



Australian Government
Australian Law Reform Commission

Results in Brief: Seminar on the Future of Public Law Reform

On 29 May 2019, the Australian Law Reform Commission and the University of NSW hosted a conversation on the future of law and constitutional reform in Australia. The event launched the ALRC's new project that seeks public input in identifying areas of Australian law that may benefit from reform.

The panel's discussion provided insightful suggestions for reform.



Prof George Williams AO noted that Australia is overdue for a comprehensive constitutional review and that there are practical and economic consequences of inaction on constitutional reform due to inefficiencies in the federal model. He proposed a standing Commission to conduct ongoing review of the Constitution and propose potential reforms.



Gemma McKinnon identified an urgent need for constitutional reform in order to implement the First Nations Voice to Parliament called for in the Uluru Statement from the Heart. However, she urged that reform should not be delayed by any future law reform inquiry (accordingly, attendees were not asked to vote on this proposal in our brief poll below).

Dr Paul Kildea offered concrete ideas around improving the process for constitutional reform, and advocated for increased public engagement (such as citizens' assemblies), and ways to combat misinformation.

Following the seminar, participants were invited to vote for their top three priority topics for a law reform inquiry. Attendees' top concern was the need to establish a standing Constitutional Commission. This was followed by the need for holistic review of the Constitution, enhancing the process for constitutional reform, and improving public literacy on referendum topics.

The ALRC is holding a number of seminars across the country and is hosting an online survey (until 30 June 2019). We encourage you to take the opportunity to participate and help to shape the future of law reform in Australia. More details are available at: www.alrc.gov.au/inquiries/where-next-law-reform.

