

**Human Rights and
Equal Opportunity Commission**



**President
The Hon. John von Doussa, QC**

7 April 2008

Mr Peter Hallahan
Secretary
The Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT

Dear Mr Hallahan

Inquiry into the Rights of the Terminally Ill (Euthanasia Laws Repeal) Bill 2008

Thank you for the invitation to provide a submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs Inquiry into the Rights of the Terminally Ill (Euthanasia Laws Repeal) Bill 2008.

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission ('HREOC') will not be making a formal submission to the Inquiry as HREOC has not conducted any recent work on euthanasia and human rights.

However, I would like to draw your attention to an Occasional Paper produced for HREOC in December 1996 by George Zdenkowski, then Associate Professor of Law and Director of the Human Rights Centre of the University of NSW.

The Occasional Paper sought to promote informed public discussion of issues surrounding the legal regulation of euthanasia, following the introduction of the Rights of the Terminally Ill Act 1995 (NT), and in particular the relevance of international human rights norms to that debate. The paper is available on the HREOC website at http://www.humanrights.gov.au/human_rights/euthanasia/index.html.

Please note that the Occasional Paper reflects the state of law and policy as at December 1996. As HREOC has not conducted any work on the topic since that time, we do not know whether there have been subsequent developments in international law that may qualify some of the information contained in the paper.

Yours sincerely

John von Doussa, QC
President