

FREE SPEECH & HATE CRIME LAWS

Presented 17 March 2025

DO AUSTRALIANS HAVE A RIGHT TO FREE SPEECH?

- Australian law is quite different to the US Constitution- we have no Bill of Rights
- Many here are unaware of their actual rights
- No *explicit* right to free speech in our Constitution
- The High Court has recognised an *implied* right to free speech, but in very limited circumstances – (Lange v the ABC, 1997)
- In the absence of a Bill of Rights, the government can pass new laws to over-ride implied freedom
- Leaves Australians reliant on the government of the day to not pass new laws that limit freedom

**Courtesy of The Law Society of NSW*

HOW DO WE COMPARE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES?

“Australia has less protection of free speech than most Western countries...”

- Former High Court Judge Michael Kirby



WHAT ABOUT INTERNATIONAL LAW?

- The UN General Assembly adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) on 16 December 1966.
 1. ICCPR Article 19 states: **Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.**
 2. **Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression**; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.
 3. The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be **subject to certain restrictions**, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others;
 - (b) For the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals.

THE NEED FOR A HUMAN RIGHTS ACT



FREE+EQUAL
AN AUSTRALIAN CONVERSATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Australian Human Rights Commission

A Human Rights Act for Australia

Why Australia needs a Human Rights Act

We have very few laws protecting human rights in Australia

Australia is a country with a strong sense of human rights and freedoms. Many people are therefore surprised to discover that there are actually very few laws protecting human rights in Australia. We have federal legislation that addresses discrimination, and we have some protections of rights in common law and in the Constitution. However, many human rights – such as the right to free speech, or freedom from torture – have limited protection in Australian law.

Australia has signed a number of United Nations conventions that commit us to protecting and promoting all human rights, but the majority of our international commitments have not been translated into our own national laws.

Human Rights Acts have been passed in Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland, and have had positive impacts. But Australia has no Human Rights Act at the federal level. We are the only liberal democracy in the world without a Human Rights Act or a Constitutional Charter of Rights.

Our federal Government should be obliged to consider human rights to ensure that they are upheld

At present, the Australian government is not obliged to consider human rights in their policy-making or decision-making. A national Human Rights Act would embed transparent, human rights-based decisions as part of public culture, which could prevent breaches of human rights from occurring.

We need legal remedies for people whose human rights have been breached

In many cases, individuals whose human rights have been breached have no avenue now to pursue a legal remedy.

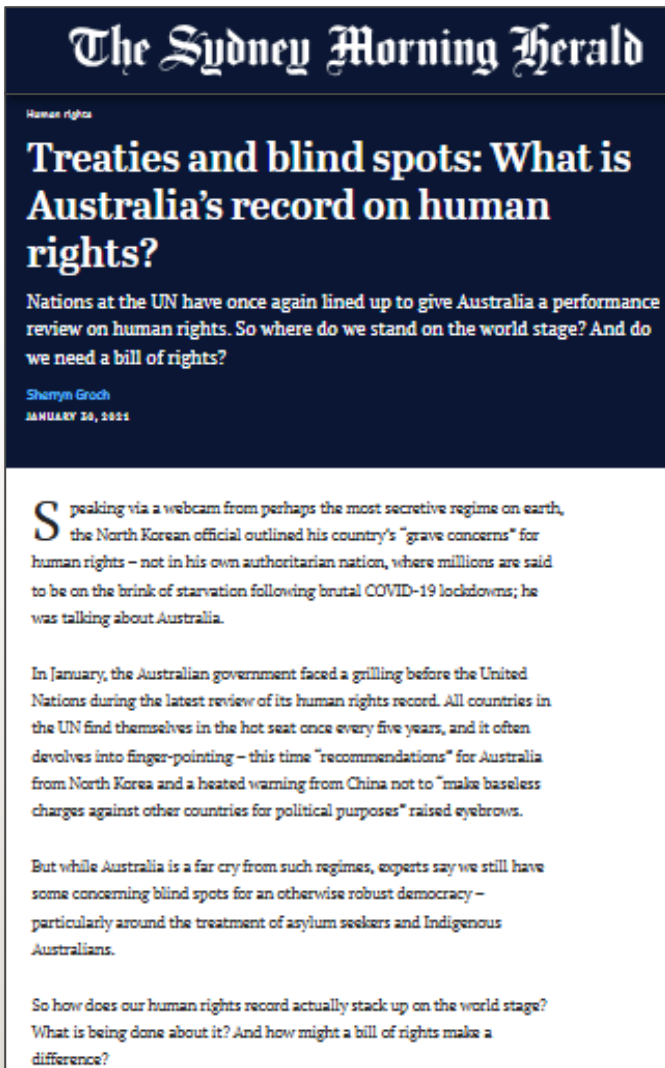
A proposed model for a Human Rights Act for Australia

A national Human Rights Act would be an evolution, not a revolution. It would build on the success and lessons learned from our state and territory models, and on the experience of the Australian Human Rights Commission in handling complaints since 1981. The Australian Human Rights Commission has released a report (<https://humanrights.gov.au/human-rights-act-for-australia>) setting out how a national Human Rights Act should operate.

