



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

# Proof Committee Hansard

## SENATE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE EXPOSURE DRAFT OF THE  
MARRIAGE AMENDMENT (SAME-SEX MARRIAGE) BILL

### **Marriage Amendment (Same-Sex Marriage) Bill**

(Public)

MONDAY, 23 JANUARY 2017

MELBOURNE

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**HARRISON, Mrs Dorothy, Chair, Coalition of Celebrant Associations**

**PFORR, Mrs Liz, Vice-Chair, Coalition of Celebrant Associations**

**RICHARDSON, Mr Brian, National President, Australian Federation of Civil Celebrants**

[14:03]

**Mrs Pforr:** I am also the Vice-Chair of the ACQ, which is the Alliance of Celebrants Queensland. I am also on the advisory committee for the subject matter experts group, which was rewriting the training up to a diploma level, but unfortunately it only went through as a Cert IV which was implemented last year with the Skills Council and the VET. I am also a trainer for the ongoing professional development of colleagues and of aspiring celebrants with Australian Celebrations Training.

The Coalition of Celebrant Associations would like to thank the Senate very much for the invitation and the opportunity to talk today on this bill. CoCA is a peak body formally recognised by the Attorney-General's Department, and we meet twice a year in Canberra with its Marriage Law and Celebrants section. I have personally attended for the past five years. Having said that, unfortunately CoCA was not consulted prior to this draft exposure bill being formalised. By definition of our name, we currently represent over 11 associations as well as all celebrants in Subdivision C of the Marriage Act 1961. This is important, as most celebrants do not belong to any association, whilst some belong to several.

Current figures, given in our submission, show that we have 8,040 celebrants currently registered, as of 4 January this year. We did a survey of those celebrants, as well as a separate survey with my own Queensland association. Celebrancy has an amazing history in Australia and it is so very unique in the world, and I do not think Australians as a whole really understand the role that we play in their lives. It is a public service that commenced 43 years ago. Civil celebrants are unique in our country. We are governed by a federal law to conduct marriage ceremonies, Australia-wide, at any location, at any given time and on any day, for all eligible marrying couples. It is not a process whereby you are filling in a form, showing the documents and getting rubberstamped, as it is in some countries of the world.

Although, from a government standpoint, I appreciate that marriage is a legal process, for couples marriage is a rite of passage. It is a pivotal and an emotional milestone in a couple's lives. In getting married, they do want authenticity and a ceremony in their life that reflects them as a couple and their beliefs. That is why we as civil celebrants under subdivision C are privileged to conduct 75 per cent of marriages in Australia. For clarity, I think we need to explain the differences between our three main subdivisions of celebrants. We have subdivision A, which is the clergy and recognised religions, subdivision B, which is the registry officers appointed by the state, and subdivision C, which is us, civil celebrants, but also includes independent religious celebrants. That is who we represent—subdivision C. Then, as you stated earlier, we have the chaplains of the armed forces, who go under the hierarchy of a religious organisation. With subdivision A celebrants, the clergy, and section 45, there are anomalies in the act as it stands at the moment in Australia, where couples are not required to state their intent to marry, nor is the officiant required to say that they are the ones authorised to marry a couple or to remind the couples that, by definition, it is a legally binding act. They are not officiating marriage ceremonies on a regular basis, and we feel that all celebrants should be required to state section 46, who they are and what they are there to do, according to our law. We call it the monitor, and all couples should be required to observe section 45, which concerns saying their legal vows to their witnesses. That is not currently the case in Australia with subsection A celebrants. Our first recommendation is to remove section 47(a) so that the exemptions not be included for civil celebrants. We are happy for it to remain as such for religious celebrants. They are already covered by our law as it stands and we do not feel that that needs amendments in any way, shape or form.

Following on from Senator Pratt's earlier questions, to some degree civil celebrants, I guess, can say, 'We're already booked,' 'We're already busy,' or something on that day. If we have a couple in front of us that we feel we are not going to relate to as such, there are ways that we can handle that and I do not feel it needs to be in legislation. To me, that is just broadening something and is like 'how long is a piece of string' essentially, to put it in layman's terms. To put it this way—and it sounds frivolous, but it is not—a couple might come to you who want a celebrant who is blonde and that is very important to them. I might not like blondes, so I might not want to marry a blonde. It sounds frivolous, but I am just trying to show that there are objections that we may have to a couple that come to us and there are ways that we can say, 'We are unavailable and, by the way, I can give you the name of somebody who I feel will do a conscientious, beautiful ceremony for you.'

