

New Private Member's Bill? Human Rights Act for Australia to be tabled

An Independent MP has announced she will soon table a new Private Member's Bill to introduce a federal HR Act for Australia. See **CLA Report for August 2024** for details.

What future should Australia aim for?

The USA faces a projected shortage of up to 450,000 nurses by 2025 and 120,000 doctors by 2034.

Australia is directly competing for trained and qualified medical, scientific and technical experts against the likes of the UK, US, Canada and NZ, as well as EU nations and other countries.

Our greatest asset is 'Aussiedom', the unique combination of a fair go, rights and liberties, free and easy lifestyle, remoteness and safety from people-generated wars and strife, as well as a non-racist equality that could make Australia the best place on earth to live, if nurtured from childhood – all children – up.

That's the type of package we need to embed, promote and sell to the world as our point of difference.

Seeing ourselves as founded on a 110-year-old, militaristic Anzac culture of dying for other nations in foreign fields is 'old Australia'. It's not what skilled migrants want for their kids.

'Aussiedom' will attract the world's best and brightest people, whether fleeing persecution or seeking the 'perfect' place to live for their own and their children's futures. – Bill Rowlings, CEO of Civil Liberties Australia, August 2024. – US statistics: <https://tinyurl.com/3hrmmhxd>

LIES

Governments lie and sideline the truth

Instead of nurturing kids, Australian governments are officially abusing the nation's children, and telling lies about what they are doing, and lies about the impact of supposed monitoring agencies.

The National Children's Commissioner said last month that interviews with more than 150 young people about their experiences in the criminal justice system have revealed "evidence of the most egregious breaches of human rights".

That's no way to run a country now, much less in the future.

Commissioner Anne Hollonds (photo) released a landmark report titled *Help Way Earlier*, which calls for the establishment of a national taskforce to reform child justice systems. That is the minimum of what is needed, CLA says.

Hollonds' report also recommends raising the age of criminal responsibility, a federal cabinet minister for children, and a ban on the use of solitary confinement.

The report found that media "sensationalism" about youth crime demonises children, "hardens" sentiments, and encourages politicians to take "populist 'tough on crime' solutions which do not work to keep children or our communities safe". <https://tinyurl.com/5bucde7m>

The "lies" were proven in WA, where the state's Department of Justice was pulling the wool over the Minister's eyes, though it is extremely fair to say he could not have been completely unaware of major problems in the jurisdiction (see *CLArion* August issue).

Queensland is possibly the worst state at the moment, with an election due there on 26 Oct 2024. The state locks up many more children than other states. The Department of Youth Justice has confirmed:

- the average daily number of young people in custody is up by 92 young people in the past 5 years (310 in the 12 months to 31 March 2024)
- the average length of time spent in custody by a young person has increased by 13 days in the past 5 years (to 31 March 2024).

See:

'Screaming, freezing, struggling to breathe: confronting Queensland watch house footage exposes anguish of children locked in isolation cells': Ben Smee, in *The Guardian* <https://tinyurl.com/5fyr329f> and *'How Queensland's youth crime crackdown is forcing vulnerable kids into "brutal" detention system'*: <https://tinyurl.com/mr84mhvf>



But last month, Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan announced she was reneging on long-foreshadowed plans to raise the age of criminal responsibility. <https://tinyurl.com/5ff5e3wh>

Police actively chose to prosecute more Aboriginal children

“In July 2020 Australian state and territory governments got together and established a National Agreement on Closing the Gap, one aim of which was to reduce the number of Aboriginal adults in prison by 15% by 2031,” crime research guru Don Weatherburn* wrote recently.

“Between making that commitment and March 2024, the Aboriginal imprisonment rate rose by 18%. If it continues rising at the current rate, it will be more than 40% higher than it was back in July 2020.”

The imprisonment rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is 2.5 times higher than the African American imprisonment rate and more than three times the Native American imprisonment rate.

“...the primary driver of Aboriginal imprisonment is a high rate of arrest. The arrest rate for Aboriginal people is between 8 and 12 times higher than for non-Aboriginal people.

“Aboriginal young people are less likely to be cautioned and more likely to be prosecuted than non-Aboriginal young people. At age 17, 16.6% of caution-eligible non-Aboriginal young offenders are prosecuted, compared with 43.2% of Aboriginal defendants.”

* Don Weatherburn (photo) is a professor at the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre and was formerly Executive Director of the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. – extracts from an opinion piece, *SMH* and *WAtoday* 29 July 2024 <https://tinyurl.com/pp8jnrnp>



Brand new govt makes same mistakes

In the NT, the Liberal Country Party government elected on 24 August has already announced it will lower the age of criminal responsibility from 12 to 10 in what will become another failed bid to legislate and police away the problems of Indigenous disadvantage and lack of adequate support.

Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro plans to lock up children aged 10 and 11. Their brains are not properly formed in normal circumstances, and in the NT a very large number suffer from malnutrition as babies and lack of schooling (see below for report on Howard’s misplaced claims about the NT “intervention”).

At best, the CM will merely have to fund a large increase in child jailing, at \$1m per child per year. Then there will be the cost of new “jails”, probably two more at least for young people in the Territory.

And, of course, the ramifications for child development, for outdoor kids being locked for years in high security environments, on their mental health as children and adults and parents themselves later on, will haunt the NT 10-20-30-40 years from now.

But, of course, Liberal, National, Country Party or Labor, there’s nothing like a crime scare to win an election. The new govt has promised more prisons, more sentencing options, and more penalties for people convicted of crimes.

More of the same policies that have failed throughout Australia, as the Hollonds report points out.

Lies and misdirections emanate from Ministers and governments

The admitted lies by the WA Dept of Justice – generated by the Corrections Department – are an excellent indication that other departments and agencies elsewhere in Australia do exactly the same thing.

While proof is so far missing, there is every reason they learn from each other at the regular conferences, training sessions and seminars regularly attended. In the prisons field, the same situation is probably much enhanced by an overlay of private contractors.

Then there are the fibs by people formally responsible for the abuse of children.

For example, Queenslanders were told all was well when the state decided to lock up young children in police watchhouses: there were five agencies monitoring the welfare of the kids, the govt said.

But for months and years those same agencies had been consistently reporting abuse of children in all child jails and jail-like facilities (and adults too, of course).

For years, the Qld govt had done nothing practical to fix the problems.

The same situation applies in WA, in the NT, in the ACT, in Tasmania and in Victoria. There’s no reason to think it is not nationwide, systemic, entrenched and actively ignored.

Everyone knows the problems disproportionately – massively so – affect our Indigenous kids. But no federal, state or territory jurisdiction will make the fundamental reallocations of resources across health, education, social services, police and justice to properly address the issues.

