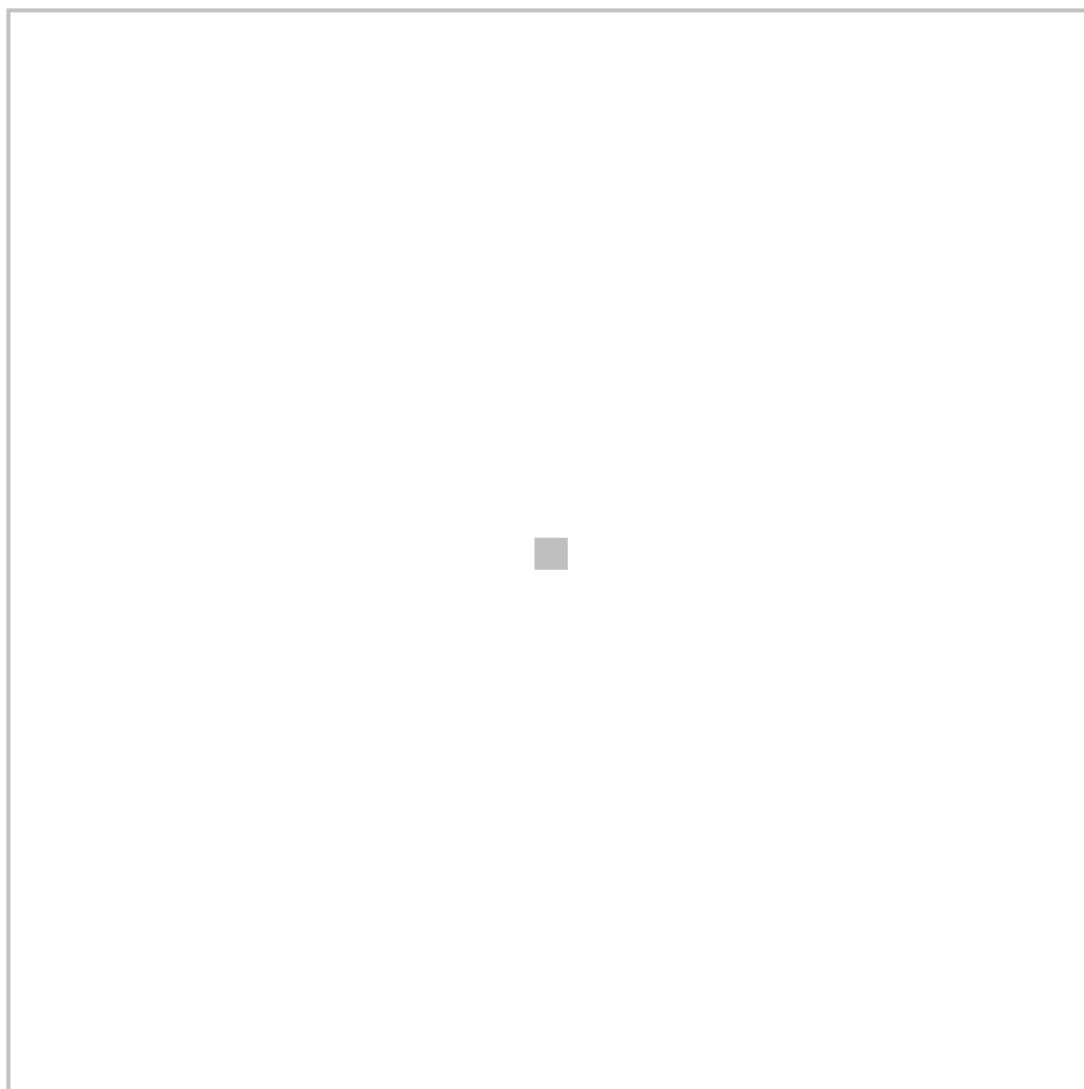


**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY – SPEECH – NATIONAL PRESS CLUB – CANBERRA – TUESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Tuesday, 9 February 2021 12:29:47 PM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB**

**NATIONAL PRESS CLUB  
CANBERRA**

**TUESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2021**

\*\*\* *CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY* \*\*\*

(Acknowledgements omitted)

No-one goes into politics to be in Opposition.

Especially not those of us on the Labor side, the party of initiative and ideas, the party created and sustained by a belief in the power of government to change people's lives for the better.

But - so long as you are in Opposition - you have a fundamental responsibility to hold the government to account – not just on issues of policy but on questions of integrity.

Two weeks ago, Anthony Albanese asked me to take on the portfolio of Shadow Minister for Government Accountability.

