



PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Expressions of interest

External legal adviser to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights

Expressions of interest for the position of external legal adviser, to commence in January 2018, are invited from suitably qualified persons.

Role of the committee

The committee's primary role is to examine all bills and legislative instruments that come before either House of Parliament and report on their compatibility with Australia's human rights obligations under seven core international human rights treaties. The committee is also able to examine existing legislation and conduct broad inquiries into matters relating to human rights as referred to it by the Attorney-General.

The committee is established under the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011* (the Act). The committee meets to adopt its report on the bills and instruments introduced in the preceding period on the first Monday of every joint sitting week and otherwise as needed.

Further information is available on the committee's webpage:

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary Business/Committees/Joint/Human Rights](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Human_Rights)

Committee structure

The committee has ten members: five appointed by the Senate and five appointed by the House of Representatives.

Secretariat

The committee is supported by a secretariat, usually comprising a Secretary, two Principal Research Officers with international human rights law expertise, a Senior Research Officer and a Legislative Research Officer.

The secretariat provides the committee with procedural and other advice as needed, and the legal adviser with significant drafting and technical support for the preparation of reports for the committee.

Role of the legal adviser

The legal adviser provides the committee with independent legal advice on the compatibility of legislation with international human rights law. The legal adviser is engaged as an independent contractor, not an employee.

Specific duties include:

- a) with the support of the secretariat, provide reports on the compatibility of bills and instruments with international human rights law in a timely fashion;

- b) as required, with the support of the secretariat, provide reports on the compatibility of Acts with international human rights law;
- c) as required, with the support of the secretariat, provide timely additional advice to the committee secretary and to the committee on any matters that arise which fall within the committee's terms of reference;
- d) as required, attend (usually in person) the committee's regular meetings in Canberra (currently held at 5.30 pm on the Monday of each joint sitting week) to support the committee's consideration of particular provisions of bills and legislative instruments which are considered to raise human rights compatibility concerns;
- e) as required, and wherever possible, attend ad hoc meetings of the committee (including via teleconference); and
- f) as required, and wherever possible, attend committee briefings and participate in other committee activities such as inquiries (including via teleconference).

Selection criteria

The successful applicant must demonstrate appropriate qualifications, skills, experience and availability as assessed against the following criteria:

Mandatory

1. specialist knowledge of international human rights law and treaty processes, demonstrated by relevant research expertise or substantial professional experience, particularly in relation to the seven core international human rights treaties to which Australia is a party and the committee's analytical framework;
2. excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to engage effectively in the context of Parliamentary legislative and committee processes;
3. familiarity with the principles of statutory interpretation;
4. ability to provide oral and written advice to the committee on bills and instruments within short timeframes; and
5. ability to attend the committee's regular private meetings in Canberra.

Desirable

1. familiarity with domestic human rights legislation and case law (e.g. the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (ACT));
2. familiarity with Australian domestic administrative, constitutional and criminal law, as it relates to Australia's human rights obligations.

Remuneration

The legal adviser will be paid \$51,000 per annum (plus any applicable GST).

An amount up to \$5,000 per annum is also available for the reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses incurred to attend committee meetings (typically 14 meetings per year).

Expressions of interest

Expressions of interest, including a curriculum vitae and brief outline of relevant skills, experience and particular areas of expertise, may be submitted electronically to human.rights@aph.gov.au, or in hard copy to:

Ms Toni Dawes
Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

The closing date for expressions of interest is close of business on **Thursday, 23 November 2017.**