Our recommendation 2 proposes that exemptions, if they were to be included, apply to existing authorised celebrants not newly appointed celebrants and requires that those who object on religious or conscientious grounds be able to apply for the exemption or to reassign themselves as an independent religious celebrant. Some

are currently registered as both, so that needs to be highlighted as well. Subdivision B celebrants would not be able to refuse, I believe, under the act, because they are from the state.

Recommendation 3 is that the definition of marriage be amended to read:

... marriage means the union of **two adults** to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.

As we are aware, child and forced marriages are a growing concern in Australia, so we feel that, as we are becoming more multicultural, the public are not necessarily aware of our laws and that this is a perfect opportunity for government to educate the public on the requirements that we have in Australia, particularly if the law is changed. Some already do not even realise that they have to give a month's notice, for example, particularly when you have, dare I say, frivolous television programs that purport to be marrying couples. It is actually clearly not the case. They do not help our educative process.

In recommendation 4 we recommend that subdivision C celebrants be separated, so that you have the separation between civil celebrants and the Commonwealth religious celebrants. We agree, furthermore, that same-sex marriages which have occurred legally overseas be recognised. We look forward to hearing your questions on the submission.

**CHAIR:** Thank you. Mr Richardson, would you like to make an opening statement?

**Mr Richardson:** Yes. I will be brief. I have been the president of the Australian Federation of Civil Celebrants since July 2013 and I have been a member of the AFCC national committee since 2010. I would like to open by suggesting that the matters of marriage equality and same-sex marriage in Australia have been the subjects of emotional debate for far too long. As indicated in our submission, there can be no doubt that the vast majority of our members support changes to the Marriage Act 1961 to allow for marriages that are not necessarily between a man and a woman. That said, the circulation of the exposure draft on the Marriage Amendment (Same-Sex Marriage) Bill and invitations to make submissions to assist your inquiry have ignited emotive debate from a different perspective.

Having read all of the 75 submissions made to your committee, it is clear that our position on exemptions is at odds with those of most of your respondents. That issue alone is polarising our members and other Commonwealth registered celebrants, with many strongly in support of our position that exemptions should be available under law, and many at the extreme other end of the spectrum opposed to the position we have adopted. We attempt, as an association, to represent a large number of members with significant variations in opinion but who rightly deserve to have their personal views acknowledged, ensuring we maintain that marriage is an option that is open to any couple no matter their beliefs, sexuality or choices in life.

We support same-sex marriage and we support all members of our association, but at the same time we stand in support of those celebrants who would prefer not to marry same-sex couples. To not do so would surely give rise to yet another form of discrimination—that is, discrimination against those celebrants. Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you for that. It sounds like you are working in the microcosm that this committee is looking at. Perhaps you should be a member and add some insight! I will kick off with some questions and then go to my fellow committee members. Mr Richardson, perhaps I could start with the concluding remark that you made there, which is that you or some of your members fear that they will essentially suffer reverse discrimination should these laws go through without adequate protections. What sorts of consequences do your members fear?

**Mr Richardson:** Many of them are not willing or are too afraid to contribute to the debate. They would sooner sit back and wait to see what happens for fear of retribution if they were to express their views, in this case against exclusions or exemptions being made available.

**CHAIR:** Who do they fear those retributions would come from?

**Mr Richardson:** There are no doubt many who are opposed to the position that we have adopted who have been known to and from our understanding would be quite willing to take action in the Human Rights Commission for discrimination on the basis of sexuality. We are aware that has happened in Australia and we are aware it has happened overseas. So there is a fear of retribution.

**CHAIR:** One of our earlier witnesses proposed a broad 'no detriment' provision which would say that there could be no detrimental consequence of somebody expressing a view, as opposed to manifestations in terms of not providing a service—just expressing a view. Is that the sort of protection that you would be seeking for your members?

**Mr Richardson:** I do not believe that section 47A as proposed to provide an exemption would succeed without the consequential amendment to the Sex Discrimination Act.

**CHAIR:** Would that also need to flow down to state based discrimination law?

**Mr Richardson:** Yes, it would. In my view, it would need to, although it should take precedence.

**CHAIR:** Ms Pforr, my understanding is that you said all celebrants ultimately come under your association but not everyone is a member of other associations.