This means it's my job to call-out every government rort and racket, every broken promise, every instance of the Liberals and the Nationals putting their donors and their cronies ahead of the national interest.

I share that responsibility with Pat Conroy as Shadow Minister Assisting on Government Accountability and all my colleagues – and indeed, with all the members of the press gallery here today.

Because proper scrutiny and real accountability depends on issues being carried beyond the to-and-fro of parliamentary committees and the theatre of Question Time and into the homes and minds of your readers, listeners and viewers.

So, I've come to the National Press Club today to talk about why integrity in politics matters.

Why it matters to the health and strength of our democracy.

And why it matters to the state of our economy and the quality of Australians' lives. Because every dollar funnelled into dodgy land deals and sports rorts and splashing cash on executive bonuses for Liberal mates is a dollar that can't be used to help rebuild the Australian economy after a recession, or properly fund an aged care system overrun by neglect. Or help families battling cost-of-living pressures, including high childcare costs

Now, I've been in politics long enough to know there is a view out there that graft and graft

and dodgy deals with donors are just par for the course, the nature of the beast, the cost of doing business. “Factored in” by voters, because ‘all political parties do it’ and all politicians are in it for themselves.

And – for that same reason – I’ve heard it argued that drawing attention to individual scandals and corruption and dishonesty and mismanagement only succeeds in damaging the standing of politics itself.

But that’s only half true.

Exposing acts of corruption doesn’t damage the standing of politics.

Corruption itself does that. Even more so when corrupt acts go unpunished. When they’re ignored, or worse, rewarded.

When there are seemingly no consequences for gross incompetence and no penalties for scandalous negligence – that’s what undermines belief in the system and respect for the institution.

And apathy in the face of incompetence and scandal has been one of the hallmarks of this government for 8 years.

Stuart Robert: dumped for using his ministerial position for private interests, now back as a Minister. Despite the MyGov crash and the Robodebt disaster, he still has his job. In fact, he’s been entrusted with a key part of the vaccine rollout!

Susan Ley: sacked from the frontbench after an expenses scandal, now back as a Minister.

Michaelia Cash misled the Senate on multiple occasions and wouldn’t cooperate with the Australian Federal Police. Now promoted to Deputy Leader in the Senate.

Angus Taylor’s had Grassgate, Watergate, and the forged documents affair, yet still has his job.

Christian Porter failed to deliver religious freedom laws and hasn’t delivered the Government’s Integrity Commission – yet still has his job.

Richard Colbeck, a grossly incompetent minister who failed to act when the Royal Commission into Aged Care handed down an interim report titled “Neglect” and who failed to act again when COVID hit the residential aged care sector and 685 Australians died on his watch. Censured by the Senate, still has his job.

And when independent bodies like the Audit Office find problems – as they have with the airport dodgy land deal and Sports Rorts – Scott Morrison responds by cutting their funding.

In the world of business, these examples of incompetence would be career-ending.

And a culture so lacking in accountability would have everyone talking about a change of CEO.

In politics, the consequences stretch further than that.

There are real-world problems caused by a failure to uphold integrity in public life.

Democracy has always derived its strength from the consent of the governed, the will of the people.

And when that consent and faith and respect is undermined, democracy is weakened too.

For all its virtues, democracy is a fragile institution.

We saw vivid proof of that last month, the US Capitol attacks, perpetrated by what President Biden rightly called domestic terrorists and far-right extremists.

We see it too with the chilling effect of law enforcement and national security laws on freedom of the press in this country.

And it may seem a strange thing for someone who has spent almost 20 years in public life to say, but we must acknowledge that democracy is not necessarily enduring.

The country of my birth, and the beacon of democracy for the world, the United States of America, now must rebuild many of the institutions and conventions that support its ‘small d’ democratic government.

What happened in the USA should jolt political parties in a liberal democracy to consider their responsibilities to preserve the sacred trust between voters, elected representatives and governments.

The erosion of conventions and institutions that uphold democratic freedoms in the United States...combined with the easy and emotive capacity of social media, disinformation and foreign interference to sway voters, is a wakeup call that we must preserve and uphold the bedrocks of Australian democracy, including:



An independent Australian Electoral Commission

- Compulsory Voting
- The rule of law, an independent judiciary and independent law enforcement and national security agencies – with appropriate oversight, especially on intrusive powers
- Freedom of the press and public interest journalism
- Freedoms of religion, association, and speech, and
- Oversight and accountability mechanisms, provided by bodies like the Australian National Audit Office, Senate estimates, and state-based Integrity Commissions.

As Anthony Albanese noted in his vision statement on democracy at the end of 2019, the University of Canberra has found that satisfaction with Australian democracy has more than halved in the last decade, down from 86% to 41%.

