarceration rates amongst this country's aboriginal population continues, as do the high numbers of prisoners in Victorian gaols.

Liberty Victoria will continue to review and question government policies and legislation that impact upon our freedoms. No right or freedom should be affected without good and proper justification. We will continue to ask whether the measure or proposed measure is necessary; whether it is proportionate; whether there is not a better alternative, and we will advocate for change when necessary.

To achieve our aims, we rely upon your support, your ideas and your views. On behalf of Liberty Victoria, I thank you for your support in 2015 and look forward to your continued support in 2016. I also express our gratitude to all of the members of our committees, volunteers, executive staff and to those who will be leaving us this year, our former President, Justice Jane Dixon, Anne O'Rourke, Michael Cohn and Michael Webster.





Young Liberty for Law Reform 2014 – 2015

YLLR: Effective, reform-oriented human rights advocacy

Young Liberty for Law Reform is a program of Liberty Victoria that offers early-career civil liberties advocates the opportunity to work with senior Liberty Victoria members to engage in practical and reform-oriented advocacy to defend and extend human rights in Australia.



YLLR volunteers sign up for a 12-month program.

They are introduced to the skills needed to be strategic law reform advocates through a targeted training program. Volunteers then design and undertake projects which aim to effect systemic change in Liberty Victoria's key priority areas. In 2014-2015, volunteers worked in groups focused on:

- · refugee and asylum seeker rights;
- criminal justice;
- privacy; and
- equality and government accountability.

They are supervised by members of Liberty Victoria's Policy Committee.

Improved program

The period of July 2014 – June 2015 was an important period of growth and development for the YLLR program. This period saw the conclusion of first 12-month YLLR program in March 2015 and the commencement of the second year-long program in April 2015.

The YLLR program is run by a Steering Committee, and this year we welcomed new members and said goodbye and thank you to previous members who had driven successful programs in 2013-2014. In March 2015, Louise Brown took over from Lucy Maxwell as Chair of the YLLR program.

Four key improvements were made to the 2015 program:

- introducing a project checklist to guide volunteers through the steps of effective strategic advocacy;
- launching a re-vamped training program, led by Eliot Olivier;
- reducing the number of volunteers to improve the program experience; and
- devising and implementing a communications strategy, headed by YLLR Communications Director Sophie Fitzpatrick.

Launch of 2015 program

The 2015 YLLR program was launched on 3 April 2015, and began with a series of training workshops on effective and impactful strategic law reform advocacy. These training sessions were:

- 1. An Introduction to Strategic Advocacy presented by Matthew Albert and Daniel Webb.
- 2. Identifying Stakeholders presented by Eliot Oliver.
- 3. Media and Communications presented by Tom Clarke and Dana Affleck.











Through these sessions, volunteers discussed identifying and developing law reform projects, analysing human rights issues, and how to effectively communicate messages to a target audience using a range of law reform strategies and platforms. Training was well-attended and benefited the volunteers as they began to develop their project plans.

YLLR Team

The following people were members of the YLLR Steering Committee between July 2014 and June 2015: Elizabeth Beaumont, Louise Brown, Lea Christopher, Sophie Fitzpatrick, Zoe Kent, Gemma Leigh-Dodds, Brittany Myers, Lucy Maxwell, Anna Saunders, Dale Straughen.

The YLLR Steering Committee thanks the supervisors of the 2014 and 2015 programs: Matthew Albert, Stewart Bayles, Michael Griffith, Adam McBeth, Andrew Roberts, Michael Stanton, Evelyn Tadros, Daniel Webb

YLLR advocacy to defend and extend human rights

From July 2014 - June 2015, YLLR volunteers produced a large range of law reform projects on key human rights issues in Australia across a diverse range of formats. Highlights of this work include:

- FairGo4Refugees
 campaign and produced a video
 calling for funding for legal
 representation for asylum seekers
 to be reinstated after sweeping cuts
 in March 2014 by the Federal
 Government. The campaign was
 supported by leading Australian
 refugee organisations including the
 Asylum Seeker Resource Centre,
 Refugee & Immigration Legal
 Centre and Refugee Advice &
 Casework Service.
- ➤ A Midsumma Event on Australia's treatment of LGBTI asylum seekers. Australia currently processes, and proposes to resettle, all asylum seekers who arrive by boat in PNG where consensual gay sex is criminalized. Find out more about this issue in the interviews with YLLR on BentTV (Channel 31) and on RightNow Radio on 3CR.
- A YLLR volunteer wrote an article in Spook Magazine on the serious privacy implications of the mandatory data retention laws.
- A submission to the Victorian Ombudsman's investigation into the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners in Victoria. The submission considered the effect of security regimes, such as solitary confinement, on the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners, and the vital role of educational programs in prison to the Victorian Ombudsman's investigation into the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners in Victoria. Many of Liberty Victoria's recommendations were picked up in the Ombudsman's report.
- YLLR released a report 'The Benefit of the Doubt: Improving the procedures for determining the age of asylum seeker children', reported on by Ben Doherty in The Guardian.

Keep an eye out for YLLR's work through the Facebook page and the Liberty Victoria website.

