

MP Engagement Training for Activists



AIMS OF TRAINING

- Tips and advice on how to lobby local MPs for human rights outcomes

- How and why Amnesty engages MPs
 - Especially how you and your group can help!

- How important parliamentary advocacy can be for human rights

MP Engagement is

Building a relationship with your MP



Influencing your MPs positions and behaviour



Building the VISIBILITY of Amnesty groups to show how many of us are committed to human rights



AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



Your Work is Part of Our Work

- Your work is part of a broader government relations strategy.
- We are most effective in engaging MPs together.
- Your role is critical.



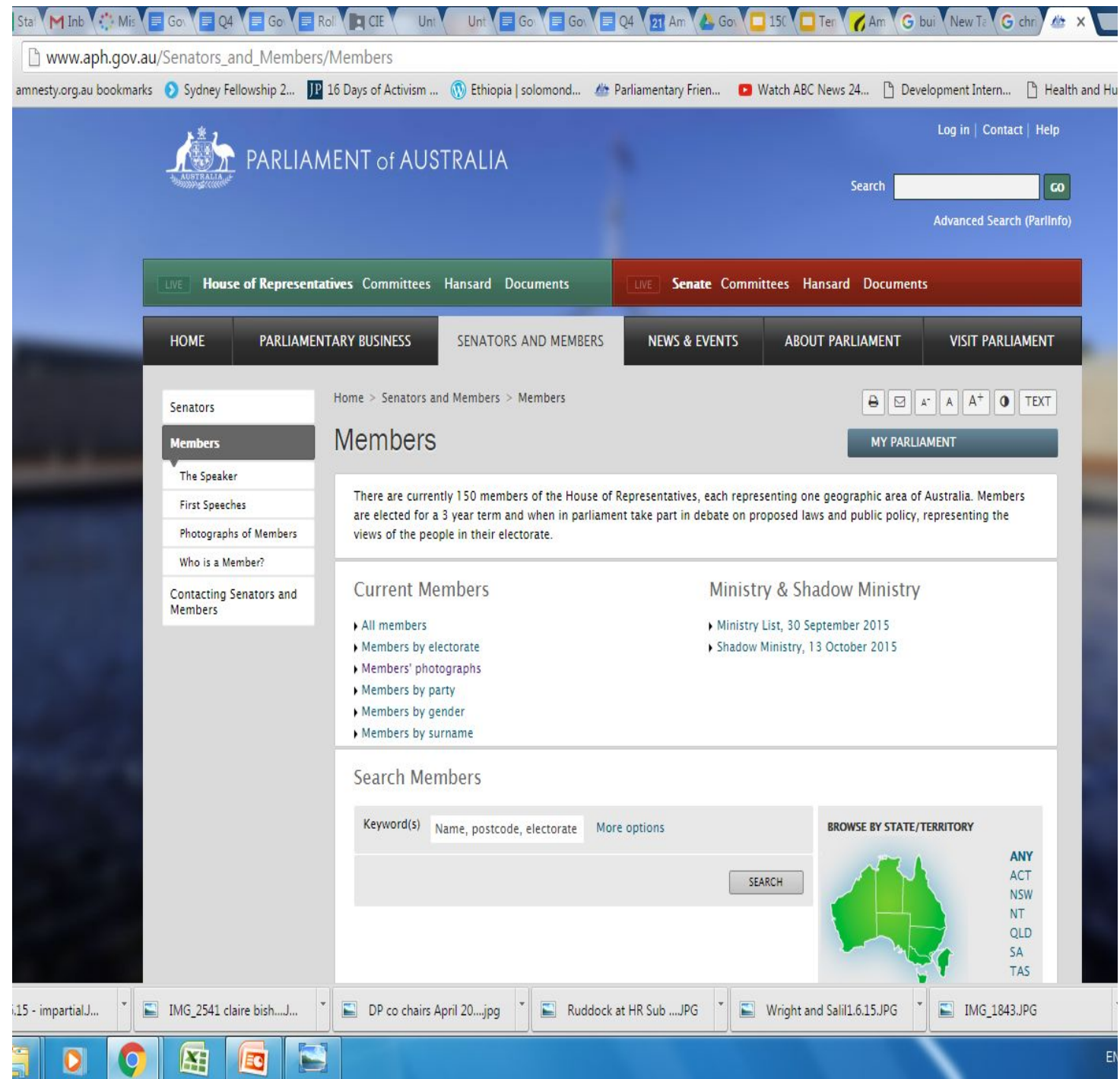
MP ENGAGEMENT IS ALSO...