Australian Human Rights Commission (2023). A Human Rights Act for Australia (factsheet). Sydney: Australian Human Rights Commission. 1

- Basic human rights are not well protected under Australian commonwealth law
- The only ‘liberal democracy’ in the world with no effective charter of rights
- Some states have basic human rights cover
- The Australian Human Rights Commission has been advocating for legal protection for all with remedies when rights are breached
- *“People’s human rights matter, all of the time, but this does not hold true in Australian law. We need to change that by introducing a national Human Rights Act.”*

FEEDBACK FROM THE LAST UN REVIEW IN 2021



- Key areas mentioned - treatment of asylum seekers and first nations people
- Low age of criminality – 10 year olds in gaol
- Also noted 2009 enquiry recommending a national charter of rights never acted upon
- US recommendation - *“Protect those speaking out against government policies, including by amending national security laws that inhibit the speech of journalists, whistleblowers and lawyers.”*

*SUMMARY OF WHERE THIS LEAVES US

- Some protection for political communication courtesy of the High Court
- In the absence of a Bill of Rights, the government can pass new laws to over-ride implied freedom
- Leaves Australians reliant on the government of the day to not pass new laws that limit freedom

**Courtesy of The Law Society of NSW*

AUSTRALIA'S ANTI-TERROR LAWS POST-911

- **Initial Response (2002-2003)**

- Security Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2002 -defining terrorism
- ASIO Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2003 – expanded powers during peacetime

- **Post-Bali Bombings (2005)**

- Anti-Terrorism Act (No. 2) 2005 – preventable detention orders and control orders

- **Foreign Fighters & Metadata (2014-2015)**

- Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Act 2014 – preventable detention & control orders
- Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment (Data Retention) Act 2015 – mandated retention of meta data and police access without a warrant

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE 'WAR ON TERROR' YEARS

- Since the September 11, 2001, Australia has enacted over 90 distinct pieces of anti-terror related legislation, which have reshaped our legal and security framework.
- Prior to 9/11, Australia had no specific federal counter-terrorism laws, relying instead on general criminal statutes.
- By 2019, 82 laws spanned over 5,000 pages had been passed in Australia, far exceeding the UK, US, Canada or any of our western peers
- Between 2001-07 a new law was passed every 6.7 weeks

MORE RECENT EXPANSIONS (2018-2024)

- **Espionage and Foreign Interference Act 2018** – overhauled espionage laws, criminalised possession & disclosure of certain information, impacting whistleblowers & journalists.

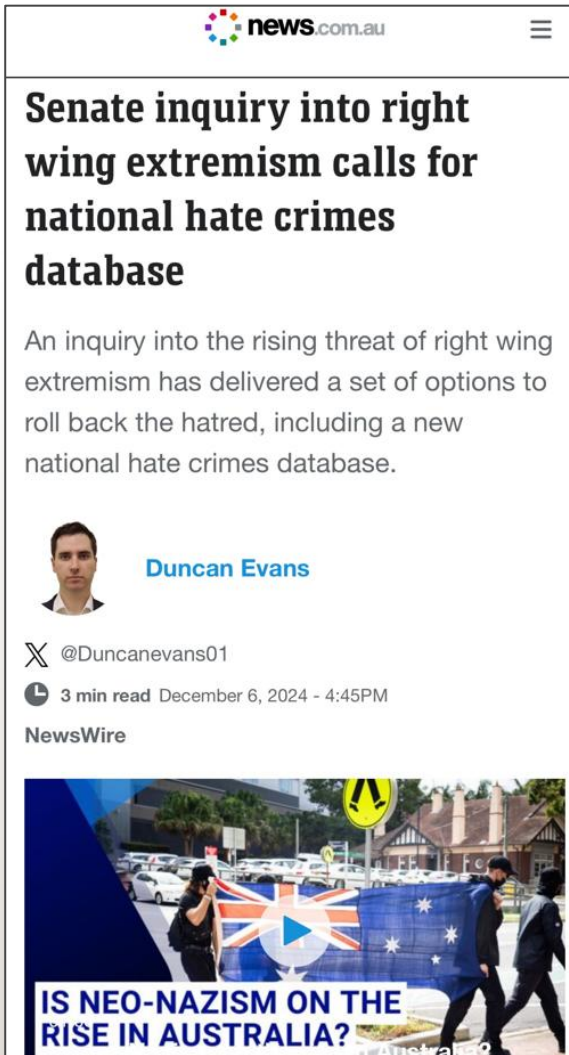
Non-Terror Related

- The **Online Safety Act 2021** empowering the eSafety Commissioner
- The ill-fated **Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill**
- The **Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024** bring in age restrictions and verifications

THE NEXT CHAPTER IN A NUTSHELL

- The government has recently rushed through controversial **'hate crimes'** legislation, ignoring warnings from legal & religious groups
- The law **identifies certain groups** based on **race, gender identity, sexual orientation, intersex status, disability etc** and provides them with **special protection from hate speech and hate crimes described as 'advocacy' or threat of 'force' or 'violence'**
- The law shifts from requiring ***intent*** to incite 'force' or violence, to merely being ***reckless*** raising concerns over its potential misuse
- The bill was backed by both major parties, with both Labor & conservatives accused of collaborating to enable its harsh provisions
- *Free speech advocates warn of increasing authoritarianism and urge Australians to resist and push for the law's repeal*