The Lowy Institute found in 2019 that 22% of Australians support the statement that “in some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.”

It was a shocking 30% of voters aged 18 to 29 years who agreed with this statement.

As Anthony said, that is dangerous. When the idealists lose support for democracy, cynicism wins and positive change stops.

Distrust and disengagement allow failure to go unaddressed, and self-interest to be served.

In short, when voters’ cynicism grows, politicians like Scott Morrison flourish.

It is much easier for a politician like Scott Morrison to serve his own political purposes if Australians have low expectations and cynical views of their Government.

Whilst the long-term decline in trust in democracy is worrying and creates space for the cynicism, it’s also a fact that trust rebounded in 2020 as Australians looked to governments to protect them during the pandemic.

The national response to COVID showed that when the community and political leaders move together. We can still do really big things quickly to fix problems, protect the vulnerable, and improve people’s lives.

When the pandemic hit, Labor sought to work constructively with the Government.

As Leader of the Opposition, Anthony wisely judged that the Australian people wanted and needed their parliamentarians to put aside partisan arguments and ensure that health and economic support flowed as soon as possible.

This constructive approach stands in stark contrast to the oppositionist approach taken by the Liberals during the global financial crisis.

But Anthony knew, especially after his many visits to communities struck by bushfires over last summer, that in a crisis, the most important duty of elected representatives is to deliver support quickly and provide confidence to the Australian people that the parliament is on their side.

That's why Labor offered constructive suggestions, such as a wage subsidy, and we supported JobSeeker and JobKeeper legislation quickly through parliament. Where there were gaps, we looked for solutions, not arguments.

JobKeeper has been vital – that's why Labor proposed it in the first place. There are still 1.6 million Australians relying on this lifeline.

There is still a very long way to go in our recovery, and for many Australians, there is a real fear about what happens next month. Because the single biggest threat to the Australian economy is this Liberal Government reverting to type.

Already, this year, we've seen the most radical, regressive proposals for Industrial Relations since WorkChoices. Blatant canvassing of junking an election promise and freezing superannuation.

And a Prime Ministerial commitment to cut JobKeeper and JobSeeker, cutting a lifeline for millions of businesses and families – and cutting Australia's recovery off at the knees.

It's clear that the government have already flicked the switch from 'we're all in this together' to 'you're on your own'.

And while the Prime Minister is out preparing the ground for an austerity agenda of cuts to pay, conditions, super and support.

He continues to treat taxpayers' money as though it is Liberal Party money.

And the size and scale of this scandal is still not fully understood.

Scott Morrison was up to his neck in the Sports Rorts, more than \$100 million in taxpayer money overwhelmingly benefiting marginal electorates in the lead up to the 2019 election.

Scott Morrison didn't care about the thousands of community sports clubs who deserved funding and missed out. All he cared about was gaming the system to help his

Government.

But understand this: SportsRorts is no one-off.

It's not the biggest nor the worst use and abuse of taxpayers' money under the Liberals.

Shadow Minister for Finance Katy Gallagher's budget analysis shows: over the past six years as Treasurer and Prime Minister, Scott Morrison has perfected the art of syphoning billions of public funds into special purpose funds which, sitting as large pots of cash, standing ready to be deployed for politically convenient purposes - particularly in the lead up to an election.

At just \$100m SportRorts is small fry compared to where the main game is.

Let's take just one example with Community Development Grants.

These grants were established in 2013 with a relatively modest \$340m under the Abbott Government.

But Scott Morrison – as Treasurer – recognised the political benefit of sitting on large amounts of unallocated money in the budget.

Morrison has topped Community Development Grants up - budget after budget - until it now sits at a whopping \$2.5 billion.

And no pesky colour coded sheets to trip you up with this program – the beauty of the Community Development Grants is that to get a grant you have to be invited by the Morrison Government to apply!

So, no guessing which electorates have done the best out of these grants – overall, 70% of the funds to date have gone to coalition seats, last year alone, 75% of Community Development Grant money went to coalition seats.

It's not just the massive multi-billion-dollar Community Development Grants and Sports Rorts that Morrison had up his sleeve in the lead up to the 2019 election; he had also cashed up

- the \$150m Female Facilities and Water Safety Program, with no guidelines, tenders or application process, where the funds went to 11 Liberal and National seats
- the \$3b Urban Congestion Fund, 83% of which went to Coalition held or marginal Labor seats.

There's also the:

- \$1billion Building Better Regions Fund
- \$650million Commuter Car Park Fund
- \$300million Drought Communities Program
- \$22million Communities Environment Program
- \$55million Safer Communities Fund

The list goes on and on.

