



SELECT COMMITTEE – ON THE COVID-19 2021 PANDEMIC RESPONSE
ELIZABETH LEE MLA (CHAIR), SUZANNE ORR MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), JO CLAY MLA

We have received positive feedback on the ads and will review Inquiry into the COVID-19 2021 pandemic response
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
30 September 2021

Asked by Mrs Jones MLA

In relation to:

MRS JONES: Commissioner Toohey, could I please ask if, on notice, you could provide the links and a copy of the ads, the words used in the ads for example, so that I can see the complete picture of how people can come to you? When they come and their complaint does not become a formal complaint, is their experience recorded in our statistical format for annual review and so on?

Ms Toohey: Yes. We have only for the last year had a facility on our website to enable people to report to us, which is very clearly messaged as: “This is not a complaint. Let us know what is happening to you in the community.” And it is not specific to race. It is a broad-based sort of data collection tool. But we have been promoting that, again through social media. We have certainly done some ads about our general complaint-handling process in some of the media. I do not think we have recently done community language ads, which is why we went to radio. We were told that was probably the best way of getting to a more diverse audience. As I said, we have only been doing that for the last couple of months. I am just waiting on a report coming back on the data on that. I am certainly happy to pull something together and get that to you.

KAREN TOOHEY, Commissioner, Discrimination, Disability, Health and Community Services:

The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:–

Any contact with the Commission to report experiences of race discrimination or racial vilification that is made with the Human Rights Commission’s complaint handling team is recorded and reported in our annual report. Contact can be made by phone, email, letter, in person visit, filling in our complaint form, enquiry or contact us forms on our website. Reports to the Commission that are not a complaint, such as those made anonymously or by people seeking information and not wanting to make a complaint, or from people who have concerns about discrimination or racism but are not an aggrieved person as defined in our legislation, are recorded and reported as enquiries.

In 2020/21 we responded to 1819 enquiries of which 387 raised issues of discrimination. 84 of those enquiries, 22%, related to race discrimination or racial vilification.

In 2020/21 we received 218 discrimination complaints of which 47, or 21%, raised issues of race discrimination or racial vilification.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. COVID/2

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In August 2021 the Commission commenced running community announcements on CMS1 FM (Canberra Multicultural Service) radio. The ads are in Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, Arabic and Tamil. The text of the two ads is below. The ads were developed and translated with the assistance of CMS1. The audio files of the ads have been provided separately.

Racism: it's not OK

Canberra is a great place to live, but sometimes things go wrong.

If you experience or see racism, discrimination or vilification at work, using health services, with housing, or dealing with the government, call the ACT Human Rights Commission.

We're independent. Our services are free and confidential.

- Call 6205 2222. Or arrange to come and see us.
- Call us through the national interpreter service, 131450.
- Go to www.hrc.act.gov.au and fill in a complaints form.

Discrimination: it's not OK

Canberra is a great place to live. But if things go wrong its ok to get help.

You can call the ACT Human Rights Commission if you have problems accessing a hospital or GP; or if you're discriminated against in shops, in education or employment.

We are independent. Our services are free and confidential.

We can also help if you're concerned about aged care, the abuse of an older person, services for children, disability services, or how you were treated as a victim of crime.

- Call 6205 2222.
- Call us through the national interpreter service, 131450.

Fill in a complaint form on our website www.hrc.act.gov.au

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on the COVID-19 2021 Pandemic Response

Signature:

Date: 25/10/2021

By Karen Toohey, Commissioner, Discrimination, Health, Disability and Community Services