

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Question No. 8

Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 23 February 2009:

When was a decision made to commence the Commission's sex and gender diversity project?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

The sex and gender diversity project has its origins in the 2006-07 *National Inquiry into Discrimination against People in Same-Sex Relationships: Financial and Work-Related Entitlements and Benefits*. During this Inquiry, the Commission received submissions from members of the sex and gender diverse community about the discrimination they experienced. The Inquiry was not, however, able to address these concerns as they were beyond the Inquiry's terms of reference.

In 2008, the Commission decided to investigate these issues further. As a result, in May 2008, the Commission released an Issues Paper about the human rights concerns of people who are sex and gender diverse. The Commission used this paper to seek the views of the sex and gender diverse community about their most pressing human rights issues. The majority of responses identified obtaining documentation as an important issue. In July 2008, the Commission reported on the responses to the Issues Paper, stating that it will develop a project focusing on the legal recognition of sex identity.