Billions of dollars in public funds, discreetly parked in the budget and given away – usually at the complete discretion of Ministers – because no-one needs the auditor to come sniffing again – money to be provided to hand-picked electorates when the electoral timing is right.

The perfect pork barrel programmed into the budget year after year, normalising a blatant misuse of taxpayers' funds for the Liberal party's political purposes.

But the use of taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party money extends beyond the billions of dollars in grants and rorts.

While Scott Morrison cuts JobKeeper, JobSeeker and cuts the wages of ordinary Australians, he makes sure his mates have access to secure jobs and good pay.

Eight years after the election of this Liberal Government, half of the ministers in Tony Abbott's first government have left Parliament and have been well rewarded by their Liberal mates.

Fifteen of 30 ministers in Tony Abbott's first ministry have received appointments or other favours from the Liberal Government, got jobs with organisations they worked with as Ministers, or lobby their colleagues for cash.

This means that, right now, Scott Morrison is quietly spending millions of taxpayers' dollars to fund the lifestyles of former Abbott Government Ministers.

Jobs for mates extends beyond giving a soft landing to former ministers. There are also the secretive contracts to Liberal Party connections and using government resources to prop up Liberal Party advertisements.

Eight years of this Liberal Government, and Australians still don't know:

- Why the Liberals gave half a billion dollars to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation – a tiny organisation that never asked for the funds, and despite its name, had little experience in protecting the Reef.

- Why millions of dollars of advertising and market research contracts are being handed to mates of Scott Morrison, mates like former Crosby Textor pollster Jim Reed, who got \$1m to provide market research to inform Scott Morrison's "Our Comeback" marketing campaign. The Morrison Government refuses to release the Reed research.
- Why a tiny company called Paladin, registered to a beach shack on Kangaroo Island, was given \$500million without a tender to run Peter Dutton's offshore detention centres.
- Why the Morrison Government paid \$30million for land in the Leppington Triangle for the second Sydney Airport, when it was only worth \$3million
- Why, while Australians were suffering from bushfires last year, Scott Morrison rolled out Liberal Party advertising politicising the Australian Defence Force – a move that 'discomforted' the Chief of the ADF Angus Campbell.
- Or why, last week, the Liberal Party rolled out a social media advertisement that politicised the COVID vaccine and the Health Department Secretary, Professor Brendan Murphy.

Scott Morrison – or Scotty from Marketing as he is sometimes known -- is using \$75million of taxpayers' money to fund his COVID recovery advertising blitz, including \$7million to promote the failed COVIDSafe App and \$15million to fund the "Our Comeback" Campaign – a campaign that amounted to little more than an over-worn and now abandoned catchphrase in parliamentary question time.

This comes on top of \$140million the Morrison Government spent in 2019 to promote themselves.

Wherever Scott Morrison goes, the marketing budget grows.

Scott Morrison can come up with a pithy marketing line about what he stands for, but when we look at his actions, we can see whose side he is on – and who he leaves behind.

Scott Morrison announced in a media conference that his government would take responsibility for keeping older, vulnerable Australians in residential aged care safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Scott Morrison knew our aged care system was in crisis before COVID hit.

After all, the Royal Commission Interim Report into Aged Care was handed down in 2019. It detailed shocking, horrifying reports of aged care residents with maggots in open wounds, chemically restrained, and left to lie in their own urine and excrement.

The Royal Commission Interim report says that there were 4,000 notifications of alleged or suspected assaults in one year, and that up to half of Australia's frailest aged-care residents are malnourished.



This is not a report from a Third World country; this is a report of what is going on in Scott Morrison's aged care system, summed up in one word, the report's title: Neglect.

As Treasurer, Scott Morrison cut \$1.7bn from the aged care budget, but since the Liberal Government came to power in 2013, they've spent \$1bn in advertising telling us what a good job they are doing.

When COVID hit aged care, Scott Morrison wasn't on the side of Australians in aged care and their families like he promised.

We knew from what was already happening overseas with the pandemic that aged care residents were particularly vulnerable to COVID, and what extra measures did Scott Morrison take?

None.

No extra precaution and no personal protective equipment and no pandemic training for aged care staff.

Surge workforce plans were developed too late.

685 aged care residents died from COVID-19, making Australia one of the worst countries in the world for aged care deaths as a proportion of all COVID deaths.

Families were separated from their loved ones and aged care residents – our parents and grandparents – died alone, suffering, and sometimes without their families even aware they had passed away.

Over the past year my colleagues and I have met with dozens of aged care workers. They are the unsung heroes in Australia. They have sought, at every turn, to give older Australians the care, dignity and protection they deserve.

