



**STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY**

**JEREMY HANSON CSC MLA (CHAIR), MARISA PATERSON MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), JO CLAY MLA**

**Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Asked by Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA: To ask the Human Rights Commissioner

In relation to: **Disability Justice Strategy 2019-2029**

Ref: Budget Statements D, Disability, Output class 1.5 Protection of Rights

1. The ACT Human Rights Commission has been tasked with education outreach on the rights of people with disability, as part of the Disability Justice Strategy 2019–2029. What is the current progress of this disability-focused initiative and in what ways has education outreach been undertaken specifically?
  - a. How do the Commission and government directorates target people with disability and how many individuals have participated in this outreach?
  - b. There are approximately 62,000 people who identify as having a disability in the ACT. How many of these individuals does the Commission aim to target with education outreach by the end of the first action plan in 2023?
2. The ACT Human Rights Commission has been tasked with education outreach on the rights of people with disability, as part of the Disability Justice Strategy 2019–2029. What particular work and targets have been set in relation to education outreach in the ACT for:
  - a. the non-government sector;
  - b. the government sector;
  - c. family and carers of people living with disability;
  - d. the CALD community;
  - e. the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community;
  - f. young people (aged 16-25 years);
  - g. seniors (aged 60 years+)?

Dr Helen Watchirs: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. a, b

We are not aware of how Directorates are targeting people with a disability.

The Commission is not specifically funded or resourced to undertake education outreach about disability rights under the disability justice strategy and has no dedicated community education resource. Each business unit in the Commission undertakes community education and information events throughout the year to the ACT community which includes people with a disability, with some events being cross-jurisdictional such as the annual International Human Rights Day event on 10 December, which had a theme for 2020 of the Right to Health, COVID and



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

JACS No. 49

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Pandemic Responses. These activities include providing information about: human rights; complaint handling jurisdictions and processes; services for victims of crime; services provided by the intermediary function; services provided by the Public Advocate for vulnerable people including people with a disability. Information about rights of people with a disability is also disseminated by the HRC through social media, advertising, articles in press and in disability focused media and through working with key advocate groups and stakeholders such as the Official Visitors, disability advocacy and legal centres, ACT Police, courts and tribunals etc who are key contacts for people accessing the justice system.

2. No specific work and targets have been set for the groups outlined in Q2. As above the HRC undertakes community engagement across the disability sector regarding the rights of people with a disability. Some specific work has been undertaken by the Victims Support Act which is outlined below.

- ACT Human Rights Commission have commenced development of a training program to deliver disability-specific training for Victim Support ACT providers with a view to expanding access to therapeutic services for victims of crime with a disability.
- Victim Support ACT has been working to build stronger networks and outreach relationships to ensure other organisations know what supports are available to their clients with disability and to ensure we can collaborate in support of this client group. This includes meetings with:
  - Housing ACT
  - Legal Aid ACT
  - The NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission
  - Disability advocacy organisations
  - NDIS support coordinators
  - ACT Police.

Victim Support ACT is increasing their capacity to offer face to face support to victims of crime with a disability who need to engage with service providers.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Signature:

Date: 15/03/2021

By the President and ACT Human Rights Commissioner, Dr Helen Watchirs