**Mrs Pforr:** Subdivision C, yes.

**CHAIR:** What feedback have you had around concerns to this extent?

**Mrs Pforr:** Dorothy, do you want to answer that?

**Mrs Harrison:** Yes, I do. I have a bit of laryngitis, which is why I have let Liz speak today, but we wrote the submission together. We have had overwhelming support for 47A to be removed. Three per cent of people who answered our survey said they may think about resigning if forced to do same-sex marriages, so we feel that the vast majority would be involved. We also feel that it should be signposted who applied for an exemption, saying they are available for civil ceremonies excluding same-sex marriage, if that is the case. Then they are going to be open to discrimination cases. We thought that a same-sex couple having to phone several celebrants to ask, 'Are you available to do same-sex marriages?' is totally discriminatory—painful, in fact. That is why we think there should be no exemptions.

**CHAIR:** You have been here all day, so you have probably heard me asked the question of others about the Canadian proposal—

**Mrs Harrison:** Yes, Saskatchewan. That is how it is said!

**CHAIR:** Yes, thank you very much. Despite your laryngitis, you have coped with that one very, very well! What is your view on that proposal as a way of avoiding—

**Mrs Harrison:** Yes, I was saying that they should be signposted, so it is somewhere on the Attorney-General's website, as a person who does not wish to do or is legally exempt from doing same-sex marriages. It would be interesting in our situation, where there are some 40 people who are authorised to do religious and civil ceremonies, which I think is totally out of order as well. What have they got to do—

**CHAIR:** Just to help the committee understand, because I must confess I have never really looked into the celebrant industry: in terms of the business model of someone who does civil marriages versus someone who is registered as a religious celebrant—other than the different name and a slightly different focus, in terms of the business model for a small business person—is there any fundamental difference between the potential market size and business opportunities they have?

**Mrs Harrison:** There certainly is, because we are required to pay a registration fee to the federal government annually and we are also required to do, approved by the department, ongoing professional development. I think there are great differences there.

**CHAIR:** The implication is that someone who is a religious celebrant does not need to pay a fee and does not need to do professional development?

**Mrs Harrison:** And they do not have to do professional development about the law, as we do. I think we should all probably need to do some of that, especially on the legal matters.

**CHAIR:** My understanding from reading some submissions is that we have a large denomination. They have structures to basically have people who are licensed by the state but conduct it within the religious organisation. There are some that are quite small and celebrants, I am assuming from the way I have read the submissions, are licensed as civil celebrants but they are actually working within the construct of that church who are not big enough to have denominational recognition. Have I interpreted that correctly?

**Mrs Harrison:** Independent religious celebrant should not be doing civil ceremonies if they are in subsection C. They are independent religious small groups and they are required to do ongoing professional development and pay a registration fee, as civil celebrants are. At the moment, with all the celebrants, the average is 9.3 weddings per year, which is not enough to maintain the knowledge, in my opinion. I have had 40 years' experience as a celebrant.

**CHAIR:** You are saying that on average celebrants to 9.3 weddings per year?

**Mrs Harrison:** Each per year.

**Mrs Pforr:** If I may, marriage figures are declining. As far as a business model is concerned, there are very few of us—when you say the word 'business', it implies that, even with small business, you are making a lot of money and you are able to support yourself. Celebrants cannot. Essentially, the majority of them are doing it still as a public service, but it is also as a secondary job for them.

**CHAIR:** I may come back to you, but I will hand over to Senator Pratt for now.

**Senator PRATT:** So you outlined an example of just being able to say that you are busy if you are asked and actually want to decline a ceremony to act as a celebrant. Can that be legally challenged and are you liable under current anti-discrimination law if you do that? My understanding is that part of the training is upholding the application of anti-discrimination law. How do you balance that?

**Mrs Pforr:** I guess it would have to be proved firstly that you were not already booked, so great lengths would have to be taken in that regard for yourself. I would tend not to do it, obviously, because it is not the way I operate, but there are some celebrants who do. I know of celebrants who object to having children in weddings, because they still believe that a child should not be part of the wedding. That is their conscientious belief at the moment, but they would say that they were booked. How that could be proved is another matter.

