



6 January 2016

Jennifer Mar Young  
Director, Civil Law and Cabinet  
NSW Department of Justice  
GPO Box 31  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Sent by email: [policy@justice.nsw.gov.au](mailto:policy@justice.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Ms Mar Young

**Re: Relationships Register Act 2010 (NSW)**

Thank you for your letter and request to provide a submission to the statutory review of the *Relationships Register Act 2010 (NSW)* (RRAct).

ACON is Australia's largest community-based lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI) health and HIV/AIDS organisation. Incorporated in 1985 as the AIDS Council of NSW, ACON has been widely recognised as an innovative, successful organisation which has adapted to changes in the HIV epidemic and responded early to emerging health issues among our communities.

Relationship recognition continues to be an important issue for many people who identify as LGBTI. It is an important issue for ACON as we believe that a society that protects and promotes human rights provides the foundation for good health.

Ensuring equality is a foundation for the work that we do to improve the health of our communities. It is important that a diversity of methods of relationship recognition exist, and the current RRAct plays an important role in jurisdictional recognition of the relationships that exist in our communities. There are criticisms of the scheme, which were raised at the time of its creation. Many of these criticisms still stand, including the lack of interstate and international recognition. However, we understand there is little appetite for reform of these laws.

Working towards marriage equality is the current priority for many in our communities and this work will continue at the Commonwealth level. The form of relationship recognition provided for under RRAct is not a substitute for equality, but we look forward to the day in which marriage equality is achieved and this Act will then provide another option for LGBTI people to recognise the diversity of relationships that exist.

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ACON acknowledges the support of its primary funder, NSW Health

We support the continuation of the Relationships Register Act 2010 and look forward to a further review once marriage equality is achieved. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to me on 02 9206 2122 or email [nparkhill@acon.org.au](mailto:nparkhill@acon.org.au)

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicolas Parkhill', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nicolas Parkhill  
Chief Executive Officer