



## **Media Statement**

Wednesday, August 06, 2008

### **Does race discrimination contribute to homelessness in WA Australia?**

Homelessness Week provides an opportunity to reflect on the causes of families and individuals who have no permanent home and are sleeping rough or with relatives.

“Many people have described to us that race is a factor in their difficulties obtaining rental accommodation in WA,” Yvonne Henderson, Commissioner for Equal Opportunity said.

Ms Henderson said groups that spend time assisting people to obtain accommodation had come to the Commission requesting it to investigate allegations that families suffered racial discrimination in the private rental market.

“People who work on a daily basis trying to assist others who are homeless tell us they believe race is a factor that often makes it difficult to obtain a place to rent,” Ms Henderson said.

“As a result of these approaches the Commission is inviting submissions in relation to race discrimination in the private rental market.”

“We are inviting submissions from individuals and groups to enable us to investigate these claims”, Ms Henderson said.

Ms Henderson said the Equal Opportunity Commission website had the terms of reference for the Enquiry and a submission form for individuals or organizations.

“The Commission welcomes submissions and these may be as simple as a letter or people may choose to answer the questions in the submission template.”

“The Commission is also keen to hear from real estate agents and property managers.” “An information forum for real estate agents will be held in Perth at the Commission’s offices on 15 August at 10:00 am”, she said. Information sessions about the enquiry have been held in some regional centres and in the metropolitan area.

For information about making submissions see the EOC website:  
<http://www.equalopportunity.wa.gov.au/housinginquiry.html>

#### **FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENT:**

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