Treasurer's Report

VICTORIAN COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES INCORPORATED ABN 23 236 210 735

TREASURER'S REPORT - 2015

A deficit of \$9,229 was made for the year compared with a surplus of \$9,464 in 2014. The underlying result was actually very similar to the prior year, given that we received a one-off amount of \$20,000 in 2014 from the Wolfgang Sievers exhibition. It should also be noted that if we continue to make deficits, as has been budgeted for 2016, the cash reserves of the organisation will continue to be depleted unless we received additional income, whether that be from new memberships, grants, donations or additional events.

Members funds totalled \$87,260 as at 30 June 2015 (\$96,489 as at 30 June 2014).

Current membership as at end of June 2015 was 299 members. Note that we had 292 members in June 2014, 273 members in June 2013 and 288 members in June 2012.

I would like to also thank Michael Drapac for providing rent free office space at his premises in North Melbourne and Carlton and Gillian Garner and Torunn Momtazi who do an outstanding job organising everything and certainly make my task easier.

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Income		
Memberships	15,080	13,465
Donations	1,914	7,169
Events	38,077	38,202
Sievers exhibition	-	20,000
Investment income	9,136	1,116
Other income	100	115
	64,307	80,067
	01,001	00,007
Expenditure	05.400	04.007
Events	25,189	21,897
Bank charges	455	421
Office costs	4,582	4,345
Salaries & wages	41,315	41,379
Other costs	1,995	2,561
	73,536	70,603
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(9,229)	\$9,464
Retained earnings - beginning of year	96,489	87,025
Retained earnings - end of year	\$87,260	\$96,489
reduited carrings and or year	407,200	\$50,100
	2045	2044
	2015	2014
Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2015	\$	2014 \$
Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2015 Assets		
Assets	\$	\$
Assets Westpac general account	\$ 4,297	\$ 2,876 437
Assets Westpac general account Petty cash Colonial investment account	4,297 163	2,876 437 50,583
Assets Westpac general account Petty cash Colonial investment account Westpac high interest account	4,297 163 83,568	\$ 2,876 437 50,583 39,916
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Neale Meagher Treasurer

Submissions and Policy Work

Inquiry into Recognition of Foreign Marriages Bill 2014

31 July 2014

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee

The goal of removing discrimination against same-sex couples from the Marriage Act 1961 is one Liberty wholeheartedly endorses. We have consistently taken this principled view in submissions to the Senate since 2009. We continue to hold this view, and therefore consider that the present Bill does not go far enough, as it does not attempt to reverse the discrimination against couples other than "a man and a woman" that the Marriage Amendment Act 2004 introduced into domestic law.

Inquiry into the National Security Legislation Amendment Bill (No 1) 2014

7 August 2014

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

Liberty Victoria and councils for civil liberties (CCLs) across Australia made a joint submission on aspects of the National Security Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2014, with a supplementary submission a few days later at the request of the committee.

The submission stated: "The CCLs accept that ASIO and other intelligence and security organisations must have the powers and resources necessary for the protection of national security including protection against the very real threat of terrorist activity in Australia - consistent with democratic values. We support the modernisation and appropriate streamlining of national security legislation including the ASIO Act 1979 to ensure that the agencies are not hindered by outdated legislation in the face of massive and fast moving technological change particularly in the communications arena.

However, where the proposed changes expand existing ASIO powers and/or weaken balancing safeguards and protections our endorsement is dependent upon persuasive evidence justifying such changes and clear demonstration that rights and liberties are not being unwarrantedly or disproportionately encroached upon. In our view, such persuasive evidence has not been provided to justify some of the new or enhanced security powers being proposed in this Bill."

Liberty would particularly like to note and express our gratitude to members of Liberty Victoria's Young Liberty for Law Reform, who provided research and assistance in preparing this submission.

Submission on the Revised Guide to Information Security

27 August 2014

The Privacy Commissioner, Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

We support the initiative behind the Revised Guide to Information Security, which seeks to provide guidance to entities regarding their obligations under Australian Privacy Principle 11 (APP 11).

In our view the draft Guide is successful in providing some practical guidance on how APP entities may comply with their obligations under APP 11. This is to be commended. Liberty, however, is of the view that there are a number of shortcomings, which are discussed in the submission.

Liberty believes that personal information should only be collected for a legitimate purpose authorised by law. Once collected, personal information should be destroyed as soon as it is no longer required. If personal information is only collected when absolutely necessary, it is less likely to fall into the wrong hands. If it is destroyed when it is no longer required, it is less likely to become incorrect and out of date. The spread of new technologies presents new threats to privacy; the legal environment in which such technologies are spreading should discourage the misuse of personal information.

Sentencing Amendment (Emergency Workers) Bill 2014

1 September 2014

Victorian Legislative Assembly

This Bill introduces mandatory immediate imprisonment and mandatory minimum nonparole periods for certain offences against emergency workers on duty.

While supporting the need to protect emergency workers, these provisions will prevent judicial officers from exercising mercy in cases that do not fit within one of the prescribed "special reasons" (for example, where an offender, without a prior criminal history, may have acted out of character and/or when drug affected, and is otherwise a law-abiding citizen in gainful employment and a provider for his or her family). They will also provide a disincentive for offenders to plead guilty (and also provide an incentive for offenders to appeal), which will only put further pressure on Courts which are stretched to breaking point, and see emergency workers having to be drawn into protracted court proceedings as witnesses.

