



## **ALHR ENVIRONMENT & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE SENIOR CO-CHAIRs POSITION DESCRIPTION 2023**

### **ALHR's Thematic Committees**

ALHR utilises thematic subcommittees and has adopted a co-chair management structure within them as a means to improve the impact of our advocacy and deliver efficiency and accountability.

ALHR now has a total of 12 subcommittees, including:

- Refugee Rights
- Disability Rights
- Freedoms
- Human Rights Act(s)
- Indigenous Rights
- Business and Human Rights
- LGBTI Rights
- Women and Girls' Rights
- Children's Rights
- Economic Social and Cultural Rights
- Environment and Human Rights

A focus on thematic human rights areas has engaged our members allowing them to concentrate on particular human rights issues and enabling ALHR to deliver a key promise to our paid membership by offering them a voice on human rights and law reform in Australia. This thematic focus also serves to increase the impact of our strategic advocacy and enables ALHR to efficiently target areas of critical focus for Australian human rights practice.

### **The Role of Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs**

Subcommittee Chairs and Co-Chairs are responsible for leading ALHR's work in the thematic areas of practice determined by the National Committee to be of strategic priority. They will be lawyers who are passionate about the topic and have significant knowledge, experience and expertise in the thematic area. The purposes of these roles are to facilitate research, coordinate submissions and comprehensive advocacy on these topics, and to present them to key legal and political figures in order to keep the thematic area at the forefront of public discussion.

**Accordingly, the following key qualities are expected:**

1. A significant and demonstrable passion for the human rights topic in academic, journalistic or professional experience.
2. An ability to network with key legal, political and public figures in order to engage the general public on the human rights topic.
3. A commitment to ALHR's aims and objectives.

**About the Environment and Human Rights Committee**

Launched three years ago, ALHR's Environment and Human Rights Subcommittee engages locally, nationally and internationally with a diverse range of stakeholders in order to:

1. Undertake advocacy to stand up for recognition of the right to a safe, clean and healthy environment; and sustainable environmental governance.
2. Highlight the need for decisions about the environment to be made from within a human rights framework.
3. Promote awareness of the growing body of international discourse on human rights and the environment and adherence to the Framework Principles.
4. Promote awareness of human rights issues raised by environmental issues such as climate change.
5. In recognition that young people are a key group amongst those most likely to suffer the long term future human rights impacts of climate change and environmental neglect, the subcommittee specifically engages with and offers a voice to children and young people.

**Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs will be expected to:**

1. Lead ALHR's work in the thematic area by devising comprehensive strategic advocacy plans annually.
2. Chair a minimum of 4 meetings of the committee per annum.
3. Co-ordinate the drafting of submissions, press releases, letters, position statements and other documents by the committee and submit them to the National Committee or Executive for approval.
4. Act as a media spokesperson on behalf of ALHR in the thematic area.
5. Attend meetings with external organisations and stakeholders and appear from time to time as a speaker at events.
6. Coordinate research in the thematic area, including by providing supervision of student project work.
7. Ensure that consistent and regular opportunities are provided for members of the subcommittee to engage in its work. Committee members need to be given the

opportunity to participate in the work of the committee and one of the primary roles of co-chairs is to plan 12 monthly advocacy strategies that facilitates this engagement via submissions, position papers, research, ALHR events, press releases.

8. Consistently attend the monthly meetings of the National Committee to report back on the committee's activities and attend the Annual General Meeting and Annual Planning Weekend. Where a co-chair arrangement is in place co-chairs are expected to work together to ensure that there is at least one chair present at meetings of the National Committee.
9. Liaise with ALHR's state and territory convenors to support their local advocacy efforts in the thematic area and organise events.
10. Respond to enquiries received from members of the committee in a timely manner
11. Comply at all times with ALHR's policies and procedures including the Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures; the Financial Control and Authorisation Policy and Procedures, Social Media Policy, Volunteers Policy and the policies and procedures set out within the National Committee Induction Pack.

It is the duty of a chair or co-chair to carry out and fulfil the responsibilities specified and for which the ordinary member has been elected and appointed to the best of his or her abilities. Co-Chairs will be supported and guided by ALHR's National Committee.

#### [Committee Chair and Co-Chair's Responsibility to ensure they are performing their role](#)

ALHR recognises that as a volunteer organisation, we are dependant on people and people's capacity to be actively engaged can fluctuate. Chairs and Co-Chairs are responsible for communicating with the executive and their National Committee colleagues if their capacity to contribute will be reduced for a period of time.

If a committee chair is aware that they will be unable to contribute for a significant period of time (i.e. two months or more), they should discuss this with the ALHR Executive. The executive will determine whether another member should be recruited to assist with duties for that time.

If a committee chair is aware that they will be unable to contribute for a period of time longer than six months, they should either resign or, depending on the individual circumstances, the National Committee may resolve to make arrangements to have an acting chair take over.

If the National Committee has concerns about a subcommittee chair's capacity to adequately engage and perform the above outlined responsibilities, in the first instance an office bearer will discuss this with the chair and set agreed goals for the next three months. If these goals are not met, the National Committee can resolve to remove subcommittee chair and appoint a new one.

Where a committee chair consistently fails to engage with the National Committee and perform the above outlined responsibilities for a prolonged period of time without explanation or discussion with an office bearer, the National Committee can resolve to remove them and appoint a new subcommittee chair.