

18/10/2017

Director, Legal Policy

Department of the Attorney General and Justice

Dear Ms Witham,

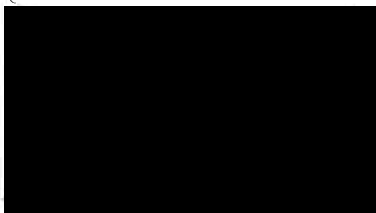
I am glad I could write my greeting without risk of offense. In days to come, when the addressee is unknown, I was wondering, under the proposed changes to gender related titles and vilification assessments, what would be the polite greeting? Surely not: Hey You; Dear Cousin It; or Dear Whatever-you-feel-you-are-today? Perhaps G'day Mate? – Oh no! That too could be offensive! I am being facetious of course, but I wish to highlight the everyday difficulties such changes could undoubtedly incur.

Before addressing some of the questions listed in your Discussion "Starter" Paper, I want to say that I appreciated the opportunity to attend the "Public Consultation on Anti-Discrimination Laws" meeting at Casuarina Library. I was, however, disappointed with the amount of opportunity for public consultation. It seemed to me that more time was spent reading out the discussion paper (which I would say that most present had already read) with its rather innocuous examples of effect, than allowing for questioning of the flow-on effects of its implementation. Someone present suggested that it seemed like you were trying to sell us a house without letting us look inside. That analogy seemed very apt to me. Suspicious that there is a hidden agenda were not allayed by your misinterpretation or evasion of the question regarding what difference it would make if a reporter were to be in the room. I realize that you are not your own boss and are answerable to higher authorities, so thank you for the courteous effort you made to answer some of the questions, albeit within given guidelines.

Now to submit answers to some of the questions raised in the paper.

- Questions 1, 2, 3: No, No and No.

Why? Because the terminology seems to be aimed at appeasing a group of lobbyists whose movement began to gain momentum under the leadership of an anarchist (so I found when I "Googled" LGBTQ history) moved on through a reformist period – counting on societal complacency, developed with war-like militancy, to where they are today, having political parties falling all over themselves to please. What is this? A dash towards communism and dictatorship under the guise of a step towards equality? These people talk about love, but generally demonstrate nothing like the Biblical definition of love: "patient, not envying, not boastful or proud, not rude or self-seeking, not easily angered, and keeping no record of wrongs. Delighting not in evil, but in the TRUTH. It protects, trusts, hopes, perseveres & never fails (I Corinthians 13:4-8). They do seem, however, to count on being responded to in such a way. Perhaps they have never heard that "speaking the truth in love" is part of the ethic that provides this definition. Every cell in a person's body – with rare, sad exception – spells out that each human being is born male or female. That is the truth. The few people with genetic defects causing them to be doubtful of which category they fit into should by all means be given the opportunity to choose. It is not so much the terminology that I am opposed to, but who is "pushing the barrow" and what load the "barrow" is carrying. Being politely told that the details haven't been worked out is not sufficient grounds for a change of anything.



What makes the suspicion of a hidden agenda grow are the proposed anti-vilification laws. These seem to be directly aimed at anyone who might express publicly that homosexuality as a lifestyle choice is sinful according to the Bible. Even saying that all people are born sinful, according to the Bible, could be deemed offensive by those of a mind to receive offense. No matter that the Biblical definition of sin is "falling short of the glory of God", (Romans 3:23) which by any definition of God (capital G) should be self-evident - if one does not ascribe to the belief that there is a God, why should what the Bible says matter anyway? We only know about God's standards from the Bible. If we believe the Bible we see that God created male and female to procreate, and that He passes judgment on those who choose to disobey His laws and fail to meet His requirements. (Thankfully, He is a God of grace, and equal opportunity (Romans 6:23: Acts 17:30: John 3:16) – That is just so you know that my interest is in TRUTH as per the Bible and not borne out of hate for "gay" people.)