- Impartial - AI value
- Part of a 3 year strategy to increase and deepen MP Engagement around Australia
- Building a bigger Human Rights Movement in Australia



Step 1: Target

- Who is your local MP? (Federal and State)
- What are their interests?
- What issues resonate with them?
- What common ground do you have?
- Think (and act) LOCAL
- Focus on building a relationship



Step 1: Plan - Create a PLAN for whatever level of engagement you are interested in

- What is the problem?
How do you want to change it?
- Why are you engaging at this time?
- How will you approach the MP?
- How does it resonate in the electorate?
- What can the MP/Senator proactively do?
- How can Amnesty International help them?



Steph 3: How...???

Social media

Calling

Meetings

Aim: Building
Relationship
and Influencing

Letter Writing

Flyers/Actions

Events



Social Media

- Is your MP following you?
- Tweet at your MP
- Comment on their FB page
- Be polite (where it feels right stroke the ego! 😊)
- Remember impartiality

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile of Andrew Giles MP. The page has 4,536 likes and a video about being a Labor Member for Scullin. A post from December 10 at 3:03pm shows Andrew Giles MP sharing a photo by Tanya Plibersek. The photo features the text: "All human beings are born **free and equal** in dignity and rights," with "UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ARTICLE 1" below it. The photo also includes the text "HUMAN RIGHTS DAY | 10 DECEMBER". Below the photo, Tanya Plibersek's post from December 10 at 2:42pm is visible, stating: "On 10 Dec 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the UN. Today we reaffirm our commitment to human rights and freedoms for all. #HumanRightsDay". The right sidebar shows a 'Create Page' button, a 'Recent' list with years 2015, 2014, and 2013, and a sponsored ad for 'chuffed' with the text: "Gifts worth giving plan.org.au/giftsofhope Feeling festive? Give a gift that will make a real impact this Christmas. Need help with your Crow... Chuffed.org We noticed you were thinking about starting a campaign - was there anything we can do to h..."



Calling

- Write down what you want to say
- Identify yourself as a constituent
- Outline your key concerns
- Leave a message!



Writing

- Use correct titles
- Always have a clear ask!
- Give background info on your group, Amnesty supporters in electorate etc.
- Clearly outline your concerns and what needs to be changed.
- Request a meeting
- Template coming...watch this space!



Flyers/Actions

- Be respectful and inclusive – stunts in offices are a no go
- Give a heads up
- Take photos and share on MP social media page



Meetings

- Prepare talking points
- Have a clear objective and 2-3 asks
- Ask your MP or senator to follow up on any action taken as result of meeting.
- Always follow up on actions!
- Take notes and reflect



Events

- Pollies love an audience!
- Invite them to one of your events
- Hold a town hall meeting and ask them questions
- Show there is a concerned constituency in their electorate



Step 4: Follow Up

- If relationships are the key to effective lobbying – then it pays to maintain your relationships.
- After a meeting with an MP/Senator, write to them to thank them for their time
- Reiterate your key points and your ‘calls’ to remind them what you are after.
- Let them know you’ll keep them informed and stay in touch about the issues that interest them.

We must talk to our MPs - IT'S IMPORTANT!

MPs ENGAGEMENT MEANS:

- MORE RIGHTS DISCUSSED IN PARLIAMENT
- MORE RIGHTS ASKS IN PARLIAMENT

Part of Amnesty's role is to hold the government of the day to account to its human rights obligations. Local groups can help do that.



HOT TIPS!

- What is the current government policy? Check it out online
- What does the MP think? Check out their website: media & speeches
- If they're from an opposition party – find out that party's position online
- Check AI website to get up to date position on the issue
- Useful to know if the MP has extra parliamentary roles. Check out their parliamentary service, bio and maiden speech at aph.gov.au.

MORE HOT TIPS!

- Clearly set out your point of view and why you have taken the time to meet with the MP
- Have a request ready:
 - Eg. Want to see the Australian Government better support Afghan Women's rights and for the MP to discuss the need for this with their colleagues.
- Make sure you ask a few tricky, polite questions – your MP will not know everything about the issues you are interested in. Ask them to follow up an issue. This gives you a “hook” to make further contact.
- Let them know you will FOLLOW-UP.

Amnesty's Government Relations Department want to help you!

Contact info: Tamara Lions
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Tamara's call-in hours are: 3pm-5pm, Monday-Thursday –
there are no silly questions!