

January 28 2009

Media Statement

Commissioner welcomes Federal Government's anti-racism drive

The Western Australian Equal Opportunity Commissioner Yvonne Henderson has today welcomed the Federal Government's move to make funds available to tackle racism.

"Race discrimination has been the highest or the second highest area of complaint to the Equal Opportunity Commission for the last five years," Ms Henderson said.

"It is clear that a significant number of Australians encounter race discrimination at work and in accessing services much more frequently than others would imagine," she said.

Ms Henderson said the Commission received complaints of outright racist comments at the hiring stage of employment as well as on the job and sometimes at sporting events.

"In other instances people from minority racial groups are being subjected to close scrutiny in shops and supermarkets and many believe this to be an insidious form of racism, she said.

"The Commission continues to receive complaints of shoppers being closely followed and watched by security personnel basically from the moment they enter a store if they are visibly racially different," she said.

"Such practices undermine self esteem and lead to resentment and alienation," she said.

**FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENT: Commissioner Yvonne Henderson
(08) 9216 3954 or mobile number 0409 880 544**

Level 2, 141 St Georges Terrace, Western Australia 6000 - Tel: (08) 9216 3900 - Fax: (08) 9216 3960
Email: eoc@eoc.wa.gov.au Website www.eoc.wa.gov.au

G O V E R N M E N T O F W E S T E R N
A U S T R A L I A