The effect of this Bill is to change the key decision making from the judiciary to the executive, whereby the decision will rest with prosecutors as to whether to proceed with charges that have mandatory sentences or proceed with (and/or resolve to) some lesser alternative charge that does not result in mandatory gaol. This may well result in inconsistent, personality driven decision-making.

The Bill constitutes yet another step towards mandatory and baseline sentencing as enacted or proposed to be enacted by a number of other Bills and Acts. Taken together, this legislation constitutes a significant and radical shift in the role of the legislature and the courts when it comes to criminal punishment.

Sex Offenders Registration Amendment Bill 2014

4 September 2014

Victorian Legislative Assembly

A major problem with this Bill is that it sees the Sex Offenders Registry further move from being a proactive database to assist crime prevention to a responsive form of data collection. The Registry becomes a vast "warehouse" of information that may be used after a crime has been committed to assist with a prosecution rather than providing a targeted and refined database of information that can be used to protect the community and prevent crimes from being committed in the first place.

The Bill fails to act on the VLRC call to make the Register stronger by sharpening its focus, and instead greatly expands the amount of information that all registrants must disclose, which only further weakens its focus and diminishes its effectiveness.

Liberty Victoria supports a system of registration for sexual offenders who pose a significant risk to the sexual safety of the community. However, Liberty Victoria is strongly opposed to the system of mandatory registration under the SORA which denies the capacity of judicial officers to ensure that those who are placed on the register do pose such a significant risk.

Submission: Medical Services (Dying with Dignity) Exposure Draft Bill 2014

5 September 2014

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

Liberty believes that a person's decisions about death and dying are among the most important, if not the most important, that any and every individual will make. Consistent with the organisation's commitment to civil liberty, we believe that an individual should be accorded the maximum feasible scope for exercising her moral, ethical, personal and medical discretion when faced with dilemmas and decisions surrounding the end of her life.

It follows that state and society should impose upon these individual discretions to the least extent possible. In this arena, perhaps more than in any other, it should not be the function of the law to force competing moral frameworks or societal mores upon an individual facing death. The choice that an individual with a terminal illness desires sincerely to make concerning her means of ending life should remain fundamentally her own. These are not decisions that society, through law or any other means, should make on an affected individual's behalf.

The only exception to this general rule, on the other hand, should be that the law may properly set down conditions designed to ensure first, that a person with terminal illness is in a position to provide informed consent to the administration of relevant medical services and, secondly, to ensure that the person is not placed under undue pressure by others to adopt one course or another.

Sentencing Amendment (Coward's Punch Manslaughter and Other Matters) Bill 2014

15 September 2014

Victorian Legislative Assembly

Liberty Victoria was strongly opposed to this Bill which seeks to enact mandatory sentencing (a 10 year mandatory minimum non-parole period for manslaughter in circumstances of a "coward's punch/ strike" and/or in circumstances of "gross violence").

The Bill is ambiguous and will need to be tested in the Superior Courts at great public expense. Such ambiguity provides a further disincentive for accused persons to plead guilty.

This legislation all combines to whittle away the power of the Courts in a manner never before seen in Victoria. Of course while the Courts honour the convention not to criticise Parliament, it must be recognised that this represents a significant shift in power and an attack on judicial discretion.

Joint submission: Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill

3 October 2014

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

Following the joint submission on aspects of the National Security Legislation Amendment Bill (No.1) 2014, a second tranche of national security legislation was announced on 24 September, the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill 2014. Liberty Victoria joined other civil liberties groups to comment on the Bill, highlighting the lack of time for proper debate and discussion of the Bill, given its dramatic impact on human rights and calling for an extension of the review process. Of particular concern:

- The renewal of extraordinary ASIO powers, stop and search powers, preventative
 detention for people not accused of any crime, and control orders, for a further 10
 years. These were due to expire in 2015 or 2016 under existing sunset provisions
 and experts, including the government's Independent National Security Legislation
 Monitor, recommended that they not be renewed.
- The creation of "no go zones", making it a criminal offence to travel to any place declared by the Foreign Minister as such, subject to a traveller having to provide evidence that the trip complied with listed legitimate purposes.
- The dramatic broadening of the scope of existing offences of travelling to a foreign country to engage in a hostile activity. The definition of "hostile activity" has been expanded to include "subverting society" and a range of other new activities.
- The power to cancel welfare payments on security grounds, without even having to give the affected person any reasons.

Crimes Amendment (Sexual Offences and Other Matters) Bill 2014

8 October 2014

Victorian Legislative Assembly

Liberty Victoria, in collaboration with the Criminal Bar Association, previously made a submission to the Department of Justice Review of Sexual Offences upon which this Bill is based.

Four key reforms raised by the Bill are:

- changing the mens rea of rape and sexual assault to an objective test and disregarding the impact of self-induced intoxication on an accused person's belief in consent;
- introducing a "course of conduct offence";
- · removing time limits for commencing certain historical offences; and
- introducing new "sexting" offences.

Liberty Victoria had a number of concerns and is strongly opposed to a number of aspects of the Bill.