SENATE ENQUIRY INTO 'RIGHT WING EXTREMISM'



- Enquiry began in Dec 2023, made interim report in Dec 2024 with various recommendations
- Calls for 'national consistent definition' of 'hate' and a national database
- Identified the internet and social media as 'accelerating global extremist movements'
- ASIO identified incidents as motivated by 'nationalist and racist ideologies'
- Recommended govt consider enabling police to access encrypted communications

PROTESTS AGAINST THE WAR ON GAZA ESCALATE

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS

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» FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, ASSOCIATION AND ASSEMBLY  AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIANS' RIGHT TO PEACEFULLY PROTEST THE ACTIONS OF ISRAELI GOVERNMENT MUST BE PROTECTED



13 December 2024

Amnesty International Australia strongly opposes the call by Australia's antisemitism envoy to ban pro-Palestinian protests from city centres. Protests advocating for a ceasefire, the protection of human rights, and an end to Israel's genocide of Palestinians in Gaza are an essential and protected outlet for Australians to freely express their views.

MEANWHILE ATTACKS ON PROPERTY ESCALATE

Melbourne synagogue fire condemned as 'act of antisemitism' as police search for culprits

Two masked people were seen spreading accelerant inside Adass Israel synagogue in Ripponlea on Friday, police say

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◀ Jewish leaders condemn synagogue attack that "should not occur on Australian soil" – video

Counter-terrorism police and the arson squad are investigating the firebombing of a **Melbourne** synagogue that both the prime minister and the Victorian premier have condemned as an act of antisemitism.

A large blaze engulfed the Adass Israel synagogue in Ripponlea in Melbourne's south-east on Friday morning and police are treating the fire as deliberately lit.

Victoria police are searching for two masked individuals who were seen spreading an accelerant at the synagogue before the fire broke out. About 60 firefighters and 17 trucks were called to the site about 4.10am.

Sydney childcare centre set alight and sprayed with antisemitic graffiti

NSW premier Chris Minns says police will track down people behind Maroubra attack and foreshadows new anti-hatred laws

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📷 Damage at the scene of a fire at a childcare centre in Maroubra in Sydney Photograph: Daisy Dumas/The Guardian

More detectives will be assigned to track down the perpetrators of a spate of antisemitic attacks in **Sydney** after a childcare centre was set alight and targeted with graffiti overnight.

Anthony Albanese said on Tuesday that national cabinet would meet later in the day to discuss antisemitism across Australia. The prime minister had earlier visited the childcare centre in Maroubra.

The **New South Wales** premier, Chris Minns, denied he had "lost control of the crisis", while state police confirmed arrests had been made over separate vandalism incidents.

HATE CRIME LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO PARLIAMENT

Australia introduces hate-crime legislation as antisemitism rises

The move comes amid an increase in acts targeting the Australian Jewish and pro-Israel community in the wake of Hamas's Oct. 7 massacre.



A pro-Palestinian protest in Sydney, Australia, on Oct. 24, 2024. Credit: Gaspard Horn via Wikimedia Commons.



(Sept. 12, 2024 / JNS) Australia's government on Thursday introduced hate crime legislation that imposes criminal penalties, including jail sentences of up to five years, on those targeting a person based on race, gender, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation.

Australia has seen an increase in acts targeting the Jewish and pro-Israel community since Hamas's Oct. 7 massacre in southern Israel.

- In response to increasing levels of protests and the acts of vandalism, the 'Hate Crimes' legislation was introduced

Summary of Key Dates

- Mid-2024: Drafting likely began (estimated June–July).
- September 12, 2024: Introduced in the House of Reps
- September 19 – November 8, 2024: Public submissions to Senate Committee
- December 12, 2024: Senate Committee report released with largely bi-partisan support recommended the legislation go ahead

PRETEXT FOR THE NEW LEGISLATION

Australian Labor PM accedes to Coalition on sweeping “hate speech” laws

Mike Head [@MikeHeadWSWS](#)
(17 February 2025)

In what corporate media outlets described as a “humiliating backflip,” Australian Labor Prime Minister Anthony Albanese joined hands with the Liberal-National Coalition to ram far-reaching supposed “hate speech laws” through parliament on Thursday, under the guise of combatting antisemitism.



Anthony Albanese and Peter Dutton [Photos: Anthony Albanese Facebook; Peter Dutton Facebook]

Once again making a mockery of parliamentary democracy, the legislation was pushed through both houses of parliament in less than 24 hours. The Labor government suddenly announced that it would accept Coalition amendments to impose draconian mandatory minimum sentences—up to six years’ imprisonment—for key offences.

Just weeks before an election, which must be held by May 17, Albanese’s government sent another signal of its readiness to embrace the repressive and militarist agenda of the US Trump administration, which it has refused to criticise, let alone oppose.

