

28 September 2022

National Anti-Corruption Commission Bill

The Law Council welcomes the introduction of legislation into the Federal Parliament today which will establish the National Anti-Corruption Commission.

“The Law Council has advocated for a national integrity commission for many years, and we are pleased to see this further step in the Government’s commitment to establishing such an authority moving ahead,” Law Council of Australia President Mr Tass Liveris said.

“The Law Council has long recognised that corruption has many corrosive effects on society including to undermine democracy and the rule of law.”

“The administrative and executive powers of the Commonwealth, along with national security and law enforcement powers, have expanded in recent years and therefore, it has never been more critical that we take decisive action to continuously strengthen our systems of integrity and independent oversight.”

The Law Council has called for the National Anti-Corruption Commission to be aimed at addressing serious and/or systemic corrupt conduct, be empowered to hold public hearings where a closed hearing would be unfair to the person or contrary to the public interest, be heavily focused on education and corruption prevention, and to have consistent processes, powers and requirements when dealing with law enforcement and other public sector corruption.

“This means the Commission must be appropriately and sustainably resourced and supported to achieve its stated objectives,” Mr Liveris said. “Therefore, we were pleased to see the Prime Minister’s and Attorney-General’s announcement earlier this week of \$262 million over four years for the establishment and ongoing operation of the Commission.

“It is essential that Parliament provides for proper scrutiny of the Bill, including through the joint select committee inquiry process, and ensures that the Australian public has adequate opportunity to consider the Bill and contribute to this process. We look forward to working with the Parliament to ensure the final model for the National Anti-Corruption Commission is fit for purpose,” Mr Liveris said.

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