
22 June 2023

PRIME MINISTER DECEPTIVE ON VOICE TO PARLIAMENT POWERS

“The Prime Minister’s deceptive claims that the Voice will merely be an advisory body carries no weight, contradicts his previous statements, and lacks any factual basis given the established role and powers of the High Court,” said Daniel Wild, Deputy Executive Director of the Institute of Public Affairs.

This morning, the Prime Minister referred to the Attorney General’s second reading speech on the *Constitution Alteration (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice) Bill 2023* to claim the Voice “will be a consultative body,” and be limited to matters which “specifically or differently” affect Indigenous people.

Institute of Public Affairs’ research, submitted to the Parliamentary Joint Committee into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Referendum, established that, under the separation of powers – a cornerstone of our democracy – it will be the High Court that has ultimate authority over the meaning of words in the Constitution, including the scope and power of the voice.

“The statement from the PM that the Voice will not have a right of veto directly contradicts his pledge made at the 2022 Garma Festival that ‘it would be a very brave government’ who would defy the edicts of the Voice,” said Mr Wild.

“The Prime Minister knows the wording he passed through Parliament will give the Voice an effective veto power over every major decision of both parliament and the executive, making our supreme law-making body, the Parliament of Australia, subservient to this divisive activist body.”

“It is becoming clearer by the day that Australians are sick and tired of being treated like fools by the Prime Minister and Voice to Parliament advocates, who simply refuse to fully and honestly explain what changing our Constitution will actually mean for our nation.”

“Anthony Albanese needs to be fair dinkum with Australians and stop playing tricky word games. If he believes the Voice will have a say on matters that ‘specifically’ affect Indigenous people, why was this not written into his legislation?”

“The Prime Minister is right that we must do better to alleviate tragic Indigenous disadvantage, but the Voice, as clearly expressed in the Calma-Langton report, will just be another layer of government in Canberra on top of an already broken system,” said Mr Wild.

To download the IPA’s research [click here](#).

For media and comment: Andrew Hudgson, Director of Communications, on 0404 020 896, or at ahudgson@ipa.org.au