Inquiry - Migration Amendment (Character and General Visa Cancellation) Bill 2014

28 October 2014

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

Liberty Victoria endorsed the submission made by the New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties to the Inquiry into the Migration Amendment (Character and General Visa Cancellation) Bill 2014.

Of particular concern to Liberty is the increase in the Minister's personal powers under s 501, which have no merits review. We see this as contrary to the rule of law. In relation to sections 109 and 116, we question why it is necessary to deny people merits review in this non-criminal arena. In this area there is no risk to the Australian community. The capacity to overturn decisions of the Refugee Review Tribunal and the Migration Review Tribunal, which would be in addition to that already available in relation to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, is a worrying trend. It makes a mockery of merits review, effectively taking decisions away from these specialist bodies.

The new provision, s 501CA, automatic prison cancellation for citizens serving time in prison, raises a question whether this might be perceived as punishment, which is outside the immigration power.

Liberty also is concerned by the introduction of red notice provisions in new section 501(6)(h). Liberty's experience is that Interpol notices are often unreliable and sometimes come from countries with questionable human rights records, where the basis of the alleged charge might be political. Further, the inclusion of this provision as a ground for not passing the character test is inconsistent, in that Australia does not recognise a red notice as a basis for arrest.

Inquiry - Freedom of Information Amendment (Administrative Arrangements) Bill 2014

6 November 2014

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

For the following reasons, Liberty Victoria opposed this Bill:

The Bill seeks to repeal entirely the scheme for Freedom of Information (FOI) Review set in place in 2010. It is a return, therefore, to a system of external review that had been found wanting only four years ago. The 2010 administrative reforms sought to achieve a number of very important objectives, each of which were designed to facilitate the public's right of access to governmental information.

The Bill repeals the administrative arrangements sought to achieve a number of worthwhile objectives.

We note that the comprehensive review of the FOI Act, conducted very recently by Allan Hawke AO, concluded that the Office of the Information Commissioner had been a valuable addition to the manner in which the legislation was implemented.

Regrettably, the only feasible rationale for this backward Bill is that it is designed to return the control of access to governmental information, and in particular politically and administratively sensitive information, to those in whose interests secrecy lies.

Children, Youth and Families (Disclosure of Youth Offending) Bill 2014

5 December 2014

Department of Justice, State Government Victoria

None of the reforms proposed by this Bill are necessary. They reflect an erosion of the longstanding, important and internationally-recognised principle that children who offend must be protected from publicity in all but very rare circumstances. Liberty Victoria stands against that erosion.

Criminal Investigation Powers Bill Exposure Draft

11 December 2014

Criminal Law Review, Department of Justice, State Government Victoria

Liberty Victoria supports the intention to modernise and streamline criminal investigation powers, and to consolidate them into a new standalone piece of legislation. However, Liberty raises significant concerns around a number of changes the *Criminal Investigation Powers Bill* would make to investigative powers. Liberty has significant concerns around -

- a. The expansion of powers of arrest.
- b. The expansion of the power of police to enter premises to arrest without warrant.

- c. New provisions for the use of force to effect an arrest or prevent the commission of a crime.
- d. The lowering of the threshold for the taking of fingerprints and DNA samples.
- e. The introduction of a regime for covert search warrants without sufficient safeguards in place to protect the rights and privacy of individual members of the community.

Liberty welcomes the introduction of definitions for 'forensic relevance', 'incapable person', 'independent person', and 'suspect'. These definitions are appropriate and clear. Liberty welcomes changes to sections 457 to 463B of the *Crimes Act* whereby persons who have been arrested but not convicted of offences are not referred to as 'offenders'.

Ombudsman's investigation into the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners in Victoria

31 December 2014

Victorian Ombudsman - Prison Consultation

The preparation of this submission by Liberty Victoria to Victorian Ombudsman was supported by the YLLR Criminal Justice Pods.

This submission first considered how the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) (the 'Charter') is relevant to the provision of rehabilitation and reintegration programs for prisoners. As Corrections Victoria is a public authority, it is accountable pursuant to s 38(1) of Charter, with the consequence that it is it unlawful for it or its officers to act in a way that is incompatible with a human right or, in making a decision, to fail to give proper consideration to a relevant human right.

Prisoner rehabilitation not only benefits the individual – it makes the community a safer place. Striking the right balance between just punishment and rehabilitation is undeniably difficult. However, Liberty Victoria is concerned that the right balance has not been struck. Additionally, we fear increasingly punitive sentencing laws may be making the community less safe, particularly as prisoners do not have sufficient access to rehabilitative and transitional supports.

It is vital that resourcing for rehabilitation and reintegration services increases proportionately to the prison population. If an offender could potentially benefit from transition services, offence-specific rehabilitation programs or educational opportunities, any failure to provide those services is an indictment on the system. Additionally, regard must be had to the particular characteristics of vulnerable prisoners, notably women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners.

Michael Stanton, Liberty Victoria Vice President, was interviewed by 3CR on 5 February on prisoner rehabilitation in the context of the Ombudsman's investigation into the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners in Victoria particularly the issue of overcrowding and prisoners not having access to rehabilitative courses and education.