**Senator PRATT:** I guess this really is just a question in terms of drawing a contrast of positions of the two organisations, which are different, in terms of how you both choose to cope with the same issue. Clearly, it is an issue that exists already, irrespective of whether we have a carve out for same-sex couples—

**Mrs Pforr:** Our objection is that it is just same-sex couples that are being targeted with this bill.

**Senator PRATT:** If it were a more generalised exemption that enabled you to negotiate with couples—for example, if I want to get married I would like to be able to ask my celebrant whether they authentically believed in my right to get married as a person in a same-sex relationship. Currently, under a change in the law, either they will be able to say yes or no or they might be concerned that they might be prosecuted if they said, 'No, I do not believe in supporting same-sex marriage,' and I am denied the right to have that authentic engagement with my celebrant about what their actual views are.

It is a complicated path, because I also understand people who say, 'I should not be denied the right to get married by any particular celebrant.' If I need to draw the line on that issue, where should I be drawing it?

**Mrs Pforr:** I guess it comes back to my opening statement, where I said, 'How long is a piece of string?' It is really so open-ended, with how many examples you could—

**Senator PRATT:** But you could look to a more generalised exemption rather than singling out same-sex couples. Or is the principal—

**Mrs Pforr:** I do not see the need, our association does not see the need, whatsoever, for that exemption to go in. It is being managed and has been managed. Regardless of our opposing views, Brian, I feel your association would support that in the fact that we already as celebrants manage that without the need for it to be put into legislation.

**Senator PRATT:** Notwithstanding the fact that it may already be in breach of some anti-discrimination law to do that.

**Mr Richardson:** Same-sex marriage is not legal. We as celebrants, and I am sure my colleague would agree, do not often come across that question with couples who want to get married, whether they are same-sex or not. Our view, more long-term, if this bill were to be enacted and implemented, is when the issues might start for us as civil celebrants.

**Mrs Harrison:** That is why we object to it.

**Senator PRATT:** Notwithstanding that, I have certainly been to many weddings where the heterosexual couples ask the celebrant to say some words that express their personal values in support of same-sex marriage contrary to the current Marriage Act. You would need to work out whether as a celebrant you were comfortable saying something like that.

**Mrs Pforr:** That is already occurring because—

**Senator PRATT:** Very frequently.

**Mrs Pforr:** Yes. I would say, for the last two years, and I am talking on a personal level here, it is the first time I have been asked, after I say the monitum, 'However, it is the views of the marrying couple that they feel that love is love,' essentially, or words to that effect. I am very careful with my wording of that though, where I say it is the couple's view. Sometimes the couple have approached me and said, 'Why can't you say that it's everybody's view?' I have said, 'Until I have everybody'—that is, the guests of that ceremony, and it could be two people or it could be 200 people—'until I have spoken to everyone I cannot say that, because it may not be everybody's view. Not everybody is comfortable to say that.'

**Senator SMITH:** Just speaking for myself, I think what has been useful thus far—we do have some days to go—is that people have been able to articulate their most preferred or purist position but also have been able to articulate what they might think is a fair or, let us say, accommodating position, given the positions of many other people who are interested in this issue. That brings me to the Coalition of Celebrant Associations' proposition that

is detailed at page 161 of my briefing pack, but it is not page 161 of your submission. But you do put forward a proposition, which is:

... if the parliament decides to provide exemptions for independent professional civil celebrants, such exemptions should only apply to ... current authorised civil celebrants, not new civil celebrants, and ... require those who object on 'religious or conscientious grounds' to apply to the Commonwealth Marriage Registrar for an exemption in accordance with the legislation ...

Can you just speak to that a little more broadly.

**Mrs Pfforr:** Yes. We currently have a register that is online, on the Attorney-General's website. We felt that, if the bill went through in its current state, there could be some form of coding or something like that that went online for that.

**Senator SMITH:** But what you are also providing, and these are my words, is effectively a grandfathering arrangement—that those people who have agreed to be civil celebrants under the law which recognises heterosexual marriages should be given the freedom to still be civil celebrants, but, if the law changes, should be able to exercise a religious or conscientious objection; but that, if you become a civil celebrant once the law allows same-sex marriages, that religious or conscientious objection should not be available to you because you are signing up to act on behalf of the state when the law is very clear. Is that a fair—

**Mrs Pfforr:** That is very fair, yes.

**Senator SMITH:** That is a fair summation of your position?

**Mrs Pfforr:** Yes, most definitely. If I can expand on that just a little bit more, celebrants currently offer commitment ceremonies for couples. In Queensland—it has been state-by-state thing—as far as the civil partnership union is concerned, it got put in, then it got repealed, then it got put back in again. It is a bit like a political yoyo, unfortunately, and I really feel that governments need to stop playing politics with peoples' lives and realise that it is people's lives that they are dealing with. We do offer commitment ceremonies currently for those same-sex couples that wish to formalise their partnership. Obviously, marriage would be one step above that.