Aged care workers in Australia are understaffed and underpaid. They are starved of resources. They know that the Neglect detailed in the Royal Commission report is the direct result of Government cuts to funding and policy decisions.

An aged care worker with many years' experience – often a woman, often in her 50s or 60s – is most likely paid less than a 19-year-old retail worker in his first job.

I acknowledge here today Gerard Hayes and the Health Services Union, who have launched a landmark work value case with the Fair Work Commission to get a proper pay rise for these caring and dedicated workers.



Unfortunately, when it comes to jobs in aged care, there is only one job on Scott Morrison's mind: in his reshuffle, the Prime Minister left Richard Colebeck in the Aged Care portfolio.

A job for a mate was a higher priority for Scott Morrison than the safety and well-being of older Australians.

How can older Australians and their families rely on Scott Morrison to deliver on the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care when he has never been on their side?

Scott Morrison also stood up in a media conference and announced he would get Australians stranded overseas home by Christmas.

As a member of the COVID-19 Senate Committee, I have heard story after story from distressed Australians stranded overseas.

Working families like Vowels from Newcastle in NSW, who were stranded for months in the UK with their 5 children, living out of a caravan and about to lose their jobs and their home in Australia.

As Deanne Vowels said, "It's mentally, financially and physically detrimental. If you can get high-paying actors and politicians and cricket players....and even lobsters in and out of Australia, surely you can get hard-working, good-working Aussies home."

I'm happy to say that the Vowels family did finally get home, but only after a lot of publicity generated by their appearance at COVID Committee hearings.

Funny that, pretty much every stranded Australian who has appeared at the COVID Committee Senate hearings has found they get a flight almost within days.

Sometimes Katy Gallagher and I muse that we might need to have all 40,000 stranded Aussies appear so we can get them all home.

Scott Morrison promised they'd all be home by Christmas, but they weren't.

As Peta Stoyanovich-Kristie, whose husband and mother-in-law were stranded in Serbia said, "they are not stranded, they are abandoned."

Abandoned. Scott Morrison has not been on the side of stranded Australians.

There's no national quarantine plan, and no national leadership.

The man who bought a trophy for himself to celebrate his border management, now refuses to accept federal responsibility for quarantine.

If you want to bring a horse into Australia, it goes into a federal quarantine facility.

If you are an Australian wanting to come into Australia, Scott Morrison has washed his hands of you.

He doesn't want the political risk for quarantine: better the premiers have it, he thinks.

Scott Morrison's refusal to be responsible for the international borders is putting all Australian citizens – at home and overseas – at greater risk.

Scott Morrison also stood up here, at this very lectern last May, to announce his so-called JobMaker plan.

It really was breaking news: it was the first time the federal department responsible for employment had ever heard of the plan.

We know that the Prime Minister is always there for the photo opp, never there for the follow up.

But even by Mr Morrison's standards, the JobMaker speech was a triumph of announcement over delivery.

Not only is Job Maker leaving nearly a million Australians behind by excluding them from hiring subsidies,

But now the Morrison Government's Industrial Relations Bill will allow employers to cut the pay of Australian workers.

What's worse, the Prime Minister is using COVID as cover for this wage cut. That is no way to thank the workers who got us through the pandemic.

The Morrison Government keeps insisting that their Industrial Relations Bill won't mean a pay cut for workers.

Scott Morrison and Christian Porter say employers simply would not take advantage of the Industrial Relations Bill to cut wages now, and that employees would never agree to it anyway.

Well, HelloWorld.

Last week travel firm HelloWorld wrote to their employees seeking to impose pay cuts of up to 20% when JobKeeper ends in March.

HelloWorld shows us two things in black and white:

One, we can see what employers are willing to do when JobKeeper ends. The end of JobKeeper will be a trigger, and we should expect that more employers will look to cut wages – especially when the Morrison Government's Industrial Relations Bill makes it easier for them to do so.

Two, it should come as no surprise that the first employer we see making a pay cut is a company headed by a former Liberal Party federal treasurer.

How can the Morrison Government be looking after your job and your wages, when they're so busy looking after themselves and their mates?

And what choice do HelloWorld and other workers really have? With 2 million Australians unemployed or underemployed, of course workers feel vulnerable.

For many the choice is the Morrison pay cut, or no job.

The Industrial Relations Bill isn't just a problem for workers on JobKeeper. It is a problem for the wider economy.

Right now, what the economy needs is for people to be spending. But families won't spend money if they are worried about a pay cut.

Scott Morrison and Christian Porter just assert in a Trumpian fashion that pay cuts won't happen if this bill passes.

