



TELSTRA AND HUMAN RIGHTS:  
ACCSR 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
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## ...The National Human Rights Consultation



Telstra lodged a submission with the Committee (and was the only corporation to make a submission);

Why get involved? ... we believed:

- as a company with thousands of employees and shareholders, we had a valuable voice in the debate;
- companies, like individuals, are affected by human rights protections;
- Telstra's experience with regulation gives it a valuable perspective to comment on laws that may encroach upon liberties.

## ...Our submission to the HR Consultation



### What did Telstra say:

- we recommended a Commonwealth Charter (cf. a Bill of Rights or Constitutional amendment);
- responsible government is a soft foundation upon which to protect human rights;
- Australia's human rights record is not perfect;
- we dispelled some myths – e.g., that a Charter would transfer powers from elected politicians to unelected judges.

## ...Our submission to the HR Consultation



### Other points we made:

- Australia’s human rights record is increasingly likely to be scrutinised by Australia’s trading partners and geographic neighbours;
- a Charter would:
  - better protect the weak and the marginalised;
  - be more accessible than the current mishmash of laws (including *implied* Constitutional protections); and
  - promote good governance, due process, and improve the quality of administrative decision-making.

# ...Telstra's near-finalised human rights policy



## Purpose:

- To promote the commitment to Telstra Values treating all people with dignity and respect by recognising the human rights of employees, contractors, customers & suppliers.

## Policy:

- We value the human rights of all employees, contractors, customers & suppliers and comply with applicable legislation that is reflective of human rights including anti-discrimination and privacy legislation.
- We are an equal opportunity employer who values freedom of expression, freedom of religious expression and freedom of sexual orientation.
- We are committed to socially responsible procurement and use a Compliance and Corporate Ethics Framework to ensure a consistent, integrated approach to the management of compliance across Telstra.