Wright – and all Qld – in waiting for more forensic failures

The Qld government has kicked sand in the face of the forensic scientist who saved the state from laboratory chaos leading to criminals escaping scot-free.

Forensic biologist Dr Kirsty Wright, who exposed the state's DNA lab disaster, has been left out of the new body to oversee forensic testing in the state – despite her applying to be chosen, *The Australian's* Lydia Lynch reports.

It was Wright who uncovered inappropriate testing practices at the government lab that compromised thousands of criminal cases and potentially allowed killers and rapists to escape justice.



AG Yvette D'Ath last month announced a sub-optimal oversight panel. Former judge Julie Dick (photo) is chairing the 11-member advisory council, which includes people from forensic services, law, policing and victim support...in other words, a collection of "the usual suspects", CLA says.

D'Ath said :“The council will monitor and review all FSQ policies and procedures relating to the administration of criminal justice.”

That's almost certainly a potential lie awaiting future revelation. There were people in place in Qld to do precisely the same type of "monitoring" previously...but only Wright had the courage and integrity and conviction to blow the whistle. Without her on the "advisory panel", there is no way that, as D'Ath claims, the advisory panel "should help to restore the community's confidence in (Qld's) forensic services".

Chair Dick, to gain personal and panel credibility, must insist Wright is added to the panel, CLA says.

Why would you not appoint Wright?

Dr Wright (story above) works for the Australian Army developing forensic capability for counter-terrorism and national security, and as an RAAF reservist squadron leader helps recover and identify fallen soldiers from historic and current conflicts.

She is a visiting fellow with the Genomics Research Centre at the Queensland University of Technology, was involved in the response to the 2002 Bali bombings, led an international team identifying victims of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, was manager of the national DNA database, and was pivotal to identifying the remains of schoolboy Daniel Morcombe. – From *The Australian*, behind a paywall.

DAMNED LIES

If much of govt is continuously failing, odds are other core bits are too

There is general obfuscation by which governments get away with doing the wrong thing and, more frequently, doing nothing where they should act. This is a sort of public permission to glide from election to election without being held properly to account for their inactions and bad actions.

Tasmania is in dire strife, and it is hard to believe the extent of its self-generated problems...or that they are not endemic in the public service, such as in the police force and forensics.

For example, there are allegations that a top relevant doctor at the state's second major hospital improperly signed off death certificates, which meant the deaths would likely not be investigated by a coroner.

The same Tasmanian hospital, in Launceston, suffered from a pedophile in a powerful position for nearly 20 years. <https://tinyurl.com/nhcyk3nm> It also apparently ignored child sexual abuse allegations against two other former staff members. The former executive director of medical services at Launceston General Hospital (LGH) has been accused in parliament of falsifying death certificates.

An independent review later found 29 deaths should have been investigated by the coroner. There was at least one death – that of Eden Westbrook, 15, of St Helens – where an autopsy was carried out at the same hospital, but the formal findings are being seriously criticised.

The allegations in relation to lack of coronial action in Launceston and the north of the state link directly to a possible nest of pedophile police in Tasmania, a situation still being investigated.

Closer and closer is coming the time when a major Commission of Inquiry will be needed into police and "justice" in the state.

Time for formal inquiries into policing and ‘justice’

In Tasmania, both major hospitals, in Hobart and Launceston, had refurbishment issues.

The wharf in Devonport has been so badly mismanaged that brand new ferries won't be able to dock where they should, putting the interstate sea trade that the island depends on at greater disadvantage. In Hobart – its base – Australia's Antarctic vessel can't refuel because of incompetent forward planning.

Just this past month the government's infrastructure Minister, Michael Ferguons was forced to resign the role...but he remains Treasurer and Deputy Premier. The State's most-esteemed economic guru, Saul Eslake, has recently produced a report for the government that said Tasmania was headed towards a \$16 billion debt, the worst of any Australia jurisdiction. <https://tinyurl.com/yvxdd2ha>

There are a raft of other failures or failed promise delivery by Tasmanian governments over the past 20 years or so that have left infrastructure in massive deficit to the state's growing needs, and serious clouds hanging over the bureaucracy.

None of these matters is of direct concern to CLA. But what is a major worry is that every aspect of Tasmania's governing processes for more than two decades has been publicly identified as less than optimal, and in many cases plain incompetent.

It's in that context that CLA points out that Tasmania Police and the justice/legal system has never – not once, ever – been subjected to a formal, overall inquiry into how well or otherwise it operates.

Those in the know in Tasmania – lawyers and the like – can expound for hours on numerous horrific tales of police investigations gone wrong, evidence tainted, justice skewed and the legal/court system made subject to advertent or inadvertent abuse by players at all levels.

In the latest manifestation of problems, the forensic science staff are going on strike currently. That's a worry.

But an even greater worry is that forensics in Tasmania is under the direct control of the Police Commissioner, and therefore the Police Minister as well. Every report into forensic science worldwide says state laboratories and scientists should be independent of the police. But not so in Tasmania.

Need is dire in island state, but wider for the nation also

Tasmania clearly needs an inquiry into its state of policing and justice delivery, for the reasons above.

But the truth is that Australia needs a national inquiry of similar ilk.

The way the courts and state police/legal systems evolved from the start of the Australian federation 225 years ago is not now fit for purpose. It has not been so for many decades, from the High Court of Australia down.

We'll have more to say on these important matters in future issues of *CLArion*.

Guardian and trustee failures illustrate extent of problems

The need for a national inquiry into “justice” is evident from huge problems related to state guardians and trustees.

Widespread claims by governments and trustees that the guardianship/trustee system in Australia is fair and equitable for “clients” are porkies that can only be proven wrong one by one, in isolated case-by-case, and mostly in and by the media when ordinary systems are repulsed by “the system”.

The people's inability to hold guardian/trustee bodies to account – the entities are “independent”, government-owned, money-making and mandated to be used – means that only tragedy by tragedy, mistake by mistake, fudge by fudge is the bitter truth of trustee/guardian secrecy, maliciousness and fiscal and legal incompetence revealed.

The *ABC Investigations* unit did the nation a service last month when it exposed scandals perpetrated by the Queensland body, and problems in the ACT. (See link below).

“Tens of thousands of Australians whose affairs are managed by public trustees and guardians by order of state tribunals face hefty fines and jail sentences if they speak out,” the ABC said. That's because a gag clause stops “clients” speaking out against the government bodies that are ripping them off.

The 2023 Disability Royal Commission recommended the gag laws be lifted around the country and it called for improved transparency of public trustee fees.

