

1 February 2023



MEDIA RELEASE

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR LEHRMANN INQUIRY

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) acknowledges the Terms of Reference and scope of the independent inquiry into the *R v Lehrmann* mistrial, to be conducted by the former Queensland Solicitor-General Walter Sofronoff KC.

Based on recent media coverage, AFPA President Alex Caruana said that the Terms of Reference seemed reasonable, and supported any measures allowing Mr Sofronoff to conduct an exhaustive analysis of the motives of the parties involved in the Lehrmann trial.

“It’s vital that this inquiry tests the allegations made by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and assesses the actions of police and the ACT Victims of Crime Commissioner.

“We thank the ACT Government for quickly appointing Mr Sofronoff KC to this important role,” Mr Caruana said.

The AFPA notes that the Terms of Reference do not focus on the actions of the ACT Attorney-General.

Mr Caruana also said that the inquiry should look at what motivated the DPP to ask the Attorney-General about the possibility of video testimony from a trial being used in a retrial.

“The AFPA supports the proposed legislation to allow for recorded testimony to be used in a retrial but holds concerns about its timing and the attempts to quickly push it through the ACT Legislative Assembly without proper consultation. What was the rush?

“How many previous complainants and victims have had to undergo a retrial and present evidence in the witness box before the DPP finally raised these issues with the Attorney-General? How long has this issue been known about?

“I’d like the inquiry to ask these questions of the Attorney-General. We also feel for the complainant and victims that have had to undergo a retrial without the benefit of the DPP asking the Attorney-General for legislative amendments,” Mr Caruana said.

The AFPA strongly supports the inquiry analysing the available legal framework for dealing with juror misconduct.

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