- The pretext for expanded “hate speech” laws were recent acts of vandalism in Sydney & Melbourne
- This is despite existing laws already treating acts of violence & vandalism as serious crimes
- Stated purpose was “combatting antisemitism”
- Although no clear link established with anyone involved in the anti-Israel protest movement
- Critics claimed that criticism of Israel’s military action in Gaza should not be depicted as antisemitic ‘hate’ or support for ‘terrorism’

CONCERNS RAISED ABOUT WHERE THIS MAY LEAD

Labor's 'thought crime' hate speech laws will turn nation into 'police state', Australian Christian Lobby says

Christian Schools Australia also claims harm definition means its views on immutability of sex will be outlawed as 'hateful'

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📷 The ACL warned the hate speech bill had the 'clear potential to serve as the instrument of viewpoint suppression on ideological grounds'. Photograph: Jessica Hromas/The Guardian

The Australian Christian Lobby has claimed that Labor's hate speech laws would turn Australia into a "police state" by creating "thought crime" despite the fact the laws are directed towards threats of force or harm.

The [Albanese government](#) has [substantially watered down the laws](#) but is nevertheless facing a religious backlash, with the Catholic church and Christian Schools Australia claiming that the psychological harm definition will mean the view that sex is immutable will be outlawed as "hateful".

- ACL argued the proposals were out of step with international law standards
- Key terms are improperly defined, vague, require subjective interpretation, unsuitable for criminal law
- Expanding the grounds of protections to include new groups has not been properly examined
- Should be confined to actual offences and not stray into policing 'thought crimes'
- The need and implications of the new legislation has not been argued convincingly

THE FREE SPEECH UNION'S VIEW



To: Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee,

Via online submission only

07 November 2024

Submission on the Criminal Code Amendment (Hate Crimes) Bill 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write on behalf of the Free Speech Union of Australia to make a submission in respect of the *Criminal Code Amendment (Hate Crimes) Bill 2024*.

The Free Speech Union of Australia is a non-partisan organization whose focus is on the protection of Free Speech in Australia. We are most concerned about these proposals. Below are the key areas of concern.

1. Hate Speech Bills are always inappropriate

The Bill can properly be described as being against 'hate speech', even though different terminology might be used in some parts of the documentation.¹

"Hate" is an inherently subjective concept. It cannot be incorporated into law without privileging some peoples, groups, cultures, or worldviews over others. To give a topical example, for some groups, such as advocates for the freedom of Palestinians, the slogan "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" is a chant of freedom, but to Israeli or Zionist groups, it is genocidal and antisemitic. Is the slogan itself hateful because it is antisemitic? Or are calls to ban the slogan Islamophobic and therefore hateful? Who decides? The problem is the concept of 'hate speech' has never been successfully defined and nor will it ever be.²

Democracy relies on public discussion of ideas and policies taking place, for people to form opinions and then to vote on the basis of those opinions. If this process cannot take place because people are not allowed to hear certain controversial opinions that might be considered hateful, it renders them systematically uninformed and makes their vote meaningless. The idea of "consent of the governed" that lies at the bedrock of notions of democratic legitimacy depends on people being exposed to competing ideas. Otherwise, the censors are really the ones in charge, not the people. To put it another way, there is a reason why Hate Speech prohibitions were originally pursued by the Soviet Union, and

¹ The submission form uses the term 'hate speech'. This is probably the most accurate characterization of what they wish to include.

² <https://www.thefire.org/news/law-review-article-defining-hate-speech-attempts-impossible>

- They argue "Hate" is inherently subjective.
- Will always privilege some people's, groups, cultures, or worldviews over others
- Democracy relies on public discussion of the full range of ideas & policies to form opinions
- Excluding some opinions automatically leaves people uninformed and any vote meaningless
- The 'consent of the governed' relies on people being exposed to competing ideas

MYSTERY SURROUNDED 'THE LAST STRAW'



- Caravan discovered packed with explosives in January in a rural Sydney suburb
- A note was found inside with a list of individuals and Jewish institutions
- Explosives appeared to be mining related but had no detonators
- Large police strike force team assembled & politicians labelled it a 'significant escalation'
- Acted as the 'last straw'

AUSTRALIA JOINS THE 'HATE SPEECH' CLUB

Hate crimes: a new woke attack against free speech

Minny Jackson



Getty Images

A new and unprecedented law has passed the chamber, marking an incredibly frustrating time for those conservatives who are paying attention to the disintegration of free speech rights.

According to Mark Dreyfus, 'This bill delivers the toughest laws Australia has ever had against hate crimes.' In other words, it's a new crime the government has invented which is unique in that it aims to imprison people for 'speaking' instead of committing an actual material crime.

This is a Trojan horse manoeuvre likely to further imperil Australia's dwindling rights to political communication and free speech. The bill has had the effect of amending the federal Criminal Code, which means it applies nationwide. Further to this, several submissions were made to government, including from Christian and Jewish bodies, many of whom

Minny Jackson

8 February 2025

11:19 PM



- *Criminal Code Amendment (Hate Crimes) Bill 2025* pushed through parliament
- Creates new offences that target those who advocate or threaten force or violence against certain groups
- Defined by race religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, disability, nationality, ethnic origin or political opinion
- Expanded definitions in existing legislation – more crimes considered hate motivated
- Criminalises actions that *might* lead to violence

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT (HATE CRIMES) ACT 2024

- **Offence #1**
 - **Advocating Force or Violence** - Publicly urging or advocating force or violence against a group or its members based on protected attributes (**race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, disability, nationality, or political opinion**)
- Purpose & Enforcement
 - A person is liable if they are aware **their public advocacy is likely to offend, insult, humiliate, or intimidate and proceed anyway**, regardless of whether they specifically intended violence. Applies to the groups above with the protected attributes
- Threshold of Prosecution
 - **Criminalises speech from requiring "intent" to being "reckless" even without intent**
 - No 'good faith' defense for threats of violence in certain circumstances
- Sentences
 - Maximum 7 years. Mandatory 12 months.