As one critic said: “The public trustee should not be managing your funds and at the same time making money out of vulnerable people. It's a complete conflict of interest. They can squeeze as much as they like out of you in fees, and you don't have the right to speak up about it.”

– ‘Queensland’s Public Trustee said complaints were ‘not substantiated’. Refunds tell a different story’ by Anne Connolly, ABC <https://tinyurl.com/2zmc2m9b>

National capital is worst place in Australia for locking up kids

The ACT has traditionally weaseled its way out of responsibility for locking up more kids than anywhere else, blaming skewed statistics in a small jurisdiction.

But a new report reveals the ACT has some of the highest youth incarceration rates in the country.

The Productivity Commission shows only five out of 19 Closing the Gap targets on Indigenous disadvantage are on track to be achieved.

Nationally, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 10-17 years in detention on an average day was 29.8 per 10,000 young people.

The commission found the ACT had the largest increase in detention rates for First Nations children, which rose by 48% from 138.4 in 2021-22 to 204.9 in 2022-23.

While the local rates are small and less reliable than the overall national picture, ACT Attorney-General Shane Rattenbury conceded the over-representation of First Nations people in the territory’s justice system was unacceptable.

"I think it's fair to reflect that across the country and particularly here in the ACT, which is obviously our responsibility, there is a long way to go in seeking parity of outcomes for Aboriginal people compared to non-Aboriginal people," he told the ACT budget estimates process.

"We still see significant over-representation and I think that is a blight on our jurisdiction and we need to continue to make investments."

...and STATISTICS (or how one wholly inappropriate claim can be refuted)

Howard tells porky to try to save his reputation: facts say otherwise

The “omnipotent” old man who never apologised for any mistakes while Prime Minister claims his NT intervention of 17 years ago was ‘totally justified’. <https://tinyurl.com/muem74ac>

This is the same PM, John Howard, who refused to apologise to Australia’s Indigenous people for the crimes of colonists and governments over centuries before his own efforts (a subsequent PM made a gracious and heartfelt apology on behalf of all Australians).

“The intervention was totally justified because the NT government had failed in its responsibility to Indigenous children in the territory,” former PM John Howard said. The intervention followed a report children were being sexually abused (see later in this report).

In truth, the Howard intervention was a poll-driven attempt to shore up his failing Coalition government just five months before the December 2007 federal election. He lost the election, and was kicked out after being in office since 1996. He also lost his own seat, so badly was he perceived by his local electorate.

What did PM Howard’s intervention achieve for children as a matter of proven fact?

In 2017, researchers at the Menzies School of Health Research in Darwin and the School of Economics at the University of Sydney reported that the income management scheme (including the discriminatory basics card) introduced as part of the intervention had a negative impact on (Indigenous) children, with reduced school attendance and lower birth weights of infants. <https://tinyurl.com/mry7r86f>

From 2007 to 2012, the Australian government “intervened” in the NT without consulting with Indigenous people. The Howard government announced its massive abuse of citizen’s human rights and liberties by media release: the incoming Labor government failed to instantly throw the scheme out.

They restricted drinking alcohol and banned pornography in communities, altered welfare payments, basically reclaimed land owned by communities, and changed how education, employment and health services in the NT were delivered, as well as cancelling an effective community development scheme.

The Howard government turned out the Australian Army to basically manage and “police” its Indigenous and NT citizens. Howard removed people’s rights under the Racial Discrimination Act, which is a fair indication of his respect then and even possibly now for human rights.

His latest self-serving self defence of his actions followed the recent apology by NT police chief Michael Murphy for how the force acted over centuries against Aboriginal people, and specifically during the intervention.

Murphy told attendees at the Garma festival recently that the NT Police had “made mistakes”, apologising for the past harms and injustices to all Indigenous Territorians. Murphy said many Indigenous Australians believed Howard’s measures were “racist and reminiscent of the old protection era”.

CLA believes Murphy’s is a serious understatement: we believe about 95% of Indigenous Australians to this day believe Howard’s actions were racist and of a colonial bent and mindset.

In 2010, a UN Special Rapporteur, James Anaya found the intervention to be racially discriminating and infringe on the human rights of Aboriginal people in the NT.

But the intervention was “totally justified”, Howard declared. “I stand by every element of my government’s decision to intervene.”

This includes, it would seem, the fact that the babies born during the intervention are now the worst-behaved teenage generation in the NT’s history. This fact is probably due at least in part to the lower birth weights and reduced school attendance that PM Howard is – or should be held – accountable for.

Howard and his Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough jumped at the shadow of an inquiry report, generated by the NT government (not by the federal govt), which “after visiting 45 communities, was disturbed enough to refer ‘half-a-dozen’ matters directly to police,” as journalist Paul Toohey wrote in *The Bulletin* on 6 September 2007. “Six hearsay reports in 45 communities do not make a compelling case.”

Still, Brough jammed down on the accelerator, claiming the Territory had ‘a paedophile in every community’. <https://tinyurl.com/3vtwbf3e> Ironically, it was sexual allegations (not against him) that eventually saw him step down from the Ministry, and shortly after abandon any future parliamentary career.

Child sexual abuse: the facts

By the way, “in the five years the (intervention) legislation was in place before being repealed, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs claims that the total number of people convicted for child sexual assaults in Intervention communities was 45, compared to 25 people in the five years before the Act was implemented.” <https://tinyurl.com/mry7r86f>

Howard’s intervention, which cost something like \$1.5 – 2 billion at least, set back Indigenous people for decades, with mental health issues continuing to this day. If those extra 20 convictions were a measure of the “positive” outcome, each extra conviction came at a cost of about \$100 million.

Imagine if PM Howard had had the sense and the wisdom to spend that same amount of money on improving the communities, boosting maternal health, feeding infants better and improving primary schools. It is very important that politicians not be able to write their own puff pieces, without fact checking.

Further reading:

<https://theconversation.com/ten-years-on-its-time-we-learned-the-lessons-from-the-failed-northern-territory-intervention-79198>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/10-impacts-of-the-nt-intervention/vzia753tx>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-07-24/nt-intervention-reflections-15-years-on/101238592>

And, for the alleged roles the ABC and others played:

<https://redflag.org.au/article/seven-years-how-abc-lateline-sparked-racist-nt-intervention>

Incompetent police terrorise children, mostly Aboriginal kids

In NSW in 2023, there were 719 criminal court appearances finalised involving kids aged 10 to 13 at the time of the alleged offence.

- 53% of the kids had all charges withdrawn in the courtroom by the prosecution;
- 25% were found not guilty of any offences; and



- 20% had at least one proven offence. Of these proven court appearances, half (50%) received a court dismissal, which include a court-ordered caution or referral to a youth justice conference. – NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) 14 Aug 2024.

