

19 March 2009

The Director  
Standing Committee on Law and Justice  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

**Re: Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice  
Inquiry into adoption by same sex couples**

During hearings of the Committee, the ACL took on notice a question from Hon John Ajaka regarding statistics on the structure of families in Australia. The following information is taken directly from the *Families in Australia: 2008* report, published by the Commonwealth Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

*Couple families (where the children are the natural or adopted children of both parents) . . . are still the most common type of family with children under 18 years. In 2006-07 they made up 73% of all families with children under 18 (p. 13).*

*One-parent families made up 20% of families with children under 18. Step and blended families (where the children are a mixture of natural/adopted children and step children) made up about 7% of all families with children under 18 (p. 13).*

*The 2006 Census suggests there are around 26,000 same-sex couples, making up less than 1% of all couple families. Around 11% of these families (or 2,900 families) had one or more children of any age living with them (p. 14).*

The statistics clearly show that the vast majority of children live in a natural family environment, as stated by ACL during Committee hearings. We are concerned that the Committee may be labouring under misconceptions about what is considered to be the normal family structure in Australia and trust this information clarifies this.

I trust this information assists the Committee and apologise for the lateness of our reply.

Yours sincerely,

**Lyle Shelton**  
**National Chief of Staff**  
**Australian Christian Lobby**