The Age featured an article building upon the submission work focusing on key tenets of Liberty Victoria's submission - particularly regarding prisoner access to education via the internet. Importantly, the article draws sharp attention to the human rights of prisoners.

Joint Submission: Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment (Data Retention) Bill 2014 Inquiry

20 January 2015

Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

The joint submission by Liberty Victoria, New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties (NSWCCL), Queensland, South Australian and Australian Councils for Civil Liberties warned that the Act is open to abuse because information can be obtained without a warrant or any independent oversight.

Liberty also took part in the public hearing, attending with NSWCCL.

Joint Submission: Independent National Security Legislation Monitor (Improved Oversight and Resourcing) Bill 2014

10 February 2015

Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee

A further joint submission by CCLs supported this Bill which seeks to preserve and enhance the role of the Independent Security Legislation Monitor through amendment of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act 2010.

Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

9 February 2015

Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Liberty made a submission into the enquiry into steps required for a successful referendum on constitutional recognition of Australia's indigenous population. The YLLR Equality Pod, under the guidance of Liberty's Dr Adam McBeth, submitted a report that outlined Liberty Victoria's position on key aspects of the proposed constitutional changes, as suggested by both the Expert Panel Report on Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians and the Committee itself in a 2014 Progress Report.

The Liberty Report explored the issue of constitutional recognition of Australia's indigenous peoples within the context of international human rights law, emphasising the current inconsistencies in the Constitution and the substantive protections that could be incorporated into constitutional recognition to better adhere to international legal obligations. The Report then used this discussion to argue for particular recommendations concerning the wording and timing of the proposed referendum. These recommendations include:

- That section 25 and section 51(xxvi) of the Constitution be repealed;
- That a section 51A be inserted into the Constitution that gives Parliament the power to make laws with respect to the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

- peoples, and that 'benefit' be defined with reference to 'an ordinary reasonable member of the community for whom the benefit is intended';
- That a prohibition against racial discrimination be inserted into the Constitution that applies to federal, state and territory governments; and
- That a referendum take place at or shortly after the next federal election in 2016, provided sufficient consultation and awareness-raising occurs in the meantime.

The Liberty Report acknowledges that while constitutional recognition in itself will not rectify past discriminatory laws and practices, it will hopefully contribute to the future reconciliation of the peoples of Australia in the spirit of equality, recognition and respect.

Inquiry into the Criminal Code Amendment (Animal Protection) Bill 2015

18 March 2015

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

While Liberty Victoria is broadly supportive of measures aimed at protecting animals against acts of malicious cruelty, we considered the Bill deeply flawed and misguided and opposed the Criminal Code Amendment (Animal Protection) Bill 2015 in its entirety. The submission was largely the work of Karan Raghavan with assistance from Liberty Policy Committee members.

Some of the major objections to the Bill include:

- The 'failure to report' offence was drafted in a way which in fact targets persons seeking to expose and prevent acts of malicious cruelty to animals, whilst excluding from its operation those who are most likely to be involved in, or a witness to, animal cruelty. This seriously undermines the claim that the Bill is concerned with protecting animal welfare.
- The failure to report offence impinges unnecessarily on free speech and freedom
 of the press by criminalising the methods used by investigative journalists, activists
 and whistleblowers seeking to expose acts of malicious cruelty to animals, and
 potentially stifling debate on important issues of public policy.
- The failure to report provisions unjustifiably reverse the onus of proof in relation to critical elements of the offence.
- The elements of the failure to report offence are illogically defined, and are likely to result in absurd and unjust outcomes.
- There are a number of existing criminal offences which deal with conduct of the type covered by the interfering with animal enterprises offences. No explanation has been given as to why these existing offences are inadequate.
- The interfering with animal enterprise offences are extraordinarily broad, and will capture conduct which goes far beyond what the legislature could possibly have intended.

Review to Permit Adoption by Same-sex Couples under Victorian Law

31 March 2015

Department of Premier and Cabinet: Adoption by Same Sex Couples Review

Liberty Victoria congratulated the Government on the terms of reference of the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Review to Permit Adoption by Same-sex Couples under Victorian law, noting that they emphasise the best interests of the child, in conformity with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, and that they concentrate on removing the discrimination against same-sex couples in the current law. Both goals mutually reinforce, and cannot be separated, so that the reform the Government intends the review to develop will amply enhance human rights.

Inquiry into the Copyright Amendment (Online Infringement) Bill 2015

21 April 2015

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

Due to the extremely short time frame for submissions, Liberty Victoria endorsed the recommendations of the Law Institute of Victoria.

Section 35P of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979 Inquiry

21 April 2015

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security on the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor (INSLM).

Liberty Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australian and Australian Councils for Civil Liberties (CCLs) made a joint submission to the inquiry which sought public submissions on the potential impact on journalists by reason of the operation of section 35P of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979 concerning offences for the disclosure of information relating to a 'special intelligence operation'.

In our view the impact of s 35P cannot be assessed in isolation from other provisions in the ASIO Act and other related legislation. A serious effort by Government to protect a free and robust press in Australia would require a broader review of the cumulative impact of counter-terrorism and national security legislation on journalists – as well as the adequacy of whistleblower protection provided by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013.

For the purpose of this review on s 35P, comment was made on only the related special intelligence operations provision of the ASIO Act and the recent mandatory data retention amendment to the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979.