To CLA's mind, these figures mean that incompetent police put 78% of these children – some 560 kids – through the entire process of arrest, charge and going to court without adequate reason.

About 80% of court appearance in 2023 involving kids aged 10-13 at the time of the alleged offence did not result in a proven offence. Of the 710 court appearances where Aboriginality data was available, 70% – or 495 court appearances – involved an Aboriginal child

The statistics reveal the “guilty” are overwhelmingly the police. CLA calls on the NSW Police Force to apologise to the children of the state, and to state publicly how they will stop being so incompetent.

Ends STATISTICS

Journos get better shield...maybe

Journalists now have some protection from being forced to disclose sources after a new legislation extended shield laws to Qld Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) proceedings.

But a “public interest” clause still allows judges and the state to force disclosure. The new shield laws mean journalists cannot be compelled to provide information, documents, or answer questions in CCC proceedings where it would identify a confidential source, “unless this is in the public interest”.

Journalists who disagree with a CCC decision on journalist privilege have the right to apply to the Supreme Court to determine their claim.

These reforms build upon the existing shield laws framework that exists in Queensland under the Evidence Act to give journalists the protection for confidential sources they need to allow them to report on matters that are in the public interest.

The Bill also implements the government’s response to recommendations in the Fitzgerald and Wilson Commission of Inquiry and a number of recommendations from the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee. <https://tinyurl.com/2utrjs3f>

Diplomat keeps Canberra servant in penurious isolation

The former Sri Lankan Deputy High Commissioner in Australia, Ms Himalee Arunatilaka, owes her former domestic worker \$374,000 in unpaid wages, and a further \$169,000 in interest.

In the Federal Court judge Elizabeth Raper found, in *Danaratna v Arunatilaka* [2024], that Arunatilaka had committed “significant breaches” of Australian employment law.

Lawyers Clayton Utz (CU) represented Danaratna pro bono. She was brought out to Australia to live and work at the Canberra diplomatic home of Arunatilaka, who was appointed Sri Lankan deputy HC in Australia in 2015. The servant’s passport was taken away when she arrived in Australia, and never returned. She was a virtual prisoner in the residence.

“Our client worked from 6am until late into the evening – cooking, cleaning and washing for Ms Arunatilaka and her husband – seven days a week, for three years. She had only two days off in all that time, after she had burned her hand cooking,” CU said. She was paid only \$11,212 in total, or less than 65¢ an hour, sent directly to bank accounts in Sri Lanka.

Arunatilaka is now Sri Lanka’s ambassador and permanent representative to the UN in Geneva. She has not challenged the legal decision, or defended her actions.

CLA notes that, if the UN takes no action against her, it will have abandoned its own Universal Declaration of Human Rights principles. <https://tinyurl.com/bdfd47tk>

CU pro bono boss says possibly ‘tip of iceberg’

Speaking about the legal case, CU pro bono partner David Hillard said the matter was not an isolated case.

“It is the second Federal Court judgement in less than a year involving domestic workers at diplomatic residences in Canberra. Domestic workers in foreign diplomatic residences are among the most vulnerable and isolated workers in Australia,” he said.

“It is hard to conceive of someone in 21st century Australia literally being trapped in a job for three years and earning 65¢ an hour.”

He said it was now clear that “senior diplomats cannot hide behind diplomatic immunity when it comes to keeping their servants under slave-like arrangements.”

Allied: AG's Modern Slavery branch gets active

The Modern Slavery branch of the federal AG's department is running a national consultation on forced marriage.

The consultation closes on Monday 23 Sept 2024. You can make a written submission, respond to an online questionnaire or participate in a targeted consultation. CLA is engaged in the latter, represented by President Dr Kristine Klugman.

Consultation paper and more information: <https://consultations.ag.gov.au/integrity/forced-marriage>.

Meanwhile, after Australia's first forced marriage conviction last month, young migrant women want to educate their parents to the way of Australia rather than the ways of countries their families have fled. The AFP said there were 90 reports of forced marriage in Australia in 2023.

ODD SPOT: If the Australian tobacco tax rate of about \$2000/kg was applied to alcohol, a litre of whiskey at 40% alcohol by volume would be \$800 in tax alone, after the latest increases. A mere 50 litres of vehicle fuel would cost almost \$100,000 – that would "help" people stop driving their nasty polluting vehicles. Does anyone know why liquor, which causes more and wider suffering than tobacco, is taxed so disproportionately?

Committee lets more repressive laws through

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCIS*) has waved through the Crimes and Other Legislation Amendment (Omnibus No. 1) Bill 2024.

The bill amends and clarifies the intended operation of various crime-related laws, including:

- expressly authorises police, when executing search warrants, to seize digital assets, such as cryptocurrency;
- extends investigative and freezing powers under existing proceeds of crime laws to apply to digital currency exchanges;
- increases the value of the Commonwealth 'penalty unit' from \$313 to \$330;
- creates a position of Communications Security Coordinator in the Department of Home Affairs; and
- amends information-sharing provisions to ensure state-based oversight bodies for integrity agencies can access material that has been lawfully intercepted by the agencies they oversee. NOTE: the PJC for Human Rights does not agree with the PJCIS on this issue.

* CLA calls it the SIC – Security and Intelligence Committee – because it always seems stronger on security than intelligence. Maybe it would be a candidate for the new AI mechanisms?

ODD SPOT: So much for government restraint on prices

You will have probably noticed, above, that the increase in the penalty unit is 5.4%. So much for the Reserve Bank trying to get inflation down to 2-3%. Seems the govt doesn't give a damn.

[Speaking of artificial intelligence: this was spotted recently on the ABC News site:](#)

ABC News (AU) · 23h

How first Boeing 737 to crash in Australia was salvaged by locals

19 16



...it's either an AI mistake, or the new ABC spelling of 'Boeing' under NAPLAN education guidance, or maybe the jet engine bowstring wasn't wound up tightly enough?

Did police groom youth with mental disability so as to entrap him?

The AFP spent \$500,000 mounting a multi-year counter-terrorism operation against a 13-year-old boy with autism and intellectual difficulties which made his fixation worse and thwarted rehabilitation efforts.

The Guardian reported seeing FOI documents which show the total cost of Operation Bourglinster, an AFP probe into a boy known as Thomas Carrick, was \$507,087.

Victoria's Children's Court ruled that – after his parents sought help from authorities – police encouraged Thomas in his fixation on Islamic State during an undercover operation.

ASIO, AFP and Victoria police later charged the boy with terror offences. A magistrate, who found an undercover officer “fed his fixation” and “doomed” the rehabilitation efforts of the boy and his parents, was savagely critical of the police behaviour.

