

# Dissenting Report of the Australian Greens

1.1 The Australian Crime Commission Amendment (Criminology Research) Bill 2016 seeks to merge the functions of the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) into the Australian Crime Commission (ACC).

1.2 This bill was first introduced in 2015 and lapsed on prorogation of the parliament in May 2016. The 2016 bill has had changes made to the Explanatory Memorandum.

1.3 The government has stated that it sees great opportunity in combining the resources of the AIC and ACC to provide Australian law enforcement agencies with central access to a consolidated and comprehensive criminal research and intelligence resource.

1.4 As per the previous inquiry into this bill, the majority of submitters raised significant concerns about the proposed merger. Professor Adam Graycar AM, former Director of the AIC stated that 'people are less likely to take the output seriously and give it credibility. Without credibility research is hollow'.<sup>1</sup>

1.5 Concerns were expressed to the committee that merging the research function of the AIC with the law enforcement function of the ACC would compromise the perception of the independence of the AIC.

1.6 Professor Duncan Chappell submitted that the 'fundamental aims and ethos of both agencies are radically different',<sup>2</sup> and Professor Peter Norden AO, a fellow of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology (ANZSOC) submitted that, 'the suggestion that an academic research body such as the AIC being able to successfully merger with an intelligence agency...shows a complete lack of understanding of the role of the two bodies'.<sup>3</sup>

## Conclusion

1.7 Should this bill pass there is a significant risk that broad ranging criminological research that focusses on understanding the causes of crime, and recommending crime prevention strategies, will take second place to the law enforcement needs of the ACC.

1.8 The government's stated aim of providing Australian law enforcement agencies with central access to criminological research could have been achieved by administrative changes which would not require merging the AIC into the ACC.

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1 Professor Adam Graycar AM, Flinders University, *Submission 8*, p. 2.

2 Professor Duncan Chappell, University of Sydney, *Submission 16*, pp. 1 - 2.

3 Professor Peter Norden AO, Adjunct Professor, School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT University Melbourne (RMIT), *Submission 3*, p. 1.

**Recommendation 1**

**1.9 The Australian Greens recommend that the bill be rejected by the Senate.**

**Senator Nick McKim  
Australian Greens**