

YM22 SESSION REPORT
send to secretary@quakersaustralia.info

Name of Event:	Peace Session
Date/Time	5 July 2022 at 12.30pm AEST via Zoom
Person submitting report	David Purnell
Clerk/Convenor/s	
Summary (400 words or less) include number attending your event	<p>There were about 50 participants in the session, which was held from 11am to 12.30pm AEST on Tuesday 5 July 2022 via zoom.</p> <p>After an acknowledgement of the traditional custodians, Harold Wilkinson (convener of QPLC) welcomed everyone and outlined the program.</p> <p>Quaker Peace & Legislation Committee Report. David Purnell (CRQ) summarized the report in DIA, emphasizing the various facets of QPLC’s work – briefing documents on many peace-related themes, letters and submissions to government and parliament, links with other peace groups, support for whistleblowers, and participation in peace events. He spoke in particular about the responses to the invasion of Ukraine, the on-line vigil for peace, a substantial Watching Brief, and a visit to the Russian Embassy.</p> <p>Alternatives to Violence Project. Di Bretherton (VRM) reported that the pandemic restrictions on close contact had limited the capacity to hold effective workshops. In addition, a number of private prisons had declined to accept AVP workshops. There have been more programs in school and community groups. Globally there are active AVP programs in many countries.</p> <p>Friends Peace Teams. Valerie Joy (QRM) said that FPT is expanding geographically and in its methods. Children’s stories are a useful vehicle for engaging people. FPT has links with FWCC sections, and issues a journal PEACEWORKS. Pati Place in Indonesia has become a valued venue for inter-faith groups. There is potential for peace libraries to be developed in Australia.</p> <p>Regional Meeting Reports. (a) <u>Queensland</u>. There is an active peace and social justice group, and peace vigils are held monthly in central Brisbane. Quakers work with other peace groups on campaigns. QPLC can add appropriate links to the website. (b) <u>NSW</u>. The ‘Raising Peace’ network has emerged as a shared concern among many groups, leading in 2021 to an on-line conference and another one on the Anzac weekend in 2022 – both well attended. Quakers have been actively involved. A people’s forum on Ukraine is planned for late July. (c) <u>Canberra</u>. Quakers have taken part in rallies in support of whistleblower Bernard Collaery and Witness K. They joined the Stop Killer Robots campaign. Funding and practical support for the maintenance of the memorial to the SIEV-X loss of asylum seekers has been given. Regular monthly peace conversations have been held in the Meeting House on different themes. (d) <u>Victoria</u>. The peace network meets monthly. The weekly vigil for indigenous justice is held in Melbourne. Support for asylum seekers has continued, especially for Afghan refugees. APAN is to have a office in the Meeting House. (e) <u>Tasmania</u>. Friends are active in many peace actions. They have joined the ARRCC and put</p>

banners about climate change outside the Meeting House in Hobart. There is strong support for whistleblowers, and also for Aboriginal justice. (f) South Australia. AVP is being done in Darwin and Alice Springs in prisons. There was a Palm Sunday rally in Adelaide to support refugees, and Friends took part. Friends are working with ARRCC on climate change. (g) Western Australia. The advent of the nuclear weapons ban treaty was celebrated. Mayors for Peace continues to be active. Fremantle city has been re-named using an Aboriginal name. There is opposition to uranium mining on Aboriginal land. There is concern about the arms trade. A video about Quakers and peace is planned.

Disrupt Land Forces Expo. Christine Venner-Westaway (QRM) spoke about the action to disrupt the arms trade fair in Brisbane in October. The slogan 'earthcare not warfare' is being used. The campaign is being led by Wage Peace and involves many younger activists who are using direct nonviolent action. A particular concern is military aid from Australia to Indonesia for use in West Papua, and the role of the Boeing company.

Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN). Margaret Clark reported on the expected release of a major report on the US-Australia Alliance, to be tabled in Parliament in September. A Convergence will be held in Canberra at the same time. She recommended the IPAN newsletter 'Voice'.

Statement to Government. The meeting noted that QPLC was putting together a statement for YM to send to the new federal government emphasizing the importance of a more measured and constructive tone and approach to international relations, and identifying several specific areas of concern to Friends. The group preparing the statement welcomed assistance during YM so a completed version could be endorsed by YM.