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT (HATE CRIMES) ACT 2024

- **Offence #2**

- **Threatening Force or Violence Against Groups or Places of Worship** – includes congregations, associates or family members.

- **Purpose & Enforcement**

- Liability applies if the person is aware their threat could disrupt or intimidate worshippers and proceeds recklessly. Does not require intent.

- **Threshold of Prosecution**

- Criminalises speech from requiring "intent" to being "reckless" even without intent
- No 'good faith' defense for threats of violence in certain circumstances

- **Sentences**

- Maximum 5 years. Mandatory Nil.

OTHER OFFENCES UPGRADED UNDER THE ACT

- **Terrorism-Related Hate Crimes**

- Displaying symbols or advocating violence linked to a terrorist organisation, where the act supports or facilitates terrorism. Requires Intent.
- 6 years mandatory, 7 years maximum
- Financing terrorism 3 years mandatory

- **Displaying Prohibited Symbols (in public)**

- Displaying banned symbols in public. Eg Nazi swastika, SS symbols, or terrorist organization symbols like Islamic State flags. Requires Intent.
- 12 months mandatory & maximum

- **Blocking Access to Places of Worship**

- Intentionally obstruct access – lesser offence
- 2 years maximum, not mandatory

KEY TERMS NOT DEFINED IN LEGISLATION

- **Harmful Hate Speech** (purpose of legislation) – what is the threshold?
- **Force and Violence** – does it include psychological harm or property damage? (up to 5 years gaol)
- **Advocating** – related to force or violence- is it explicit call to action or implied support? (5-7 years gaol)
- **Public Act** – display of prohibited symbol - what is included in ‘public places’? – workplaces?, online posts?
- **Reasonable Excuse** – defence for blocking access to place of worship (2 years)

LEGISLATION OVERREACH CALLED OUT



- In the senate debate, speakers against limited but Senator Rennick gave a fiery 3 minute speech (reduced from the standard 15 minutes)
- "Reckless speech" without any intent is now criminalised. Even if you accidentally offend someone you can be charged, found guilty and go to prison
- He demanded amendments to remove mandatory sentencing
- Also asked for children under 14 to be excluded from the bill
- One Nation did not support any of Senator Rennick's amendments

LEGISLATION OVERREACH CALLED OUT



<https://www.spectator.com.au/2025/02/senator>

From Senator Rennick's X post quoting his parliamentary speech, he requested:

“A good faith carve out to prevent these rules from being used as a form of lawfare to shut down debate such as any of the below statements could soon land you in prison.

- Marriage should only be between a man and a woman.
- The LGBTQIA2S+ lobby keeps pushing radical gender policies on our kids. Maybe it's time we show them we won't stand for it anymore. Let's take action!
- We need to stop mass immigration and expect assimilation because it brings division and poverty to our country.
- The idea that gender is entirely a social construct is not supported by biological science. Those groups forcing people to accept this concept are dangerous.” <https://x.com/SenatorRennick/status/1887682800968401242>

HATE SPEECH LAWS RACED THROUGH PARLIAMENT

Australia passes tough hate crime laws with mandatory jail time for Nazi salutes

By Christine Chen

February 6, 2025 7:31 PM GMT+11 · Updated 17 days ago



SYDNEY, Feb 6 (Reuters) - Australia passed tough anti-hate crime laws on Thursday, including mandatory minimum sentences for terror offences and displaying hate symbols, in a bid to tackle a recent surge in antisemitism.

The laws will impose minimum jail sentences between 12 months for less serious hate crimes, such as giving a Nazi salute in public, and six years for those found guilty of terrorism offences.

"I want people who are engaged in antisemitism to be held to account, to be charged, to be incarcerated," Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who had initially opposed mandatory minimum sentences for hate crimes, told Sky News.

