

## Submission to the Productivity Commission CTG Review 2023

I support the views of many submitters including AntaR, the Closing the Gap Campaign, and SNIACC. I refer to Brief Comment No. 3 where reference is made about the impossibility of comparing compromised data relating to misinformation and disinformation was employed in the case of those indulging in identity politics and political ideologies. *Political Ideologies* (Andrew Heywood, Macmillan Education, Palgrave 5th ed 2012) distinguishes between ideology, which refers to the broad philosophical framework embracing amongst other things, “a political belief system,” “an action-oriented set of political ideas,” and an “all-embracing political doctrine that claims a monopoly of truth.” Heywood suggests that “ideologies” are concerned with analysing the context of political thought, acknowledging that the ideological framework cannot easily be separated from the ongoing struggle between and among political ideologies.

The failed Voice Referendum was associated with political ideology frameworks driving the No Campaigns in which the notions of distributive justice, equity and equality were absent.

In 2023 debate hosted by The Sydney Institute, Emerita Professor of Constitutional and Comparative Law at Sydney University, Anne Twomey refuted the notion of her debating opponent Paul Kelly, Political Editor-at-Large of The Australian, that everyone should have exactly the same equity and equality parameters applied regardless of the circumstances. Professor Twomey characterised scaremongering over constitutionally enshrined body Voice body as hysterical scaremongering

ASTI peoples represent the longest continuous civilisation and culture of over 65,000 years. Of the total Australian population of ATSI peoples approximately seventeen to twenty per cent are trapped in deep and persistent disadvantage. The Productivity Commission recognised the barriers to achieving true equity and equality and recommended adoption of a constitutional Indigenous Voice as had been proposed. The notion that there are no residual consequences from intergenerational trauma stemming from colonisation has been refuted.

I believe that entrenched philosophical beliefs drove the agenda for misinformation and disinformation, to achieve an outcome where exploitation of either gullibility or lack of motivation to fact check against scaremongering tactics led to a swing from that promised to be a majority vote on both majority criteria dictated by Section 128 of the Constitution requirements for a successful Referendum outcome. There is no legislation to mitigate against such tactics which gives free reign to those unconcerned about distortion of facts in driving desired political or philosophical outcomes.

The failed Voice Referendum may represent a lost opportunity to foster trust with the vast majority of the Indigenous population who supported the Voice Referendum and through the proposed Voice to address Closing the Gap parameters.

We can no longer hope for a constitutionally sanctioned coordinated collaborative bottom-up approach undertaken by an independent body of government that could proffer advice and identification of Indigenous needs in an organised and structured way, gathered from remote, regional and urban settings representative of the majority of views, whilst also highlighting dissenting views as to how needs may be met.

Despite the failure of the Voice Referendum, a bottom-up collaborative approach is still required for policy development in Closing the Gap. Further opportunities for a Joint Parliamentary Select Committee to consider future options post-Referendum should be made available for stakeholders to engage with. I also support the proposition made by members of the Crossbench that Parliament should legislate against misinformation and disinformation including for political purposes.

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