“The community would not expect law enforcement officers to encourage a 13- to 14-year-old child towards racial hatred, distrust of police and violent extremism, encouraging the child’s fixation on Isis,” Magistrate Lesley Fleming said in the decision. <https://tinyurl.com/2j96nef3>

Housing is a human right: ex-judge

Former Victorian Supreme Court judge, Kevin Bell, says housing is a fundamental human need that is embodied in a fundamental human right.

“The economic value of housing as an investment has been allowed to dominate the social value of housing as a home,” he writes. “That is a skewed way of looking at a fundamental human need that is embodied in a fundamental human right.

“Yet it has come to define the entire housing system. That is the root cause of our dilemma. That way of looking at housing has to change.” Bell made his comments in a new book, *Housing: The Great Australian Right*. <https://tinyurl.com/2s3jyer>



OPINION: You can back the NT Independent, you know it's trying. Corruption bodies...not so much!

Those who called in the police ultimately produced a result that was dishonest, inappropriate, against the best interests of Territorians and Australians...and contrary to both law and good practice, writes Civil Liberties Australia CEO Bill Rowlings about the APSAC conference, adding that transparency and openness is the best disinfectant for corruption; failing to expose it to educational media coverage was an opportunity gone south.

NT Police issue warrant banning journo for 12 months

A Territory police constable issued a warrant which purports to ban a Darwin journalist and editor, Chris Walsh, from attending any event at the main Darwin function centre for 12 months to July 2025.

Walsh is editor of *The Independent*. He is a long-time senior journo in the NT, having worked at the Murdoch-owned *NT News* and the Australian-owned *ABC*.

All he was trying to do was to attend a national anti-corruption conference and ask some of Australia’s most high-powered corruption officials some questions.

But the NT ICAC, which organised the gathering, apparently asked police to throw him out of the three-day affair. Police decided of their own volition to extend the ban to any event in the entire convention centre for a further 362 days.

CLA’s CEO Bill Rowlings wrote an opinion piece about the affair: <https://ntindependent.com.au/opinion-you-can-back-the-nt-independent-you-know-its-trying-corruption-bodiesnot-so-much/>

Boyle still faces charges, Keelty faces none?

Whistleblower Richard Boyle of Adelaide, who leaked information to the media about the appallingly amoral processes of the Australian Tax Office in how it garnisheed the income of miscreants, is facing time in jail when his court case is finalised.

His latest bid to remain free is an appeal to the High Court, recently revealed. It’s interesting to compare Boyle’s leaks with unpunished but seemingly identical behaviour of others.

Leaker Mick Keelty, former Commissioner of the AFP has – so far as is publicly known – faced no charge for leaking secret AFP information to Ben Roberts-Smith, which allowed the disgraced former soldier allegedly to “bury” items of potential evidence and buy “burner” (disposable) mobile phones to avoid the police finding ongoing linkages with potential future evidence givers. Keelty has returned his Order of Australia medal, which he was given in 2011.

You might remember that the AFP and Keelty were pilloried for their handling of the three-week Muhamed Haneef affair, when in July 2007 the medical doctor practising on the Gold Coast was jailed and falsely accused of aiding terrorists. Haneef received “substantial” compensation, thought to be in the millions of dollars range.

Duggan two years in max security for not applying for a licence

Sticking with leakers and whistleblowers and their ilk, Australia continues to hold our own citizen, Daniel Duggan, pending extradition to the US to face US Administration allegations of illegally training Chinese pilots.

US-born Duggan, 55, has already been in maximum security jail in Australia for two years, in a case remarkably reminiscent of that of Julian Assange.

Australian AG Mark Dreyfus can intervene to prevent Duggan's extradition. He should do so immediately, and return the father of six, who became an Australian in 2012, to his family.

A Sydney court heard that there was a 2016 secret indictment of the US District Court in Washington DC, which was only unsealed in late 2022. In it, US prosecutors say Duggan provided training, earning about \$90,000, to Chinese military pilots in 2010 and 2012, and possibly at other times, without applying for an appropriate licence. So, apparently, he has been locked up so far for two years for not applying for a licence. <https://tinyurl.com/3kkue5yb>

CLA says it is well open to us as a nation to insist that Duggan, as an Australian citizen, is of enormous value to us for intelligence and experience reasons and it is therefore not in the interests of Australia that we should lose instant access to information that Duggan may hold in an emergency. In other words, it is in our own intelligence and security interest to not extradite him.

Team tackles reasons for cycle of violence

WA's Edith Cowan Uni Associate Professor Jocelyn Jones (photo) is leading a groundbreaking project titled 'Learning from the stories of young Aboriginal men and adolescents convicted of domestic, family and sexual violence'.



The project is part of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) 2023–2027 program, which focuses on understanding and addressing the behaviours of those perpetrating domestic, family and sexual violence.

The aim is to break a cycle of violence to help young Aboriginal people to address their own harmful behaviours. The findings will inform health and other interventions throughout Australia.

The project is backed by a team of researchers, including: Prof John Gilroy of Sydney Uni; Robert Shaw, of Curtin Uni; Ass Prof Hannah McGlade of Curtin Uni Law School; Dr Lynn Roarty of ECU and Curtin Uni; Devon Cuimara of the Aboriginal Males Health Centre Strong Spirit Strong Families Strong Culture Inc; and Prof Richard Chenhall, of Melbourne Uni. <https://tinyurl.com/5ajpmmb5>

Briefs

Another new head for NAAJA

The North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, NAAJA, has named Anthony Beven (photo) as acting chief executive officer. He is reportedly the sixth boss of the troubled agency in about 18 months. Beven is a lawyer who most recently worked at Grant Thornton Australia. He served as Registrar of Indigenous Corporations for a decade, and worked for the Australian Securities and Investments Commission for 20 years, including 10 years in the NT. – from the NT Independent 14 Aug 2024



Govt tries to wave magic wand

Queensland, in the run-up to its 26 October 2024 election, has brought in sweeping powers for police to randomly stop and search people. Police may use handheld metal detectors – wands – to search people without a warrant basically wherever they gather. The laws are on trial until October 2026. <https://tinyurl.com/msurvrwd>

LETTERS

Ministry of spin?

I see that the Assistant Minister for Manufacturing has been rebadged the Assistant Minister for a Future Made in Australia. George Orwell eat your heart out. – Ian Douglas, Jerrabomberra, NSW

Mental health reforms languish

By comparison with the new guardianship laws in Tasmania, it appears guardianship in Victoria is administered under VCAT* and applies mainly to the aged in cases where there is no other suitable person. It does not appear to apply to the mentally ill as it does in the US and other places.