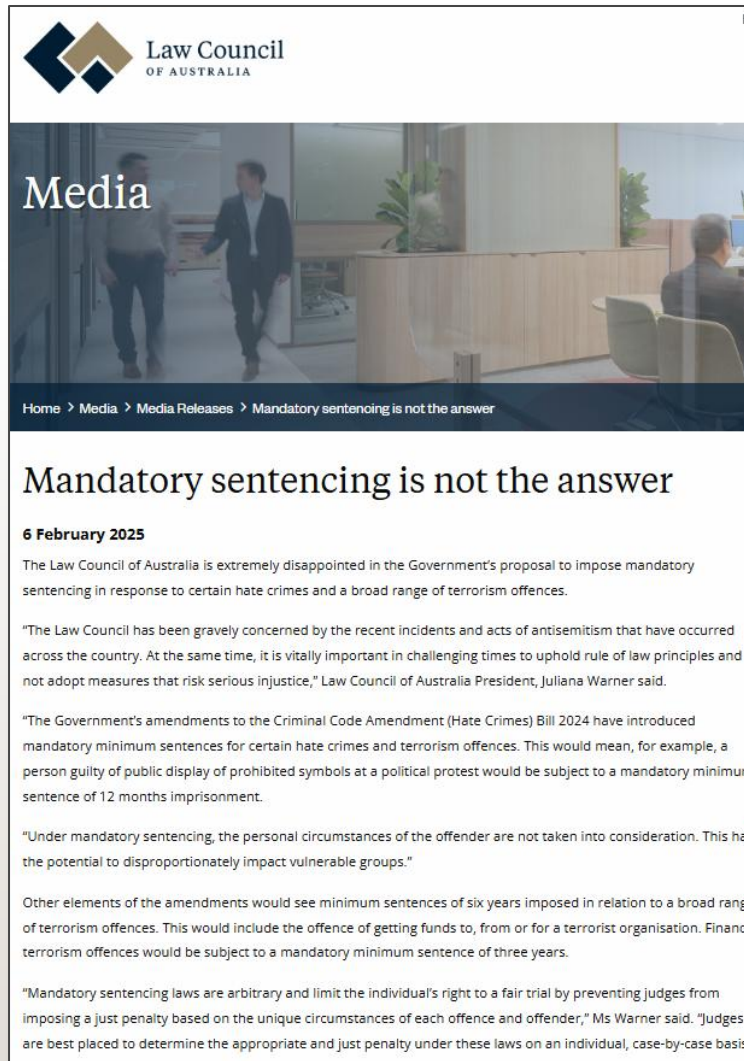
The government's hate crimes bill was first introduced to parliament last year, creating new offences for threatening force or violence against people based on their race, religion, nationality, national or ethnic origin, political opinion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status.

Recent months have seen an escalation of attacks on synagogues, buildings and cars of Jewish community members across the country, including the discovery of a caravan laden with explosives with a list of Jewish targets in Sydney.

Albanese has been criticised by the centre-right opposition party for being weak on crime and failing to address the rise in antisemitism.

- Legislation swept through both houses of parliament in less than 24 hours on Feb 6th
- Includes mandatory minimum sentences
- Creates new offences for threatening 'force' or violence against people based on:
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Nationality or ethnic origin
 - Political opinion
 - Sex, sexual orientation or gender identity
 - Intersex status

MANDATORY SENTENCING & JUDICIAL CRITICISM



- Advocates say it sends a strong message, but the Law Council of Australia disagrees...
- “The decision to add mandatory sentencing as part of the Government’s response to hate crimes has come late in the day without proper consideration”
- “Further, the Australian Labor Party has gone against its 2023 National Platform that states Labor opposes mandatory sentencing. To our knowledge, no security or law enforcement agency has asked for these extraordinary measures.”

<https://lawcouncil.au/media/media-releases/mandatory-sentencing-is-not-the-answer>

MANDATORY SENTENCING



From the Law Council's Press Release:

“Mandatory sentencing laws are arbitrary and limit the individual's right to a fair trial by preventing judges from imposing a just penalty based on the unique circumstances of each offence and offender

“Judges are best placed to determine the appropriate and just penalty under these laws on an individual, case-by-case basis.”

“There has been no opportunity to scrutinise the rationale, necessity and proportionality of these changes, which comes as part of the Federal Government's response to a rise in antisemitic incidents and deterioration in social cohesion.”

“Complex and overlapping Commonwealth and state offences are more difficult to enforce and may lead to arbitrary differences in outcome. There is a risk that inconsistent penalties at Commonwealth level will have limited impact on the intended objectives and worsen complexity in this area. Further, overly broad offences may rely on discretion to enforce in circumstances which become politicised”

BACK TO THE CARAVAN EXPLOSIVES PLOT.....

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Wed 12 Mar 2025 16:56 AEDT

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Albanese says he knew Dural caravan plot was possible hoax 'very early on'

Peter Dutton calls on PM to publicly declare when he learned of suspected 'con job' but declines to say whether he was also told of police theory

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Albanese insisted while the incident was revealed as hoax, the fear felt by the community, particularly those in the Jewish community, was 'very real'. Photograph: Dean Lewins/AP

Anthony Albanese says he was told "very early on" that investigators believed the Dural caravan plot was a "hoax" as both major parties point the finger over whether their decisions to quickly label the saga terrorism was appropriate.

Most viewed



Australia will not revise critical minerals-for-tariffs exemption deal rejected by Trump administration



The honeymoon is over for Trump, whose every unwitting misstep brings chaos and strife
Simon Tisdall



Trump sharpens attacks on US media as Voice of America employees put on administrative leave



This is how we do it: I'd distract myself to avoid climaxing - until the time I said out loud, "I need to take the bins out"



Elon Musk faces week of harsh setbacks amid Tesla selloff and Doge backlash

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/mar/12/anthony-albanese-dural-caravan-hoax-terror-plot-knowledge-ntwnfb>

CARAVAN PLOT TURNS OUT TO BE A 'HOAX'

BBC NEWS

Explosive-laden caravan plot was a hoax, say Australian police

Gavin Butler - BBC News
Mon, March 10, 2025 at 10:24 PM GMT+11 - 4 min read



Krissy Barrett said investigators believed "almost immediately" that it was a hoax [Australian Federal Police]

A caravan found packed with explosives in outer Sydney earlier this year was part of a "fabricated terrorism plot" concocted by criminals, Australian police have said.