While we regard it as a major issue, we expressed concern at the exclusive focus on the impact of s 35P on journalists. Persons other than journalists will obviously be affected by

these offences. It would not be an adequate response therefore, to develop strong protections for journalists and ignore the impact on others.

The CCLs reaffirmed their strong opposition to the concept of the SIO regime and argued for its repeal. The repeal of the s35P offences flows logically from this position. But even if the SIO is maintained (hopefully more tightly defined and with stronger safeguards), the 5 CCLs would argue for the repeal of s35P offences as unnecessary, draconian and dangerous for our democratic well-being.

While we understand that it is likely that these provisions will be maintained – hopefully with some strong amendments to counter their chilling effect, we affirmed our intention to maintain our advocacy for their repeal and the repeal or significant amendment of other exceptional counter-terrorism and national security laws which cumulatively are eroding important accountability mechanisms, freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

Crimes Legislation Amendment (Powers, Offences and Other Measures) Bill 2015

6 May 2015

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

Liberty Victoria is deeply concerned about the following aspects of the Bill:

- 1. Making recklessness the fault element for attempted offences against Part 9.1 of the *Criminal Code Act* 1995 (Cth) ("the Criminal Code");
- 2. Removing the "intent to manufacture" element from border controlled precursor offences in ss 307.11 to 307.13 of the Criminal Code;
- 3. Creating being "knowingly concerned" as an additional form of criminal responsibility under s 11.2 of the Criminal Code;
- 4. Introducing mandatory sentencing with regard to firearms trafficking offences;
- 5. Restricting the use of recognizance release orders;
- 6. Further abrogating the right to freedom from self-incrimination in AUSTRAC matters; and
- 7. Placing a reverse burden of proof on accused persons with regard to the forced marriage offence.

THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT: The case for improving the age determination procedures of asylum seeker children

Report

May 2015

This project began in response to alarming reports about age determination procedures adopted by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. The information gathered, particularly from lawyers practicing in refugee law, revealed gaps in the way in which age determinations were taking place, with repeated reports of age determinations being made by unqualified officials without reliance on substantive evidence.

'Age determination' is the process by which a person's age is assessed. In the immigration context, it refers to the processes used by the country receiving asylum seekers to determine whether a person is a minor or an adult. In Australia, the role of assessing the age of children is performed by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (the Department).

The decision about whether or not an asylum seeker is a child or an adult has important implications on the way in which they are treated through the refugee determination process. The most pertinent of those implications, for the time being, is whether the asylum seeker is detained on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea or in the more 'family friendly' facilities on Nauru.

This report was produced by Young Liberty for Law Reform, with support of Liberty Policy Committee members.

The Use of Drones in Australia: An Agenda for Reform

Report

7 May 2015

Liberty Victoria and the unmanned systems industry are seeking answers to such questions as: is it legal for a neighbour to fly a drone over your backyard? Can you stop someone filming you from above at the beach?

To mark Privacy Awareness Week, Liberty Victoria and the Australian Association for Unmanned Systems (AAUS) detailed plans for reform in order to resolve these questions and tackle growing concern about the right to privacy at a time of increased private drone use.

In a paper called The Use of Drones in Australia: An Agenda for Reform, we call on state and territory governments to introduce laws that balance the beneficial uses of drone technology with the need to protect Australians against harmful surveillance.

As stated by Liberty Victoria Vice President Jessie Taylor: "The regulatory landscape in Australia is piecemeal and ill-equipped to deal with emerging surveillance technologies such as drones. The law is struggling to catch up with these developments."

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Experience of Law Enforcement and Justice Services Inquiry

3 June 2015

Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee

Liberty Victoria fully endorsed the submissions of the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS), the National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (NFVPLS) and the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria (FVPLS). In doing so, Liberty acknowledged the unique position Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations hold in the provision of legal services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

Liberty Victoria acknowledged that those organisations providing frontline legal services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are best placed to address the terms of reference. It is the knowledge and expertise of these organisations that should guide policy and law reform in respect of law and justice issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Liberty Victoria supports the proposition that an urgent increase of funding is required to service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in respect of legal needs, access to civil, family law and criminal law services and to support services that will assist in reducing contact with the justice system and will enable diversion from prisons.

An urgent reform is sought in Victoria in respect of sentencing options and post release transitional programs.

Deaths of Recently Released Prisoners

15 June 2015

Minister for Corrections, Department of Justice and Regulation Victoria

Young Liberty for Law Reform provided research and assistance in drafting a letter to the Minister, drawing his attention to the hidden toll of preventable deaths among recently released ex-prisoners, and requesting that he commission research into this issue.

It is the view of Liberty Victoria and YLLR that the Victorian Government has a duty of care, not only to ensure the welfare and safety of prisoners, but also to facilitate their transition back into the community and to reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

While the current Government has signalled its intention to move to stabilize the Victorian corrections system, with increased funding for rehabilitation and education for prisoners, the issue of preventable deaths of post-release prisoners and the alarmingly low levels of support for prisoners post-release can no longer be ignored.