**Senator SMITH:** From your submission—it is not your purist position, but let us call it an accommodation—firstly, what you are effectively saying is that, if people have signed up to be civil celebrants in good faith when the law said X and want to continue as civil celebrants when the law becomes Y, they should avoid the temptation to be less than truthful. I do not think we would want that from civil celebrants generally. Secondly, it does recognise that people might have some religious or conscientious objections.

My next question then goes to Mr Richardson. Mr Richardson, I note that you said you had read all of the 70-plus submissions. What is the attitude of the AFCC to that accommodation, which is my word, that has been put forward by the Coalition of Celebrant Associations? In my reading of the situation, it could alleviate that fear that you have alluded to.

**Mr Richardson:** I have some concerns about the creation of yet another group of celebrants within what is already a fairly complex group. So I do not think it would be a good idea to create, out of a group of some 8,000 civil celebrants, a separation into categories of those that were prepared to solemnise same-sex marriage and those who were not prepared to.

I am, however, rather taken by your proposition about a grandfathering provision that would allow for existing celebrants—bearing in mind we have 8,000 of them who were either appointed or were registered as civil celebrants under the existing legislation that provides for marriage between a man and woman—

**Senator SMITH:** I agree with you, Mr Richardson. I am just trying to really narrow this done—drill down, if you like. Let us find where this area of contestability is.

Mr Richardson, you might have a different view. If we go back to the Coalition of Celebrant Associations' submission, they are suggesting that there would be, let's say, cumulatively, 13½ per cent of the 8,000, and please correct me if I have misunderstood these figures, who would either discreetly refuse—that is, be unavailable—or object to the idea of same-sex marriage. Of course, if we had a grandfathering arrangement, this is a group of people who would diminish over time.

**Mr Richardson:** Exactly. The survey that our association undertook as recently as August 2016 bears out the same percentage of members.

**Senator SMITH:** Okay. So we are talking apples for apples. That is good. I notice you have a 10-member volunteer national committee. Would you be good enough to reflect and come back to the committee about whether 'grandfathering'—and that may not be the technically correct word, but we understand what we are

talking about—would be a suitable accommodation; something that the Australian Federation of Civil Celebrants could accept?

**Mr Richardson:** I am certainly prepared to do that.

**Senator SMITH:** Thank you.

**Senator KITCHING:** Looking at your notes, Mr Pforr and Ms Harrison, could you take me through the different subdivisions. Mr Richardson has indicated that there could another subdivision. Can you take me through them and give me an example of who might be in these subdivisions?

**Ms Pforr:** Subdivision A celebrants are religious and recognised religious celebrants—for example, the Catholic Church in that regard; recognised religions.

**Senator KITCHING:** But not a priest?

**Ms Pforr:** Yes.

**Ms Harrison:** They comprise 52 per cent of all celebrants.

**Ms Pforr:** Then subdivision B celebrants are those who are appointed by the state—births, deaths and marriages, for example.

**Ms Harrison:** That is less than one per cent.

**Ms Pforr:** Subdivision C is civil celebrants, which is us but also independent religious celebrants. So they do not actually fit under the umbrella of a recognised religion. I think you will find that they are all listed in the ICCA's submission. I know that was a submission that went in late on Friday, so that might be something for you look at as to how many there are of those.

**Senator KITCHING:** Mr Richardson, you seemed to indicate there would be another category. Where would they fit? What are they?

**Mr Richardson:** It is not my proposition. If the civil celebrants, which is subdivision C, were split into those who were prepared to undertake same-sex marriages and those who weren't, then that would create another subdivision.

**Ms Pforr:** Just for clarity, I did say before it would be better for everybody if, essentially, the subdivision C category, which fits with us as civil celebrants, and the independent ones were separated so that we did have another section. That is probably where the confusion came in, and then Brian used the same terminology for civil celebrants: those who accept same-sex marriage and those who do not.