My chief concern continues to be the prejudice regarding mental illness, which manifests with the number of mentally disturbed people still being shot to death, particularly in NSW. If you analysed the statistics of people shot dead by police in Australia you would find a predominance of mentally disturbed people.

Armed police should not be the "first responders" to confrontations with the mentally disturbed. If the much-promised reforms coming out of the Victorian Royal Commission are being implemented, which is doubtful, there is clear indication that nothing has happened for two years. The government website boasting about "reform updates" has itself not been updated since October 2022. <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-reform/reform-activity-updates> – Reg Murray, Glen Iris, Vic * Vic Civil & Administrative Tribunal.

Honest police very responsive

Don't be misled by low crime rates. Police do a lot more work than they are recognised for. Many work excessive hours, have an average to poor work-life balance and have a reduced life expectancy. Also, maybe ask them if they need more colleagues. They will give you an honest response. – Troy Roberts, media and government relations director, Australian Federal Police Association, Canberra

ADF for disaster aid

I think the report calling for the Australian Defence Force to only be used to assist in national disasters as a last resort is a disgraceful cop out. The Australian Defence Force should always assist in such matters. They are well trained, they are a large available force, they are well paid and taken care of in many ways. Assisting in disasters is a natural fit. This report belongs in the rubbish bin. – John Lyne, Darwin, NT

Vote often...and early

As soon as an election is in the offing, our politicians suddenly start promising to do the things we've been screaming at them to do for years. I propose that henceforth we hold an election every three months. – Fred Pilcher, Kaleen ACT

CLA report for August 2024:

Independent MP Kylea Tink announces she will move new HR Act

CLA's Human Rights National Campaign team* was present when Kylea Tink, the Independent MP for the seat of North Sydney, announced sotto voce in Parliament House last month that she would move a new Private Member's Bill to introduce a Human Rights Act for Australia.

She gave no timetable, but the move is likely to occur in the next three months.

It is expected she will receive extensive crossbench and 'teal' independent support, including the heft of the Senator for the ACT, David Pocock.

Senator David Shoebridge, the Greens federal spokesperson on a HRA, also spoke at the Parliament House meeting, and indicated his party's strong ongoing push for a federal HRA. Josh Burns MHR, chair of the Human Rights Committee, also spoke.



Tink made her announcement at a meeting of the Parliamentary Friends of Amnesty International in Parliament House on 20 August 2024.

Photo shows Senator Shoebridge and MP Kylea Tink (centre) at the meeting at Parliament House.

The meeting was called to discuss the way forward on a federal Human Rights Act. But deciding on a joint strategy was disrupted by MPs from both the House and the Senate being called to formal votes in the respective houses.

Because so few MPs were present when Tink spoke, her revelation has not yet received the widespread acknowledgement that is likely once it becomes public.

* The CLA team comprises President Dr Kristine Klugman, HRA Campaign leader Chris Stamford and CEO Bill Rowlings.

Tink aims to achieve her 'wildest dream'

Announcing her solo move, Tink said it was her "wildest dream" on being elected to the federal parliament that she would be able to help pass a Human Rights Act for Australia.

"I thought it would take at least three terms," she said, signalling it was a 10-year project in her mind.

But she became a member of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, and was integral to the national consultation on a new "human rights framework" held in 2023 and early 2024. The result was a strong recommendation from the committee for the government to legislate a HRA.

“Among the extensive consultation we undertook, there was not one piece of evidence that said a Human Rights Act for Australia was a bad idea,” Tink said.

The PJCHR recommendations built on similar findings of the four-year study, *Free + Equal*, produced by the Australian Human Rights Commission. That document, tabled in late 2023, contains the full text of a draft HRA, which includes the ‘No Rights Without Remedy’ principle for which CLA has fought so hard since 2019-2020. NRWR is now entrenched in ACT HRA, which is celebrating its 21st birthday this year.

In other National CLA meetings this month:

- CLA met electronically with the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (former MP and federal Minister, Robert Tickner, chief executive Dr Mindy Sotiri) re the prospects of jointly promoting a HR Act for help justice reform.
- Attended a seminar at the Australian Institute International Affairs: *The Australian Foreign Policy Debate: A Reassessment* by Prof James Curran (which led to the lead item in this issue of *CLArion*).
- Community Consultation on Forced Marriage, Attorney-General’s Department: CLA made submission.

Tasmania...and the need for a HRA

The final report of just one of the recent major investigations into how badly Tasmania is run produced 12 volumes and an introduction. (Another major investigation was into the Ashley kids jail; a third into Tas Police pedophilia is still ongoing).

This most recent final report was given to the Tas government on 29 September 2023. The government has taken 11 months to reply.

The Tasmanian Government Response to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability lists all 222 recommendations made by the Royal Commission and the Tasmanian Government responses to them. You can read their replies here:

[Tasmanian Response Document](#) [Tasmanian Response Document Accessible](#) (CLA has absolutely no idea why the Tasmanian government is issuing one document that is apparently NOT accessible)

If Tasmania introduced a Human Rights Act (HRA), including the ‘No Rights Without Remedy’ principle, most of its problems would be solved because the people would have somewhere independent of government to go seeking justice.

Two law reform inquiries have recommended a HRA for Tasmania: about 75%-plus of the people want one.

NT...human rights embedded as police boss commits to building on them

“I stand here today to publicly commit to lead that change, to transform relations between police and Aboriginal people. It will not be a reset. It will not maintain the status quo. Instead, I intend to develop a new relationship built on mutual respect, trust and human rights.”

This was NT Police Commissioner Michael Murphy showing the way to other police leaders on how to create a new relationship between the police and Aboriginal people.

Leanne Liddle, the most senior Indigenous woman with the NT police and co-leader of change in the force, said she would work on an anti-racism strategy to follow the commissioner’s formal apology that would include increasing the number of Indigenous people involved in policing by 30% and putting Indigenous language speakers in the police call centre. <https://tinyurl.com/4tpu2zda>

NT: CLA and Amnesty campaign on hold

The election of a Country Liberal Party in the NT means the campaign for a HR Act for the NT will go on hold. If a Labor govt had been returned, there was a strong chance the NT would have had a HRA by the end of 2025.

Outstanding work was done by Elsa Adshead of Amnesty Darwin in the lead-up to the election. CLA expects she will play significant roles in the community, and possibly in politics, in future.

WA: Cross-agency problems and rules keep more people homeless

CLA’s WA leader Margaret Howkins reports that the out-of-control homelessness situation in Perth and throughout WA’s regions is worsening weekly...as is the situation nationally.

It costs \$250-500 a week – as well as a \$1000 bond – for a tiny room, with bed but no bedding. Visitor-friends of tenants are forbidden in such 4 – 6 bed rental houses.