Well, as Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations Tony Burke points out, if they want to ensure Australian workers don't get a pay cut, then don't legislate to allow it to happen.

And if you think the pay cut will be isolated to a few companies, think again. It has the capacity to spread across entire industries.

Take a Labour Hire company with not many employees. The company gets an agreement through under Morrison's Industrial Relations Bill that cuts wages.

Then the Labour Hire company starts to expand across an industry.

In order to remain competitive, what are other employers in that industry supposed to do?

Make no mistake, they will be forced to cut wages.

Scott Morrison isn't on the side of Australian workers.

Labor set a really simple test for the Industrial Relations Bill. We said we would support the changes if they delivered secure jobs with decent pay.

This bill fails that test, and we will fight it.

Labor is always on the side of Australian workers.

More than two years ago, Scott Morrison announced he would establish a Commonwealth Integrity Commission.

He has not delivered it.

All the Morrison Government has produced is a draft bill for a weak, secretive and compromised Commission that would cover up corruption, not expose it.

In the years since Scott Morrison made that announcement, the need for an integrity commission has only grown stronger with

the Leppington Triangle dodgy land deal, the cash for visas scandal - which has allowed some individuals to actually purchase Australian citizenship, and the explosion of discretionary government grants without guidelines, applications, transparency or oversight.

But Scott Morrison won't even allow the Commonwealth Integrity Commission Bill to be debated in the parliament.

It seems he wants the Australian public to be cynical about their government.

It suits his political interests if Australians' trust in government declines, and transparency in government is dimmed.

It makes it easier for him to ignore what the Australian people want and need, and look after his own interests.

Being in government must be about more than self-interest. It must be about the national interest.

Australians deserve a Government that acts in their interest, that is on their side.

No less than the future of Australian democracy – and the capacity of government to make changes in the interest of the Australian people – rests on integrity in government and trust between elected representatives and citizens.

That's why, as a major step to restoring integrity to our democratic system, Labor will create a strong and effective National Integrity Commission.

Powerful, transparent, independent.

With the powers, independence and resources of a standing Royal Commission.

The pandemic is not an excuse to delay an integrity commission – if anything, it is a reason to establish one.

There is a heightened risk of corruption in the current environment, with the prevalence of government contracts being awarded without tender, and appointments to government bodies and advisory boards being made without adequate transparency, a national integrity commission is more important than ever.

Building trust between governments and citizens also requires robust freedom of the press, stronger protections for whistle-blowers, and Governments that take seriously their legal responsibility to respond to Freedom of Information requests.

Australia got through the pandemic as well as we did because – in a moment of crisis - unions, employers, the parliament and the people came together and trusted one another.

As the crisis passes, and the recovery begins, Australians need and want a Government that is on their side to rebuild an economy that works for them.

I might pause here and let you in, just a little bit, on the sausage-making process.

One of the reasons our slogan is “on your side” is because it unifies Labor’s two key objectives in opposition

One, to present a positive plan for national reconstruction squarely focused on jobs – good, secure jobs with fair pay and conditions.

Labor is on the side of working families, and Anthony will outline the next part of that plan tomorrow in Brisbane.

And two, to hold the Government to account:

- for their waste, mismanagement and scandals, and their use of taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party money – all of which hurts Australian families,
- but also for their disregard for the fundamental aspects of democracy: transparency, accountability and integrity.
- Labor is on the side of the Australian people, who want and deserve transparency and accountability in their government.

How can the Morrison Government look after you, when they are so busy looking after themselves?

So, if you want good, secure jobs with fair pay and conditions, Labor is on your side.

If you want a properly funded education and skills system that will prepare your children for the workforce, Labor is on your side.

If you want more affordable childcare, Labor is on your side.

If you want an Australia that makes things, Labor is on your side.

If you want real action on climate change and want Australia to become a renewable energy superpower, with the jobs that it brings, Labor is on your side.

And if you want accountability and transparency in government, Labor is on your side.

An Albanese Labor Government will build a recovery where no one is held back, and no one is left behind.

Because Australians want and need, now more than ever, a government that looks after Australian families and is on their side.

