

The ABA acknowledges the relationship between the land on which it and its members work and the First Nations' peoples of Australia

Media release

ABA calls for moderation in anti-corruption debate

26 November 2021

The Australian Bar Association has called for moderation in the debate over the proposed federal anti-corruption commission, after the Prime Minister yesterday compared the New South Wales Independent Commission against Corruption to a 'kangaroo court'.

The ABA has long supported calls for a federal anti-corruption body with powers to investigate alleged malfeasance by federal parliamentarians, agencies and public servants. The design, powers and mode of operation of such a body are appropriate matters for robust debate, and the operation of state and territory anti-corruption bodies should be subject to scrutiny and, where warranted, criticism both generally and in particular cases. The ABA welcomes debate about the establishment of a federal body.

The Macquarie Dictionary, however, defines a 'kangaroo court' as an 'unauthorised or irregular court conducted with disregard for or perversion of legal procedure'.

ABA President Dr Matt Collins QC said, 'Whatever criticisms there may be of the NSW ICAC, it is neither correct nor constructive to characterise proceedings before it as the manifestation of a kangaroo court. The ICAC Commissioners are highly experienced and respected jurists who preside over investigations conducted according to law and the powers given to them by the NSW Parliament.'

[ends]

About the ABA

The [Australian Bar Association](https://www.austbar.asn.au) is the peak body representing more than 6,000 barristers throughout Australia. Established in 1963, the ABA is committed to serving, promoting and representing its members, as well as advocating for fair and equal justice for all.

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