



ANTI DISCRIMINATION
COMMISSION QUEENSLAND

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Media Release

Anti-discrimination Annual Report 2008-09 calls for comprehensive review of the Anti-Discrimination Act

The Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ) Acting Commissioner Neroli Holmes used the release of the Commission's Annual Report 2008-09 to call for a review of the Queensland *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (the ADA), to bring Queensland back to the forefront of human rights legislation in Australia.

The ADCQ Annual Report 2008-09 was prepared by retired Commissioner Susan Booth, who resigned on Monday 16 November to take up a position as a senior member with the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, which comes into being on 1 December 2009.

Acting Commissioner Holmes said she fully supports the call, adding that the ADA has not been significantly reviewed since it was written in 1991.

Ms Holmes said, "Changes to federal discrimination laws and the *Fair Work Australia Act 2009* means a review of the state legislation is required to ensure that Queensland is in step with recent developments."

"When the Act was written, Queensland was at the forefront of human right legislation and a review of the ADA would enable the State Government to reinstate its position as a leader in human rights protection." Ms Holmes said.

The report refers to legislative challenges including concerns about a reduction in prisoner complaints following changes to corrective services legislation and a request to reinstate the ADA after it was set aside as part of the welfare reforms in Cape York Peninsular.

Federal government rolled back the *Racial Discrimination Act* (RDA) and the Queensland Act in 2007 to empower the Family Responsibilities Commission to introduce welfare restrictions on persons in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale, and Mossman Gorge.

Ms Holmes said the Commission has been working to effect the reinstatement of the Acts, and had written to Queensland Premier Anna Bligh, then Queensland Attorney General, Kerry Shine MP and Jenny Macklin MP, Federal Minister for Families to express concern about the reduction of human rights protections in Queensland.

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Interviews:

Acting Commissioner Neroli Holmes - arranged by press officer