Liberty Victoria called on the Victorian Government to examine the increased mortality rate of post-release prisoners, and to address it. Reluctance to do so would be false economy. Due to the significant burden that post-release issues place on our health and criminal justice systems, investment in re-integration makes sound economic, as well as social policy.

Review of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)

27 June 2015

Attorney-General, Department of Justice and Regulation Victoria

Liberty Victoria's position in relation to each of the matters addressed in our 2010 submission remains unchanged. The Charter should provide a right to clear, simple and effective judicial remedies for breach of the Charter rights, including a right to claim damages.

Liberty submitted that all public authorities, including all entities established by statutory provisions that have functions of a public nature, should be bound by the operation and

effect of the Charter. It is submitted that there should not be exceptions that enable public authorities to act incompatibly with the Charter and/or fail to give proper consideration to a Charter right. It is submitted that religious bodies should not be above the Charter.

Liberty Victoria understands that the Charter has been under-utilised in the protection of rights, particularly in criminal law proceedings. The value of the Charter is diminished or eroded if, for practical or pragmatic reasons, those whose rights have been (or might have been) violated are discouraged from relying on the Charter to seek a remedy or relief. The Charter must be accessible, including to those charged with criminal offences.

The Charter can be improved. To further fulfil its purpose as an instrument that promotes a culture of human rights, tolerance, respect and dignity, it should include additional rights. It should provide for judicial remedies. It should reduce the barriers that discourage the pursuit of Charter litigation. Each of those goals is consistent with the contemporary values and aspirations of our community. This review can promote those goals. A further review might serve to create an impression that the Charter is transitional.

Liberty Victoria encourages Victoria's Parliament to grasp the nettle and take the opportunity provided by this review to improve the Charter. Those necessary improvements should not be delayed to a later time following a later review.

Press Releases and Media

Citizenship-stripping plan plays into the hands of extremists, says Liberty Victoria Press Release – May 26, 2015

What's wrong with our treatment of LGBTI asylum seekers? Part 2

Liberty Victoria in the News - May 27, 2015

Liberty President on Law Week, drones & let's get smarter about ways of preventing crimes

Liberty Victoria in the News - May 14, 2015

The Use of Drones in Australia: An Agenda for Reform @3CR 14 May

Liberty Victoria in the News - May 14, 2015

Drones and privacy: Unlikely partners call on Australia to get ahead of the technology horizon during Privacy Week

Press Release - May 3, 2015

Police use controversial anti-terror powers to detain teen terror suspect

Liberty Victoria in the News - April 20, 2015

What's wrong with our treatment of LGBTI asylum seekers? YLLR @RightNowRadio

Liberty Victoria in the News - April 16, 2015

What's wrong with our treatment of LGBTI asylum seekers? BentTVAustralia

Liberty Victoria in the News - April 16, 2015

Liberty Victoria applauds repeal of discriminatory law

Press Release - April 13, 2015

Government knew of abuse on Nauru months before it acted, staff to allege

Liberty Victoria in the News - March 31, 2015

Sector leaders unite to call on Government to reinstate access to justice for asylum seekers

Press Release - March 31, 2015

Open Letter to ALP Senators - data retention

Press Release - March 19, 2015

Resources for police, not harsh unfair laws, says rights group

Press Release - March 17, 2015

PM's attack on UN torture report demeans Australia

Press Release - March 11, 2015

ID scanners to be trialled at popular Stonnington nightclubs despite privacy concerns

Liberty Victoria in the News - March 6, 2015

Internet access for prisoners a 'human right that could cut reoffending'

Liberty Victoria in the News - February 26, 2015

Prisoners need internet access for their education, human rights group Liberty Victoria says

Press Release - February 25, 2015

Liberty Victoria in support of AHRC and Prof G Triggs

Press Release - February 25, 2015

Mornings with Jonathon Kendall: Federal Government plans new anti-terror measures

Liberty Victoria in the News - February 24, 2015

Judy-Ann & Company: PSO Segment

Liberty Victoria in the News - February 19, 2015

Numbers up - PSOs check commuters' train tickets ... and car registrations

Liberty Victoria in the News - February 17, 2015

Maribyrnong detention centre: Growing 'culture of excessive force'

Liberty Victoria in the News - February 14, 2015

Victoria Police launch internal investigation into use of capsicum spray on teenager after fare evasion

Liberty Victoria in the News - February 12, 2015

Scrap Abbott's 'snoopers' charter, says human rights group

Press Release - January 22, 2015

Charlie Hebdo and Freedom of Speech in Australia

Liberty Victoria in the News - Jan 15, 2015

Liberty Victoria Statement following the passing of the Migration and Maritime Powers Legislation Amendment (Resolving the Asylum Legacy Caseload) Bill 2014

Press Release - December 10, 2014

Independent police complaints authority sought after prisoner's 'distressing' death

Press Release - December 9, 2014

Liberty Victoria welcomes new President

Press Release - November 24, 2014

More jail means more violence, Liberty Victoria warns

Press Release - November 23, 2014

Police gun, baton use rises as officers face more drug-fuelled violence

Liberty Victoria in the News - November 17, 2014

Don't rush through unnecessary counter-terror laws that erode democratic rights and freedoms

Press Release - October 20, 2014

Foreign fighter laws cut freedom of movement and undermine presumption of innocence, says Liberty Victoria

