

Friday 9th January 2004
Mrs Stella Hondros
WA

Mr Patrick Laplagne
LB2 Collins St East
MELBOURNE VICTORIA 8003

RE: COMMENT ON REVIEW OF THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT
1992 DRAFT REPORT

Dear Mr Laplagne

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me over the phone. I would like to let it be known that I have had great difficulty with some people acknowledging that I may well have a legitimate complaint. Last year I spoke to a lawyer at Sussex St Legal Centre (WA) about my rights to complain about Government departments spraying with pesticides which make me very ill and put me in a life threatening situation. I found him to be very dismissive of my case and he told me that it was legal to do spraying therefore I had no case. However that does not change my situation as my life is still threatened. (I have no medical evidence).

Also I had difficulty with the lady who answered at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. She said that I did not fit in the parameters and it was not until I said that "I have no access" that she said "Oh its under access you want to be considered."

My point is that the lay person ringing up does not know the structure and terminology used by these people and it is up to the person liaising on the phone to GUIDE the initiated member of the public making the complaint. THE TELEPHONIST MUST ASSUME AN EDUCATIVE ROLE! PERHAPS POST SOME LITERATURE TO ASSIST THOSE MAKING A COMPLAINT.

I would also like to point out that one must seek information and it is only by chance that a friend suggested that I use this avenue of complaint. I had no idea that this even existed. So the profile of the HREOC is not well known.

Also the Department of Health of WA is of no help. They did very little to assist other than to say that spraying is legal and that a portion of the population will suffer. I guess it is a policy of wastage and sacrifice – until one is part of the wastage and sacrifice category. The Health department did little research, and certainly no testing of me or my surrounding environment eg soil samples, blood tests etc. Our Health Department of WA has not got a very good reputation and is known for its attempt to not portray things as they really are. It has engendered an air of distrust with the public, unfortunately. I also do not believe that the Health Dept can police the usage of pesticides so that they are used according to Material Safety Data Sheets. Breaches invariably are continually occurring.

I have not been able to read the entire "Draft Report" for the "Review of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992" but so far I believe you are on the right track and I tend to be in agreeance of what is being said.

Again, thank you for your assistance and I hope that 2004 is a very good year for all.

Yours sincerely

STELLA HONDROS