



**Australian Government**

**Australian Law Reform Commission**

## **Priorities for Law Reform**

### Potential Topic Four: Commonwealth Anti-Corruption Measures

The information below describes one of seven potential law reform topics proposed by the ALRC for comment by stakeholders and the general public as part of its Priorities for Law Reform project.

Through an online survey, individuals and organisations will have the opportunity to provide comments on potential law reform topics and make their own suggestions about areas of law they believe are in need of reform. For more information about the project, please visit <https://www.alrc.gov.au/inquiries/where-next-law-reform>.

The current framework for dealing with corruption in the Commonwealth is fragmented. In contrast, the states and territories have been establishing overarching anti-corruption bodies. There is bi-partisan support for establishing a Commonwealth Integrity Commission to investigate corruption; however, there is disagreement about what powers the Commission should have.

The National Integrity Commission Bill 2018 was introduced into the House of Representatives in late 2018 but recently lapsed. The Bill would have established a national integrity commission as an independent public sector anti-corruption commission for the Commonwealth. However, the Bill was criticised for lacking power and resources, as well as its focus on criminal conduct rather than general corruption. There was significant debate as to whether the commission should have power to publish public findings in relation to investigations.

There have also been arguments made that a wider range of reforms are required to combat corruption in the Commonwealth. These include, for example, law reform to: cap political advertising expenditure during election campaigns; strengthen disclosure regime for political donations; make lobbying more transparent; and set clearer standards on potential conflicts of interest for politicians.