Press Release - October 7, 2014

Solicitors face tighter caps after Legal Aid confirms funding for serious criminal trials

Liberty Victoria in the News - September 25, 2014

Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill

Press Release - September 24, 2014

Populist law and order agenda sees courts lose power

Press Release - September 4, 2014

All in the family - President of Liberty Victoria, Jane Dixon QC wins Senior Barrister Award

Liberty Victoria in the News - August 12, 2014

Federal anti-terror move unwarranted, says Liberty Victoria

Press Release - August 7, 2014

Voltaire Award Recipient Yu Lipski & Reproductive Rights with Ronli Sifris // Right Now August Podcast

Liberty Victoria in the News - August 8, 2014

Free speech advocates launch attack

Liberty Victoria in the News - August 5, 2014

Asylum seeker issues must be raised and fought in court, says human rights lawyer Julian Burnside

Liberty Victoria in the News - July 25, 2014

Civil liberties councils demand scrutiny of national security legislation

Press Release - July 15, 2014

Events



Saturday, 9 August 2014 San Remo Ballroom

Voltaire Award Dinner 2014: Yu Lipski

Friday, 22 August 2014

Deakin Edge, Federation Square

Alan Missen Oration 2014:

Michael Kirby

at Melbourne Writers Festival

Wednesday, 10 September 2014
Human Rights Law Centre
Strategic Advocacy
Young Liberty for Law Reform
workshop



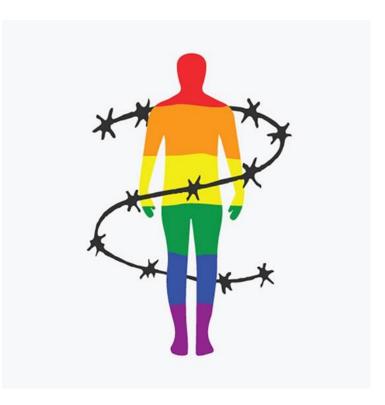
Friday, 7 November 2014

So you think you can trivia?

The Great Northern Hotel, Carlton North

Young Liberty for Law Reform fundraiser

Wednesday, 4 – 15 February 2015
Carlton Courthouse Theatre
The Process. A Play About Refugees in
Five Dubious Acts
By Ian Robinson



Wednesday, 20 May 2015 ACMI, Federation Square

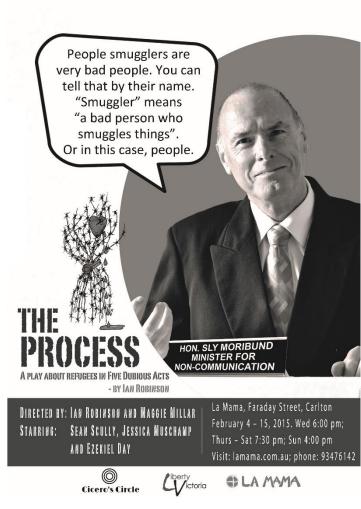
Pervert Park

Human Rights Arts and Film Festival

Wednesday, 1 July 2015 The Wheeler Centre

Beyond Bars: Reflecting on the Rights of

Victoria's Prisoners



Thursday, 5 February 2015 Northcote Town Hall

Midsumma Festival: LGBTI Asylum

Seekers, No Pacific Solution

Young Liberty for Law Reform



Collaborations

Liberty has sought actively to collaborate with like-minded organisations to maximise the impact and effects of its advocacy program. In the past year these have included:

- The New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties and interstate civil liberties bodies
- The Victorian Bar and the Criminal Bar Association
- The Law Institute of Victoria
- The Human Rights Law Resource Centre
- The Castan Centre for Human Rights Law
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- Rationalist Society
- Global Reconciliation Inc
- The Alan Missen Foundation
- The Federation of Community Legal Centres
- · Amnesty International
- Get Up
- Melbourne Unitarian Peace Memorial Church
- Australian Association for Unmanned Systems (UAAS)
- Jesuit Social Services
- Bridge of Hope Innocence Initiative
- Humanist Society of Victoria
- The Melbourne Writers Festival
- Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre
- Human Rights Arts and Film Festival
- Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
- La Mama Theatre
- Right Now
- National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS)
- National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (NFVPLS)
- Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria (FVPLS)

Liberty Victoria Membership form

First name			
Surname			
Profession / Studies			
Address			
Suburb State Postcode			
Email			
Telephone			
Membership options	A membership year run	s July - June	
Individual \$75, One year \$300, Five years		150, One year 600, Five years	
Joint State \$120, One year with two adults same address \$480, Five years	organisation \square	100, One year 400, Five years	
Under 30 / Senior / \$25, One year Unwaged \$100, Five years	Donation I would like to make a donation of \$		
Payment methods			
Cheque payable to Liberty Victoria or	☐ Visa card ☐ N	1astercard	
Name on card	Card number		
Expiry date	I authorise Liberty Victoria to automatically renew my membership annually in June, using the above credit card details		
By signing this form you confirm that you wish to become a member of Liberty Victoria. In the event of being granted admission as a member, you agree to be bound by the Constitution of the Council. The Constitution is available online at www.libertyvictoria.org.au: About			
Signature		Date	

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