Dear VLRC

This is my submission to the consultation paper for the Commission's reference on Artificial Intelligence in Victoria's Courts and Tribunals.

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I am a Victorian public servant but I make this submission in my personal capacity.

My submission relates to question 4 in the consultation paper: Are there additional risks and benefits that have not been raised in this issues paper? What are they and why are they important?

I encourage the Commission to take a broader perspective on AI than that likely to be generated by only asking questions that amount to 'does it work?' and 'what are the immediate risks?' These are technical questions that likely have technical solutions. There are deeper questions about AI that relate to how technology, far from being simply a neutral tool, has the tendency to create a particular kind of world and particular kind of person. There are several writers in the field of 'technology and society' who have formulated questions to help guide thinking about the impacts of technology. Cultural critic Neil Postman proposed the following questions that should be asked about any new technology:

- What is the problem to which this technology is the solution?

- Whose problem is it?
- Which people and what institutions might be most seriously harmed by a technological solution?
- What new problems might be created because we have solved this problem?
- What sort of people and institutions might acquire special economic and political power because of technological change?
- What changes in language are being enforced by new technologies, and what is being gained and lost by such changes?

I have set out below what I think is the best version of this kind of list, which was proposed by technology and ethics writer L.M. Sacasas:

1. What sort of person will the use of this technology make of me?
2. What habits will the use of this technology instill?
3. How will the use of this technology affect my experience of time?
4. How will the use of this technology affect my experience of place?
5. How will the use of this technology affect how I relate to other people?
6. How will the use of this technology affect how I relate to the world around me?
7. What practices will the use of this technology cultivate?
8. What practices will the use of this technology displace?
9. What will the use of this technology encourage me to notice?
10. What will the use of this technology encourage me to ignore?
11. What was required of other human beings so that I might be able to use this technology?
12. What was required of other creatures so that I might be able to use this technology?
13. What was required of the earth so that I might be able to use this technology?
14. Does the use of this technology bring me joy?
15. Does the use of this technology arouse anxiety?
16. How does this technology empower me? At whose expense?
17. What feelings does the use of this technology generate in me toward others?
18. Can I imagine living without this technology? Why, or why not?
19. How does this technology encourage me to allocate my time?
20. Could the resources used to acquire and use this technology be better deployed?
21. Does this technology automate or outsource labor or responsibilities that are morally essential?
22. What desires does the use of this technology generate?
23. What desires does the use of this technology dissipate?
24. What possibilities for action does this technology present? Is it good that these actions are now possible?
25. What possibilities for action does this technology foreclose? Is it good that these actions are no longer possible?
26. How does the use of this technology shape my vision of a good life?
27. What limits does the use of this technology impose upon me?
28. What limits does my use of this technology impose upon others?
29. What does my use of this technology require of others who would (or must) interact with me?

30. What assumptions about the world does the use of this technology tacitly encourage?
31. What knowledge has the use of this technology disclosed to me about myself?
32. What knowledge has the use of this technology disclosed to me about others? Is it good to have this knowledge?
33. What are the potential harms to myself, others, or the world that might result from my use of this technology?
34. Upon what systems, technical or human, does my use of this technology depend? Are these systems just?
35. Does my use of this technology encourage me to view others as a means to an end?
36. Does using this technology require me to think more or less?
37. What would the world be like if everyone used this technology exactly as I use it?
38. What risks will my use of this technology entail for others? Have they consented?
39. Can the consequences of my use of this technology be undone? Can I live with those consequences?
40. Does my use of this technology make it easier to live as if I had no responsibilities toward my neighbor?
41. Can I be held responsible for the actions which this technology empowers? Would I feel better if I couldn't?