**ENDS**

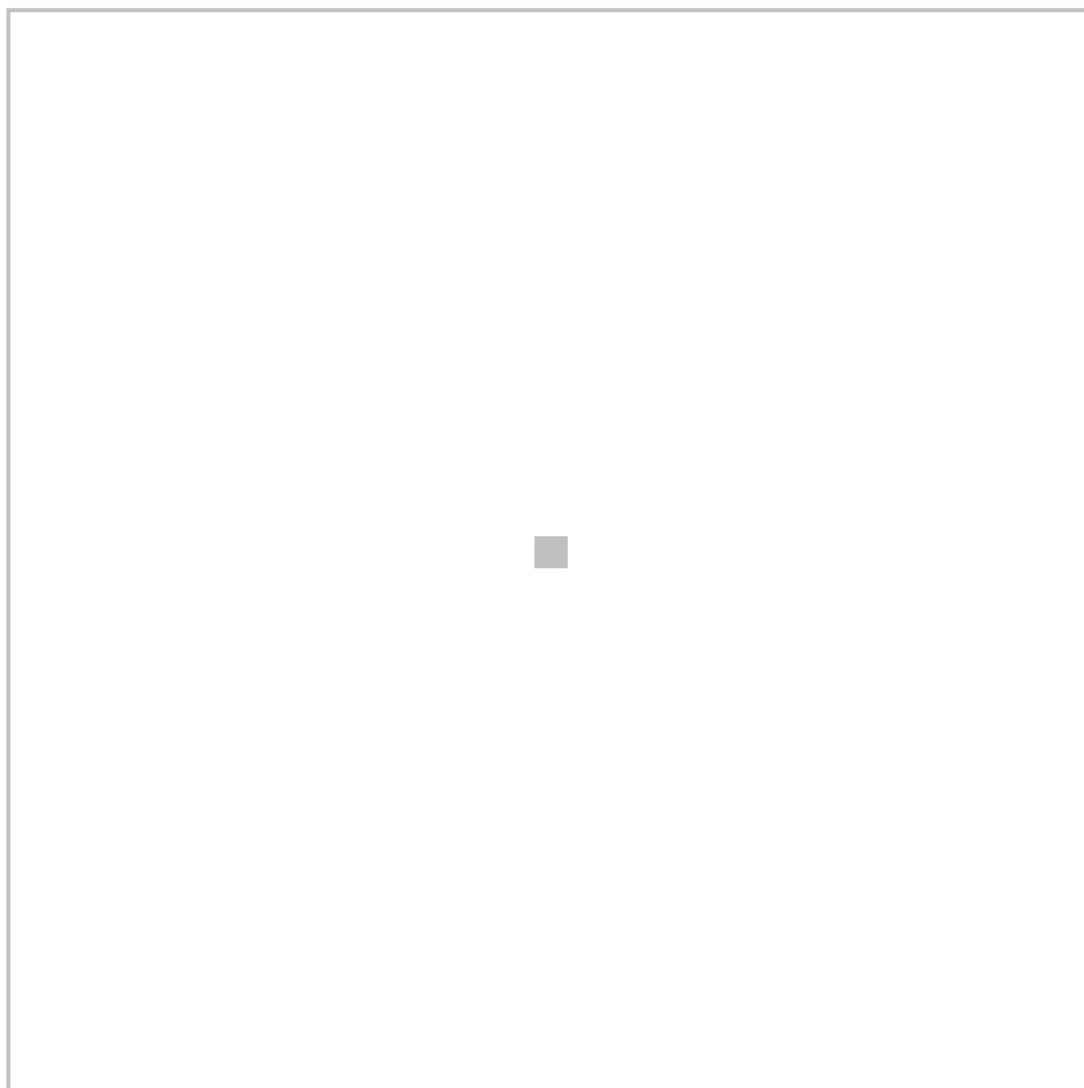
**MEDIA CONTACT: s 22(1)(a)(ii)**



**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: KRISTINA KENEALLY – SPEECH – NATIONAL PRESS CLUB – CANBERRA – TUESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Tuesday, 9 February 2021 12:31:48 PM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 9 February 2021 12:29:26 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY – SPEECH – NATIONAL PRESS CLUB – CANBERRA – TUESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2021



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**SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**  
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**SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

## **ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB**

**NATIONAL PRESS CLUB  
CANBERRA**

**TUESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2021**

**\*\*\* CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY \*\*\***

(Acknowledgements omitted)

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Especially not those of us on the Labor side, the party of initiative and ideas, the party created and sustained by a belief in the power of government to change people's lives for the better.

But - so long as you are in Opposition - you have a fundamental responsibility to hold the government to account – not just on issues of policy but on questions of integrity.

Two weeks ago, Anthony Albanese asked me to take on the portfolio of Shadow Minister for Government Accountability.

This means it's my job to call-out every government rort and racket, every broken promise, every instance of the Liberals and the Nationals putting their donors and their cronies ahead of the national interest.

I share that responsibility with Pat Conroy as Shadow Minister Assisting on Government Accountability and all my colleagues – and indeed, with all the members of the press gallery here today.

