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AFPA WELCOMES ANNOUNCEMENT OF INQUIRY INTO LEHRMANN MISTRIAL

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) welcomes ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr's establishment of an independent Board of Inquiry to examine the ACT Director of Public Prosecution's (DPP) allegations of misconduct in the *R v Lehrmann* trial.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said that the Association was pleased that the inquiry would not only investigate the conduct of police investigators, but also the conduct of the DPP and Victims of Crime Commissioner.

Mr Caruana said any potential influence exerted by ACT Attorney-General Shane Rattenbury or his office on the case must be scrutinised, as well as the appropriateness of DPP Shane Drumgold's public commentary.

"To ensure the inquiry is completely transparent, holistic and free of political interference, the conduct of Mr Rattenbury and his office should be included in the terms of reference of the probe.

"Furthermore, the inquiry should examine whether Mr Drumgold's explosive public statements were befitting of the ACT's top prosecutor. The national media frenzy caused by these claims have eroded the community's faith in its institutions. Several other more suitable mechanisms were available for Mr Drumgold to air his grievances," Mr Caruana said.

Mr Caruana also echoed Mr Rattenbury's call for the public to respect the privacy of individuals involved in the inquiry.

"The privacy of the individuals involved in this investigation is paramount. This includes the parties involved in *R v Lehrmann*, ACT Policing members, and employees of the DPP and Victim Support ACT.

"To protect the mental health of all involved, public hearings should only be conducted in exceptional circumstances. The AFPA will be here to help our members every step of the way," Mr Caruana said.

The Association awaits the terms of reference and the appointment of an independent legal expert to oversee the inquiry, and would be willing to assist either process if requested.

For comments:

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