

TERM GOALS

Advanced the Commission's relationship with key stakeholders including the Commonwealth Government and Parliament

Enhanced community understanding of human rights and build an Australian culture of rights-mindedness

Led and managed the internal and external governance of the Commission effectively

Fostered and led a positive and collegiate Commission and organisational culture

Progressed the role and leadership of the Commission as an independent statutory agency and as Australia's National Human Rights Institution



Emeritus Professor Rosalind Croucher

President

FIFTH YEAR OF TERM

Good relationships and open doors are absolutely crucial for us to be able to play the role of trusted adviser to its fullest — to be the devil's advocate and at times to be the "devil's blowtorch", you need to have a respected seat at the table.

PRINCIPLES / APPROACH

- Working inclusively to lift the consideration of human rights across law, policy and practice above and ahead of politics.
- Opening the conversation and generating forward momentum in discussing human rights challenges and solutions.
- Leading the development of a national reform agenda for human rights.
- Ensuring and promoting the Commission's reputation for human rights expertise, evidence and independence.
- Building understanding through thematically linked speeches and articles.
- Celebrating human rights achievements across the community.



President Croucher speaking at the launch of the 2021 program for the Women Lawyers Association of NSW, February 2021.

KEY ACTIVITIES: 2021–22 WORKPLAN

In addition to the governance, statutory and leadership functions of the Commission, President Croucher leads these programs.

<p>Free and equal in dignity and rights: An Australian conversation on human rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This strategic multiyear initiative aims to lead discussion about how to build a system of human rights protection for 21st century Australia where the promotion of human rights is a shared endeavour—by government, business, the NGO sector, educators, service providers and the community at large. The initiative draws on the expertise and unites the work of all the Commission. • This year’s project will culminate in the release of position papers on key areas, and then brought together in a final report. The Commission will also hold a final consultation process on technical questions.
<p>Investigation and Conciliation and National Information Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These services ensure all Australians can access free and accessible information, and investigation and conciliation services. They provide best practice alternative dispute resolution for complainants and respondents and focus on systemic outcomes that have far-reaching positive benefits for the Australian Community.
<p>Human rights education and training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program supports the Commission’s statutory function to ‘promote understanding and acceptance and the public discussion of human rights in Australia’. The program strategically targets audiences and sectors in its aim to ‘build a universal culture of human rights’. • This year’s program will see the continued development of online human rights learning resources, the re-establishment of an Australian Public Service human rights network, updating teaching resources mapped to the Australian Curriculum, training programs for public servants and private sector employers and the continued development of guidelines and policies to support organisations to comply with their legal anti-discrimination obligations and to promote a best practice human rights-based approach.
<p>Human rights technical co-operation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through funding from Australia’s Aid Program, this year’s programs with other countries include: integrating human rights education throughout schools and advancing responsible business conduct in Vietnam; implementing a new program in Vietnam focusing on human rights, technology and cyber security; strengthening the capacity of the Government of Lao People’s Democratic Republic to engage with UN treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review process; and supporting the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights.
<p>International engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an ‘A status’ National Human Rights Institution we have a formal role in the United Nations system. In partnership with other NHRIs we work to advance human rights in our region and globally. This year the President continues a pivotal role as a Bureau (board) member of the Global Alliance for National Human Rights Institutions and as re-elected Chairperson of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, one of the four regional networks in the Global Alliance of NHRIs.
<p>Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission regularly operates through partnerships and collaborations with government, business, the non-government sector and internationally. Partnerships increase our capability through shared skills and resources and create a collective ability to achieve outcomes greater than the individuals or organisations acting alone. It is a central feature of how we work. • The Commission will continue to collaborate with a wide range of partners to achieve our objectives. This year’s program will place a strategic focus on advancing human rights in sport and where appropriate, undertaking cultural reviews of diverse organisations.
<p>Business and human rights strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program builds upon the momentum created by recent legislative action in Australia and internationally to begin operationalising the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and other frameworks. • A strategic focus of the Commission’s Business and Human Rights Strategy is to work with government, business and civil society in the implementation of the <i>Australia Modern Slavery Act 2018</i> (Cth). In addition, to acknowledge the 10-year anniversary of the UNGPs, the Commission will conduct a review of their implementation in Australia.
<p>Human rights scrutiny</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program aims to improve human rights protections in current and proposed legislation and includes an ongoing relationship with the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights. The work involves the monitoring of federal legislative and inquiry processes, identifying strategic opportunities for engagement by the Commission, including evidence-based submissions to inquiries.