**Senator KITCHING:** Would you envisage that requiring a different type of registration?

**Ms Harrison:** Yes, because their needs and beliefs are different and they would need different training and so on.

**Senator KITCHING:** Let's say I phone up and I say, 'I'm going to get married. I'm gay.' Do you then meet the couple?

**Mrs Pforr:** Sometimes that is possible; other times it is not, because it may be a couple that are flying in from overseas. We do not have laws in Australia where they need to be in the country for a certain amount of time prior, like other countries do, so they could literally fly in and fly out, as long as they have given us the required paperwork, which is currently a month's notice. If they have given us that and then they have been able to provide the documentation for identity purposes and they have provided two witnesses on the day and they are who they say they are for the purposes of ourselves for the wedding, we can go ahead with it. So, no, we do not necessarily have to meet them beforehand, but generally it is the case. On the Gold Coast I more often than not do not meet the couple, because they are flying in from overseas.

**Senator KITCHING:** I presume most people provide birth certificates, do they?

**Mrs Pforr:** No. The provision changed in 2014, whereby we are now able to accept a valid Australian passport, which was not the case up to a few years ago, where we were allowed to accept it from overseas couples but not from the marrying Australian public. We actually argued that at the Attorney-General's Department that the Australian public should be afforded the same.

**Senator PRATT:** Your passport can be in a different legal gender to your birth certificate.

**Senator KITCHING:** I am interested in that. I would imagine for same-sex marriage it may be reasonably easy for a marriage celebrant, even if they do not meet the couple, to know that it is a same-sex couple, which brings me to the survey results. But I am also interested in that purpose as well, because one of the examples that we have been thinking about is that there may be an imbalance in the couple. There might be an exploitative

relationship. We are looking at that as an example, but you may never see whether that is the case if, for example, you are meeting them on the day of the ceremony. So I am just trying to think about that as well. But, just to go to Senator Pratt's question, with those identifying documents, do you feel that that process is sufficient if this exposure bill were to become legislation?

**Mrs Pforr:** I guess in some respects it would be easier because at the moment if we see their birth certificate it tells us what sex they are—whether they are male or female—and we cannot marry them currently if they are of any other gender or no gender.

**Mrs Harrison:** But transgender people also have passports saying they are of the new sex, and I have actually married a couple that was questioned by Canberra, but I said, 'I saw the passport. It said she was female. What else am I supposed to do?'

**Senator PRATT:** Who, therefore, is the arbiter of gender for the purpose of upholding the Marriage Act, because gender records are held by the state government, in terms of that being a legally defining gender identity for the purpose of the Marriage Act? Is that not right?

**Mrs Harrison:** That is correct. If they have a passport or a birth certificate saying they are a certain sex—whatever—we must accept that.

**Mr Richardson:** The act requires that the celebrant be satisfied that the parties are who they say they are. So that could be by any number of inquiries, but normally relying on the birth certificate and/or the current or expired passport, but not a cancelled passport.

**Senator KITCHING:** I am looking at your survey results which are contained in note 3. So, essentially, 80 per cent of marriage celebrants are happy to marry same-sex couples, and the remaining percentage is perhaps not so happy.

**Ms Pforr:** Yes. The figures showed us that, as you correctly stated, 80 per cent were happy to marry same-sex couples and 6.5 per cent said that they would accept them if they were legally required to do. So that was sort of taking that next step for it. So that would add to that figure. So it would be 86.5 per cent, generally—if you wanted to say in those terms—that were happy to do that. And 10.5 per cent discreetly said that they would refuse—for example, saying that they were unavailable—and three per cent said that they would resign if the law was enacted.

**Mr Richardson:** In support of that, in the survey that the AFCC undertook only seven months ago 13 per cent of the respondents to the survey said that they were not supportive of same-sex marriage in Australia. So the numbers are fairly consistent between the two organisations.

**Ms Harrison:** We did not ask for evidence whether they supported same-sex marriage or not. We looked merely at the law and how it affects celebrants.

**Senator KITCHING:** And do you have a breakdown, I guess, across the subdivisions which are contained in note 1 as to where the 80 per cent derive from in those subdivisions?

**Ms Pforr:** It was only subdivision C that we did the survey through, but that included those two within that subdivision C. So that was civil celebrants and the independent religious celebrants. We do not have any provision to email or—I guess we could have done a register of it, but I am sure if we had have emailed the Greek Orthodox, for example, they might not have bothered to answer.

**Senator KITCHING:** They may really not have bothered!

**Ms Pforr:** Exactly. There may be another view entirely.

**Senator KITCHING:** I guess you do not know until you ask.

**Ms Pforr:** For the purposes of this, it was only subdivision C celebrants.

**CHAIR:** Thank you for your submissions and for appearing today. If you have agreed to take anything on notice for the committee, I ask you to get that back to the secretariat within the week.