The caravan, which was found in north-western Sydney on 19 January, contained enough explosives to produce a 40m-wide blast, along with a note displaying antisemitic messages and a list of Jewish synagogues.

Its discovery, following a spate of antisemitic attacks in Australia, triggered widespread panic.

- Police announce on March 10 it was a 'fabricated terrorism plot'
- AFP revealed that they knew "almost immediately" that the caravan was "essentially a criminal con job"
- Other 'tip offs' of other plots also 'fabricated'
- Police - "an elaborate scheme contrived by organised criminals, domestically and from offshore"
- Which organised 'criminal gangs' will we ever know?

AFP DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NATIONAL SECURITY KRISSY BARRETT

“I can reveal that the caravan was never going to cause a mass casualty event but instead was concocted by criminals who wanted to cause fear for personal benefit,” she said.

“We are now confident that all these tip-offs were fabricated, and the caravan plot was an elaborate scheme contrived by organised criminals, domestically and from offshore....

She said an operational strategy was underway to take down the mastermind behind the fake terror plot, in conjunction with overseas law enforcement agencies.

- “Those creating fake terror threats, including using anti-Semitism to elicit a desired response from law enforcement or the courts, face being charged for creating fake plots – and unfortunately for them, they will face the full experience, capability and dogged determination of terrorism investigators,” she said.

5 WEEKS AGO FROM OUR ALTERNATIVE GOVT



 **Peter Dutton** ✓
@PeterDutton_MP

Last night, the Albanese Government was forced to back my calls for tougher penalties and new offences for antisemitic attacks—amending their own legislation and supporting the Coalition’s stronger measures.

We have secured:

- Mandatory minimum jail sentences for acts of terrorism of 6 years’ jail.
- 3 year mandatory minimum jail sentences for terrorism financing.
- A minimum 1 year jail sentence for the display of Nazi and terrorist symbols and the Nazi salute (and we have also increased the maximum for those offences to 5 years).
- A minimum 1 year jail sentence for property damage that advocates for force or violence to be used against groups because of their religion, race or ethnicity.

We have also secured a decisive response to attacks on places of worship, through new offences for those who advocate or threaten such attacks, as well as attacks on vehicles or property.

This is the strong leadership needed to keep Australians safe and get our country Back on Track

https://x.com/PeterDutton_MP/status/1887328533246320702

MEANWHILE NSW PASSES NEW HATE SPEECH LAWS

NSW has passed controversial hate speech and protest laws. Here's what you need to know

The changes, aimed at curbing antisemitism, make racist remarks in public a criminal offence and restrict protests near places of worship

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NSW premier Chris Minns says the new hate speech laws will send the 'clear and unambiguous message that we won't tolerate racism'. Photograph: Steven Saphore/AAP

The [New South Wales](#) government has passed controversial laws to crack down on hate speech and protests with the threat of hefty fines and jail time.

The laws - which passed on Thursday night - are part of a suite of reforms aimed at curbing antisemitism amid [a spate of arson attacks](#) and vandalism.

Some have praised the swift action taken by the Minns government, while others have criticised the broad nature of the laws. The criticism has also come internally from Labor MPs, with [one reportedly saying in a meeting](#) the protest-related laws were the most "draconian" in decades.

- Criminalise making racist remarks in public and restrict activities 'near a place of worship'
- Does not define what 'near' means
- Many major sites traditionally used for protests in Sydney are 'near' places of worship
- Critics said laws should only apply if protests target a place of worship
- Labor MP labels the law 'most draconian in decades'
- AG leaves the door open to broadening these laws

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/feb/21/nsw-hate-speech-and-protest-laws-what-you-need-to-know-ntwnfb>

IMPACT ON LEGITIMATE PROTESTS

Proposed ban on protest outside places of worship could prevent Town Hall rallies, Sydney mayor warns

Clover Moore says police would have power to block peaceful demonstrations and warns against eroding civil rights

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People attend a vigil outside Sydney's Town Hall in October last year. The organisers, Palestine Action Group, invited people of all faiths to 'unite in solidarity in our call for justice and solidarity'. Photograph: Roni Bintang/Getty Images

Sydney's mayor has warned that new laws proposed by the [New South Wales](#) government would give police powers to block peaceful protests at Town Hall - a regular site for demonstrations in the city.

The laws, introduced to parliament on Tuesday and carrying a [maximum of two years in prison](#), are the first tranche of measures aimed at stemming antisemitism [after a series of arson attacks and graffiti on synagogues](#) and in Sydney's suburban streets in recent months.