To get back to the question of vilification; it is too easy to "offend" someone. Some people, can easily become offended by a look perceived to be disapproving, or simply because the person does not wish to be noticed whether their behaviour attracts attention or not. Recently, my concern for someone standing in the church driveway (a public place?) resulted in my asking her if she was alright. Her angry tirade in response indicated she felt offence. In neither such case is it likely that a complaint would be carried further, but if such things occurred within the hearing of others who might be of a mind to pursue the matter, could it not tie up resources and time (and money) better spent otherwise? Causing offense is too subjective a term to be included in the definition of vilification. Question 4. Define what constitutes vilification very carefully and without bias against any particular group (e.g. Christians or people of Caucasian appearance) before you set this one in law.

Question 5. I was going to omit answering this question until I thought about what it might do. Of course, one would hope that people experiencing domestic violence would be given all due care. However, I ask, should an employer be expected to carry the burden of a sad family situation indefinitely? Might the employer not then become an "enabler" by decreasing the incentive for the victim to remove themselves from the risk situation and confirming the victim status of the abused? Thus, in the process (his) business becomes less efficient and financially less profitable – i.e. penalising the employer? Is this another way to erode the economy and effect communistic social engineering policies? Will changes to policy make a bad situation worse?

Question 10. The representative complaint model makes way for many a "do-gooder" (lawyer?) to line his/her own pockets at the expense of the accused, and once again, maintain the victim mentality of the offended party (even to stir up offence where it would otherwise have gone unnoticed). Bad idea!

Question 14. This question seems to be squarely aimed at the right of parents to choose educational role models for their children. (Communism again?) Didn't we learn anything from the state of the USSR under communism? Did the lives of the young men and women who died to protect us from that threat, and the grief of families who mourned their loss, count for nothing? As a grandparent whose grandchildren attend Christian Schools, I strongly oppose this proposal. Without a doubt, churches too will come under fire should this proposal be implemented - not to mention people of faith in the general public - if what has happened in other countries is anything to go by. So, No!



Question 15. This proposal increases the risk of a child, though badly wanted at the time, being born into a family environment which could be more readily destabilised. (I presume that is the reason those restrictions are currently in place). So, for the sake of the child, NO!

Questions 20, 21 & 22 would appear to be frivolous at first glance, but have serious ramifications. Definition of Man and Woman: If repealing the current definition of man and woman – which I understand includes transgender people – means reverting to a common-sense definition (what a boy and girl grow up to become) that is commendable. Since, however, the aim of the modernisation is to be flexible, it seems to me that it may be more double- speak. Once again, TRUTH is the loser.

Carer Roles: Why not just define the different carer roles? I for one am glad (I am being facetious again) that my children are not required to refer to me as C1 or C2! I am a parent. I am a mother. I have cared for my aged and invalid parents. In that role, I still remained their daughter, though acting as a carer. In these days of technology, is it too hard to type a few extra words? Again, what is the agenda behind the push?

Relationship Status: Relationship is a very broad and open term. It can cover a range of connections (dictionary definition 1.) from belonging to a family – my heritage – to affection for a pet, or how I get on with my boss and work colleagues. Recently I heard of someone who could not decide if she was in a “relationship” or friendship with her sometimes bed fellow. On the other hand, marriage or singleness reflects the idea of some sort of stability. If what is needed to be known involves the element of time, what better words to use than the words married or single? The re-definition of marriage comes up here, and again conflict occurs. If there is a need to include “marriage-like arrangements” why not just say it?

In summary: Thank you for reading my comments. As mentioned at least twice in the discussion paper, society is said to be evolving – at least in the area of discrimination. Evolution, as commonly understood, (natural selection) reflects a LOSS of INFORMATION. Is this what we want? People who hold faith in evolution as being scientific, generally speaking, do so because of lack of knowledge of the TRUTH by means of ignorance, or of having been deceived, or in defiance of the revelation of God’s Word and the witness of an ordered creation - which by any standard appears to have been designed and not randomly and haphazardly constructed! I recommend to you the reading of Romans 1:18-2:6 (and more) in the Bible, for it contains a warning to those who wilfully disregard His law, upon which the Commonwealth constitutional laws were based, however loosely. It would be unloving of me not to give you notice of His Word since I believe it to be true.

I will continue, as I have been recently doing, to pray that you will have wisdom, to know the TRUTH and to act upon it. You have an unenviably difficult task.

Yours sincerely

