



[Redacted text]

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1. Has the Act reduced or stopped change or suppression practices? Describe any impact you think the Act has had on the occurrence or the nature of change or suppression practices.

Yes: I would say that it has, but the term "change or suppression practices" itself is somewhat misleading. It tends to make it sound like a negative thing as if it's a medieval torture procedure, whereas the Act has stifled any attempt by the subjects (those seeking change to their gender or sex attraction) from seeking or finding relief from their unwanted attractions or feelings. Secular counselling sessions or prayer is denounced by an interfering state as being negative or harmful. The restrictions harm the very people the Act purports to protect because they are not free to explore treatment options. Counsellors or psychiatrists or psychologists would be afraid of falling foul of the law if they assist these people to explore their feelings, even at the request of the subject person. So they are denied choice and forced to deal with these issues alone. This cannot benefit anyone with distressing symptoms.

2. To what extent do you think the community is aware of and understands: a. the Act and how it works b. what change or suppression practices are and c. the harm caused by change or suppression practices

The community certainly understands the Act and the implications thereof. Parents are distressed that they can't teach their children sexual ethics in line with their values or support their child with gender confusion as they are aware of the severe penalties, including jail time, for taking their child to a counsellor in Victoria or interstate for practices deemed by the Allan government as harmful conversion practices.

b) change or suppression (conversion) practices are clearly defined in the Act but are actually very broad and somewhat misleading. The only approach that is permitted is the 'affirmative' model, even though many countries are banning puberty blockers and sex reassignment surgery in the light of new evidence coming out of the Cass review and other studies.

c) What evidence was there that religious counselling in recent times was harmful? Prohibition of religious and secular counselling has caused actual harm because a second opinion and more holistic counselling ban has caused many to suffer more conflict and confusion.

3. Could the Act's operation and effectiveness be improved? If so, how?

Yes. By limiting the definition of conversion practices to coercive, painful or unethical practices. Restoring parental rights within the Act: protecting freedom of thought for those seeking alternatives to the 'affirmative' model. Removing prayer and pastoral counselling and proper clinical counselling from the definition of "conversion practices". Remove the civil penalty scheme for wrongful practices to be dealt with in court.

4. How clear is the Act's definition of what is and what is not a change or suppression practice? If further clarity is needed, what forms of clarification would be most helpful?

The definition of "conversion practices" should be amended so that it reflects current medical

evidence and developments in global legal fields. Recent bans on puberty blockers and cross sex hormones in Australia and overseas should be taken seriously; as should recent criticisms of the RCH's Australian Standards of Care protocol by the Family Court Judge [REDACTED]. Again: religious practices, clinical counselling and guidance by parents or grandparents or guardians on sexual ethics and morality should not be included in the definition of 'conversion practices' punishable by law.

5. How clear is the exclusion for health service providers? If further clarity is needed, how could this best be achieved?

The Section 5 (2)b of the Act lacks clarity and should put the exact types of exempt health services that are contained in the NSW Conversion Act.
Sections 5 (2) and 5 (3) of the Act basically put the affirmative model as the only lawful pathway for those experiencing gender Distress. These provisions should be amended in light of new and evolving medical evidence and not relying on contested AusPATH and WPATH guidelines. It's very clear that the government is totally reliant and subject to those discredited organizations.
Medical evidence argues against the benefit of gender transition practices.

6. Is greater clarity needed about how people of faith can hold and express their beliefs to support clear understanding and compliance with the Act? What forms of clarification would be most helpful?

Explicit examples, as noted in 2.22 would make it clearer. but even so, it is not the function of government in a western, pluralist democracy to determine how people of faith hold and express their beliefs. Do we have freedom of religion? Or not? The ICCPR article 18 of the convention holds that countries uphold and protect freedom of religion. The Act does not reflect that fact.
Victorian faith communities can't express their beliefs when supporting others - according to this government. Even parents are constricted. The Act has put people of faith against their conscience and deeply held beliefs, especially those who are experiencing sexual disorientation or gender distress. They are isolated and restricted to the only legal path instead of being free to pursue alternative or holistic treatment or support. We don't need clarity: we need freedom of choice and religion.

7. How effective are VEOHRC's awareness and education materials on change or suppression practices? What improvements, if any, could help strengthen community understanding and compliance?

The VEOHRC's awareness and education materials point to only one way of dealing with gender distress or sexual orientation. Our way or the highway! It ignores medical developments, so it's materials are useless and not effective at all unless it's not the truth the VEOHRC is pursuing but an outdated ideology.
It's also inaccurate as far as the law goes when it tells parents that if they resist the medication of their gender dysphoric child they are guilty of 'conversion practice'.. That is clearly bullying and untrue.
How about the law stick to what is genuinely harmful to a child? How about the VEOHRC stick to what is actual harm?

If so, please describe what those barriers are.

There are no barriers to reporting ALLEGED conversion practices to the VEOHRC, as complaints can be made easily; anonymously; and easy to be misused or weaponised.
VEOHRC can conduct investigations and should be limited and the broad powers reduced if anything.

9. Are there changes that could help support VEOHRC to carry out its functions or improve the effectiveness of the civil response scheme? If so, please describe any changes.

Yes:
1. The Secrecy provision should be removed from the Act
2. All investigations and cases reported to VEOHRC be done with transparency.
3. Complainants should be identified and documented.
4. An annual PUBLIC report on investigations, cases and outcomes released.

10. Are there barriers to reporting, investigating and prosecuting criminal change or suppression offences? If so, what are they?

There are NO barriers to such. No criminal offences suggests that there's been no instances of conversion practices in Victoria.
The law has impacted religious freedom and restricted ordinary religious expression and practice.
Any expansion of the ACT by broader civil or criminal provisions, or introducing something that does not require proof should NOT happen. These things could easily be misused or weaponised.

11. Are there other aspects of the criminal offences in the Act that limit their effective operation? If so, what changes or supports could improve their operation?

No

12. Do existing avenues for redress adequately meet the needs of victim-survivors of change or suppression practices? Are there gaps, harms or barriers that require an additional or separate redress mechanism?

Victim survivors (alleged) have many ways to pursue financial compensation. Not necessary to provide more.
The Financial Assistance Scheme criteria, including the onus of proof, should be retained to ensure fairness.
No person should be held liable for an action they undertook before this Act was enacted ie. not retrospective.

13. Should a civil cause of action be introduced under the Act? What distinct purpose would it serve compared to existing pathways?

No. That would be unnecessary. There are already many ways to deal with any grievances.