- Sydney's Mayor warns the new laws give police powers to block peaceful protests in CBD
- Laws make certain protests outside places of worship a criminal offence – up to 2 years gaol
- Give police increased 'move-on powers'
- New serious offence 'graffiti on place of worship'
- Law Reform Commission says new laws could 'introduce imprecision & subjectivity into the criminal law'

THE IMPACT OF THESE HATE CRIME LAWS



Human Rights Law Centre:

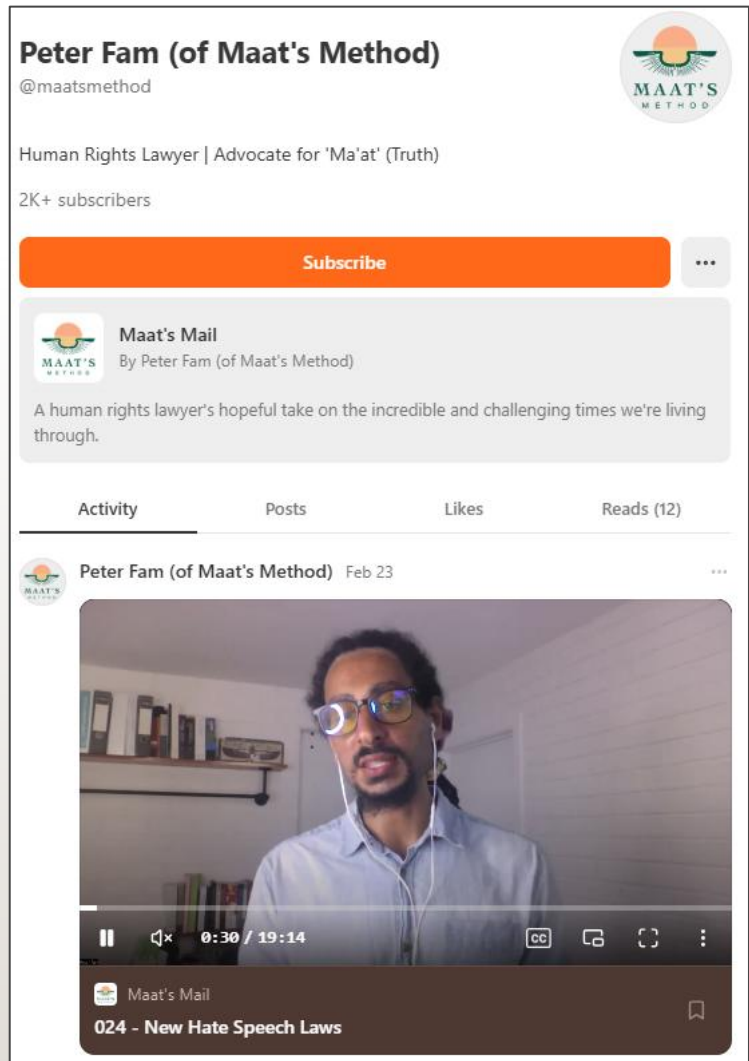
- 'Chilling effect on our democracy while failing to stamp out hate speech and discrimination'
- 'Will lead to politicians, instead of courts deciding on punishments'
- 'Could see a person charged with two years prison time and a \$22,000 fine for chanting or holding a placard near a place of worship'
- 'Gives police the power to shut down a snap anti-war protest or rally calling for climate action, if the place of gathering was near a place of worship'

RESPONSE FROM THE NSW LIBERTARIANS



- Will attempt to repeal the NSW legislation
- *"We now know it was a criminal con job that whipped up the hysteria. Laws are not made well in that environment. We need to soberly assess things."*
- *"Is NSW happy with the idea that a wacky criminal conspiracy has now eroded our free speech principles?" – John Ruddick MLC*

FOR FULL LEGAL EXPLANATION OF THE NEW LAWS



- Peter Fam – Human Rights lawyer
- <https://www.maatsmethod.com.au/>

Go to this link for a clear 20 minute video summary:

<https://substack.com/@maatsmethod>

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WHAT'S GOING ON?

A series of public events with well-informed speakers on issues that are affecting us now and will determine how we live in the future!

MONDAY 10th FEBRUARY 6.00 for 6.30pm
BYRON SERVICES CLUB - 132 JOHNSON ST, BYRON BAY

ARE WE BEGINNING TO SEE THE COLLAPSE OF GLOBALISM?

SPEAKER: MICHAEL WILLIAMSON

From the WHO's stalled global pandemic treaty to the fall of Germany's globalist government, and with President Trump promising sweeping changes to the world order, it's clear that globalism may be facing a turning point. Join us for an insightful discussion on recent key events, the global implications, and what they could mean for Australia in 2025.

BITCOIN — WHY ALL THE ATTENTION?

SPEAKER: HARLEY LINTON

Harley Linton has developed a long-term interest in Bitcoin after studying many major cryptocurrencies. He's the current coordinator of a 7-year local public Meetup group called Bitcoin Byron Bay. Join us for an information filled session, where Harley steps through the basics, explains how it could help protect your savings, and answers your questions.

DO NOT MISS THIS EVENT

Please come along. Ask your questions.
Get clear and factual information. Take action!

PLEASE JOIN THE RSL FOR ONLY \$5. OR SIGN IN AT THE DESK

WGO_ByronBay@protonmail.com
Visit our new website at whatsgoingon.community

February 2025

Hi Friends

Firstly, we would like to thank you for supporting WGO throughout 2024 and we wish you a wonderful festive season, and all the very best for the new year.

We are delighted to confirm our next WGO gathering will be on Monday 10 February, 6.30pm at Byron Services Club.

2025 is no doubt going to be a big one, and at our first event we will provide a roundup of the latest developments from around the world, discuss how these things are likely to affect us, and set the stage for the key issues we need to be on top of for year ahead.

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WHAT'S GOING ON?

GLOBALISM - IS THE TIDE TURNING?

Presented by Michael Williamson

WHAT'S GOING ON?

YOUR QUESTIONS?
