

Official Visitor (Disability Services) Appointment 2015

Disallowable instrument DI2015—18

made under the

Official Visitor Act 2012, section 10(1)(c)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Section 10(1)(c) of the *Official Visitor Act 2012* authorises the Minister to appoint at least one official visitor for the purposes of the *Disability Services Act 1991*. The function of Official Visitors (OVs) is to work to protect human rights in different environments. OVs operate in the ‘closed’ environments of youth and adult corrections and mental health, and as a result of changes made by the *Official Visitor Act 2012*, OVs now operate in the ‘open’ environments including disability and homelessness services.

This instrument appoints Narelle Hargreaves OAM as OV for the purposes of the *Disability Services Act 1991*. Mrs Hargreaves is an experienced OV, with more than five years of experience as the official visitor for the *Children and Young People Act 2008*. She has worked in education for many years, including as a school principal and a director within the public service.

She has experience as an advocate including as OV, as Chair of the Milestone Review Panel for Minister Burch, and as Chair of the ACT Children and Youth Services Council. Her commitment to the ACT community has been evident in various roles such as her current position as Chair of the Canberra/Nara Sister City Committee. Mrs Hargreaves is an experienced official visitor having a strong understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities.

As required under subsection 10(2) of the Official Visitor Act, the appointing Minister has consulted with the operational Minister (being the Minister for Disability) and is satisfied on reasonable grounds that Mrs Hargreaves has suitable qualifications or experience to exercise the functions of an official visitor for the *Disability Services Act 1991*.

Further, Mrs Hargreaves is not excluded from appointment by being a public employee or holding a relevant interest as defined under subsection 10(3) of the Official Visitor Act.

In addition, Mrs Hargreaves is not a public servant as defined under the *Legislation Act 2001*. As required by the Legislation Act, the Standing Committee on Legal

Affairs has been consulted on the appointment. The Committee has advised that it has no comments on the appointment of Mrs Hargreaves as an OV.