When police are called to settle disputes between tenants (usually new immigrant or foreign students/workers) and landlords, the police say it’s a civil matter, but civil matters take months to be

heard. Meanwhile landlords hold on to bonds, preventing tenants from moving out to locate more humane rental conditions.

Most young people can't afford another \$1000 bond. The government people responsible for housing, from the Minister down, hide behind a massive majority in parliament. Their only answer: wait a year or so...!

Vans and cars are parked all over Perth, even in school carparks, with young families living in them. We're not allowed to build a small cabin attached to our villa because 'it's against regulations'. Caravans are only allowed to stop on private land for a limited time, and then after getting "special permission". You're not allowed to assemble prefab small homes on modest-size properties. Builders stand idle because regulations prevent them building what people are asking for.

Why isn't this a national scandal? Why do the federal and WA governments appear deaf, dumb and blind to the problems of our young people in particular? Housing should be included in a federal Human Rights Act for Australia.

Every agency I ring for advice has nothing to suggest. They are wringing their hands in desperation as well.

INTERNATIONAL

'No man is an island'...except for the world's judges

Judges from throughout the world who met recently on an island in the Pacific have decided the bullying of judges is such a major global problem – 1 in 10 have reported bullying, whether by or to them is not stated – that judges now have their own "Declaration of Judicial Wellbeing".

They are also asking the UN for an official "International Judicial Wellbeing Day".

The island where these judges met in late-July 2024? Nauru.

So far as is known, none of the 50 or so assembled judges made any inquiries or took any part in investigating the "elephant on the island".

That is, the fact that the number of refugees being held on Australia's behalf incommunicado and without basic legal rights on Nauru, has risen sixfold in the past 10 months, from 15 in February to 96 at the end of July. At one stage in 2003, the Australian-funded refugee jail was empty. <https://tinyurl.com/57e6z7py>

Any survey would show that 10 in 10 boat refugees locked up on Nauru would consider they are being bullied and have stress levels 10 to 100 times higher than judges have.

The 'Nauru Declaration on Judicial Wellbeing' has seven dot points. The last of them is that "judicial wellbeing is enhanced by human rights". <https://tinyurl.com/4h5dm4cd>

Apparently judges believe only judges have human rights.

'No Man Is an Island', from a sermon by John Donne: <https://tinyurl.com/yeejxdh2>

...but, sitting atop islands of privilege, some Australian judges stress out

One-third of Australian judges should be tested for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, a "preliminary" study into the psychological distress of the judiciary has suggested, according to a report in *The Australian in August*.

More than a third – the article doesn't say if it is the same third – turn to alcohol as a way to cope, Ellie Dudley reported.

The "preliminary" study was a series of self-assessments by the judges. It was commissioned by the NSW Judicial Commission but included judges in other jurisdictions as well.

The research found judges and magistrates experience much higher levels of psychological distress than the general population. One of the top five reasons for their work stress, judges reported, was self-represented litigants, ie people without benefit of a lawyer trying to argue their case for themselves.

The preliminary study, which involved surveying more than 600 judges across Australia, is part of a research series examining judicial wellbeing. <https://tinyurl.com/yvn8mvsk>

Stand by for a public plea for more judges throughout Australia about 12 months from now, as well as extending their time on the bench to 75-80 years of age, or even beyond, CLA warns, without medical or psychological assessment of whether at that age they are still capable of being a judge.

A better solution would be to appoint younger judges.

Majority verdicts linked to wrongful convictions

A recently published report on the hidden racist and classist intent behind the 1967 introduction of majority jury verdicts in England and Wales has revealed links between majority verdicts and wrongful convictions.

The need for jury unanimity was a benchmark of the criminal justice system for hundreds of years until the then UK Home Secretary Roy Jenkins changed the rule. Previously, all 12 jurors had to agree before a criminal conviction could be secured; for nearly 60 years that standard of “certainty” has been lowered to 10 out of 12 agreeing. Similar changes have occurred in Australia.

APPEAL is a UK charity and law practice dedicated to challenging wrongful convictions and promoting a fairer justice system.

APPEAL’s Racial Justice Lead Nisha Waller (photo left) and former Deputy Director Naima Sakande (photo right) have uncovered documents showing the lowering of standards was, at least in part, introduced based on a desire to dilute the influence of “coloured” migrants and the new “labouring class”.

The narrative unfolds against concerns of a more diverse jury pool, which some commentators felt diluted the “calibre” and educational ability of jurors.

APPEAL has identified dozens of high-profile wrongful convictions based on majority jury verdicts, which are set out in the report. This includes APPEAL’s client, Andrew Malkinson, who was recently exonerated after spending 17 years in prison, and Winston Trew, who was “fitted up” by a racist police officer in 1972.

“The references to women, racialised minority people and the working class as less capable of performing jury service are not prejudicial comments of the past – they are a relic in today’s jury system.” – Nisha Waller said, commenting on findings of the report *Doubt Dismissed*. <https://tinyurl.com/yc6edcra>



ODD SPOT:

NSA? ‘Incompetents hoovering world’s data, violating civil liberties’

The greyist shadow of a spook security entity, Palantir, came under the intense probing analysis of NY Times super columnist Maureen Dowd last month, in a long-form interview with Alex Karp, co-founder and CEO of Palantir Technologies.

She wrote:

“Palantir was founded in 2003 by a gang of five, including ...Karp and his old Stanford Law School classmate Peter Thiel (now the company’s chairman). It was backed, in part, by nearly \$2 million from In-Q-Tel, the C.I.A.’s venture capital arm.”

For years, Palantir has been the reputed deep-inner-space thinking behind US secret intelligence, from allegedly tracking down Osama bin Laden to keeping Wikileaks Julian Assange and his supporters on the back foot, CLA notes. Wars, they’ve known a few, Karp tacitly admits.

In one revealing paragraph, Dowd reports:

“Mr Thiel said that while Palantir had a brief stint working on a pilot program for the National Security Agency (NA), the company would not want to do any more work there: ‘The NSA, it hoovers up all the data in the world. As far as I can tell, there are incredible civil liberties violations where they’re spying on everybody outside the US, basically. Then they’re fortunately too incompetent to do much with the data.’”

Incidentally, Thiel support Trump; Karp supports Harris.

– ‘Alex Karp has money and power. So what does he want?’ NYT, 17 Aug 2024 (behind paywall)

Draft Iraqi law would allow nine-year-olds to marry by state decree

A draft law in Iraq allowing the marriage of girls aged nine has generated widespread protests: women’s rights activists say the law would “legalise child rape”.

The new proposal passed its first reading in the Iraqi parliament last month. It gives religious authorities the power to decide on family affairs, including marriage, divorce and the care of children.

Although Iraq has outlawed marriage under the age of 18 since the 1950s, a survey by the UN children’s agency, Unicef, found that 28% of girls in Iraq marry before they reach 18.

Female MPs believe the proposed law is part of deliberate moves to wind back a rise in female power emerging from mass youth protests in 2019. <https://tinyurl.com/ytb8y8ex> and Jummar media.

HR guru Sidoti speaks out on IDF ‘criminality’

In June 2024 Australian human rights guru Chris Sidoti, as a member of the UN’s Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, presented its findings report into abuses committed on both sides since Israel’s war on Gaza began.

Answering claims by Benjamin Netanyahu that the Israel Defense Forces is the “most moral army in the world,” Sidoti declared, citing the report, “the only conclusion you can draw is that the Israeli army is one of the most criminal armies in the world”.

The report found grave human rights abuses on both sides of the conflict.

(Sidoti served on the Australian Human Rights Commission and as a commissioner of the A. Law Reform Comm in the 1990s. He has held academic, national and international posts in the HR and civil liberties area. Before his recent fact-finding in Gaza, he was a member of the UN Human Rights Council’s Independent International Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar.

NY Times report (behind paywall): <https://tinyurl.com/2p8svf3e> UN report: <https://tinyurl.com/e5wt8zc2>



International briefs

If you’re registered ill, smoking cannabis is open slather

Minnesota is one of just a handful of states that allows public consumption of cannabis and people 21 and older generally can smoke and vape wherever tobacco smoking is allowed. But a date change in the state’s recreational marijuana and hemp law passed in May imposed a new restriction on private consumption that started on 1 July. Owners of multifamily housing must ban smoking and vaping of cannabis. However, medical cannabis users registered and with a medical card must be allowed to use smokable and vapable cannabis, even in multifamily housing.

Does X training Grok using EU amount to breach?

Ireland’s Data Protection Commission (DPC) is taking High Court action against Twitter International Unlimited Company, the Dublin-based data controller for social media platform X. The DPC wants an injunction to stop the company from using EU users’ data to train an AI-powered tool called Grok, which it believes would breach its obligations under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). X claimed the legal action is “unwarranted, overbroad and singles out X without any justification”. <https://tinyurl.com/4tu9nxa5>

ODD SPOT: ‘Unseen’ women now also unheard The Taliban, male rulers of Afghanistan, have banned female voices from being heard in public, under new vice and virtue laws which a spokesman said merely uphold and enforce Sharia (religious) law. Girls in Afghanistan are barred from education beyond age 11, women are banned from public spaces and excluded from many jobs while living under enforced dress codes and male guardianship rules. <https://tinyurl.com/3bmkrv62>

Lawyers forced to flee potential attack by rioters

Law firms and individuals handling immigration cases were told to go into immediate mini-lockdown ahead of feared right-wing riots in the UK last month. The rioters had circulated a list of potential targets widely on social media, including law firm business addresses but also sole practitioners and home addresses. Some lawyers were forced to pack their bags and flee their homes overnight with spouses and children in tow. <https://tinyurl.com/43r5hf8w>

DATES

9 Sept, Canberra: Speaker’s lecture, journalist Nikki Savva: *Survival in the age of mistrust, challenges for politicians and journalists*, 11-12noon. Entry free, registration required <https://the.forms.aph.gov.au/form/speaker039s-lecture-2024> Available live online also: <https://www.aph.gov.au/live>. Hear *The Insiders’* insider Savva ‘cause trouble’ – comment about her in 2016: “What a vile bitter looking woman, an old worn out gossip with nothing better to do in her old age but cause trouble:.. – *Daily Mail*: <https://tinyurl.com/3pt5nns9>

16-19 Oct, Fremantle: National Conference, Australian Lawyers Alliance. Esplanade Hotel. Details: <https://tinyurl.com/muffmzpz>

19-20 Nov, Melbourne: ‘Policing Reimagined’, conference of the ANZ Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA), whose board is made up of the police commissioners of Australia and NZ. ANZPAA runs NIFS, the National Institute of Forensic Science, which is the peak body for forensic science in A and NZ. <https://tinyurl.com/3faswaf2>

25-27 Nov, Canberra: Indigenous Higher Education Curriculum Conference 2024, U. Canberra: Australian unis are embedding Indigenous perspectives into higher education curriculum to provide students with Indigenous graduate attributes to work with and for Indigenous Australians across their chosen professions. Details: Marina Martiniello 0417 478 028 Email: IHECC@canberra.edu.au

2025:

February, Hobart (postponed from Sept 2024): *'Denied'*, exhibition of Sky Parra's portrait series on Wrongful Convictions, Salamanca Art Centre, 67 Salamanca Place. The artist has painted Scott Austic, Derek Bromley (see photo right, in Queen St Mall Brisbane in 2022), Frank Button, Henry Keogh, Andrew Mallard and Lloyd Rayney, among others, with a new portrait likely to be unveiled for the first time in Hobart. Details: <https://www.skyparra.com/>

20-21 February, Wellington NZ: Pacific Island Political Studies Association hosts Pacific Islands conference: *Zone of Peace or Ocean of Discontent?* Uni of Wellington. Details: E: pipsa2025@gmail.com

27-30 July Cambridge, UK: World Congress on Family Law and Children's Rights. Theme: *Children Caught in Conflict*. Info: <https://www.worldcongress.co>

Election cycle for Australia:

2024: **ACT:** 19 October 2024

Queensland: 26 October 2024

2025: **WA:** 8 March 2025

Federal: March 2025 likely

(Earliest possible is September 2024 and latest possible Saturday 17 May 2025)

2026 **South Australia:** 21 March 2026

Victoria: 28 November 2026

2027: **NSW:** 27 March 2027

2028: **Tasmania:** likely date is 27 May 2028

NT: 26 August 2028

CLArion is the regular e-newsletter of Civil Liberties Australia Box 3080 Weston Creek ACT 2611 Australia.

Responsibility for election comment in *CLArion* is taken by CLA's Public Officer, Bill Rowlings, of Fisher, ACT. Please feel free to report or pass on items in *CLArion*, crediting CLA and/or any other originating source. We welcome contributions for the next issue: please send to: [Secretary\(at\)cla.asn.au](mailto:Secretary(at)cla.asn.au) Closing date for this issue was 27 Aug 2024.

As we are not a law firm, and are not licensed to give legal advice, we do not deal with individual legal or similar quasi-legal cases: prisoners and others are advised we will not be responding to letters or emails asking for help with appeals, for legal advice, for recommendations of lawyers to write to, pro bono services to consult, or similar requests. We work to change laws rules and anomalies for the generic benefit of all Australians.

ENDS ENDS ENDS