Because proper scrutiny and real accountability depends on issues being carried beyond the to-and-fro of parliamentary committees and the theatre of Question Time and into the homes and minds of your readers, listeners and viewers.

So, I've come to the National Press Club today to talk about why integrity in politics matters.

Why it matters to the health and strength of our democracy.

And why it matters to the state of our economy and the quality of Australians' lives.  
Because every dollar funnelled into dodgy land deals and sports rorts and splashing cash

on executive bonuses for Liberal mates is a dollar that can't be used to help rebuild the Australian economy after a recession, or properly fund an aged care system overrun by neglect. Or help families battling cost-of-living pressures, including high childcare costs

Now, I've been in politics long enough to know there is a view out there that graft and graft and dodgy deals with donors are just par for the course, the nature of the beast, the cost of doing business. "Factored in" by voters, because 'all political parties do it' and all politicians are in it for themselves.

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The country of my birth, and the beacon of democracy for the world, the United States of America, now must rebuild many of the institutions and conventions that support its 'small d' democratic government.

What happened in the USA should jolt political parties in a liberal democracy to consider their responsibilities to preserve the sacred trust between voters, elected representatives and governments.

The erosion of conventions and institutions that uphold democratic freedoms in the United States...combined with the easy and emotive capacity of social media, disinformation and foreign interference to sway voters, is a wakeup call that we must preserve and uphold the bedrocks of Australian democracy, including:

- An independent Australian Electoral Commission
- Compulsory Voting
- The rule of law, an independent judiciary and independent law enforcement and national security agencies – with appropriate oversight, especially on intrusive powers
- Freedom of the press and public interest journalism
- Freedoms of religion, association, and speech, and
- Oversight and accountability mechanisms, provided by bodies like the Australian National Audit Office, Senate estimates, and state-based Integrity Commissions.

As Anthony Albanese noted in his vision statement on democracy at the end of 2019, the University of Canberra has found that satisfaction with Australian democracy has more than halved in the last decade, down from 86% to 41%.

The Lowy Institute found in 2019 that 22% of Australians support the statement that “in some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.”

It was a shocking 30% of voters aged 18 to 29 years who agreed with this statement.

As Anthony said, that is dangerous. When the idealists lose support for democracy, cynicism wins and positive change stops.

Distrust and disengagement allow failure to go unaddressed, and self-interest to be served.

In short, when voters' cynicism grows, politicians like Scott Morrison flourish.

It is much easier for a politician like Scott Morrison to serve his own political purposes if Australians have low expectations and cynical views of their Government.

Whilst the long-term decline in trust in democracy is worrying and creates space for the cynicism, it's also a fact that trust rebounded in 2020 as Australians looked to governments to protect them during the pandemic.

The national response to COVID showed that when the community and political leaders move together. We can still do really big things quickly to fix problems, protect the vulnerable, and improve people's lives.

When the pandemic hit, Labor sought to work constructively with the Government.

As Leader of the Opposition, Anthony wisely judged that the Australian people wanted and needed their parliamentarians to put aside partisan arguments and ensure that health and economic support flowed as soon as possible.

This constructive approach stands in stark contrast to the oppositionist approach taken by the Liberals during the global financial crisis.

But Anthony knew, especially after his many visits to communities struck by bushfires over last summer, that in a crisis, the most important duty of elected representatives is to deliver support quickly and provide confidence to the Australian people that the parliament is on their side.

That's why Labor offered constructive suggestions, such as a wage subsidy, and we supported JobSeeker and JobKeeper legislation quickly through parliament. Where there were gaps, we looked for solutions, not arguments.

JobKeeper has been vital – that's why Labor proposed it in the first place. There are still 1.6 million Australians relying on this lifeline.

There is still a very long way to go in our recovery, and for many Australians, there is a real fear about what happens next month. Because the single biggest threat to the Australian economy is this Liberal Government reverting to type.

Already, this year, we've seen the most radical, regressive proposals for Industrial Relations since WorkChoices. Blatant canvassing of junking an election promise and freezing superannuation.

And a Prime Ministerial commitment to cut JobKeeper and JobSeeker, cutting a lifeline for millions of businesses and families – and cutting Australia's recovery off at the knees.

It's clear that the government have already flicked the switch from 'we're all in this together' to 'you're on your own'.

And while the Prime Minister is out preparing the ground for an austerity agenda of cuts to pay, conditions, super and support.

He continues to treat taxpayers' money as though it is Liberal Party money.

And the size and scale of this scandal is still not fully understood.



Scott Morrison was up to his neck in the Sports Rorts, more than \$100 million in taxpayer money overwhelmingly benefiting marginal electorates in the lead up to the 2019 election.

Scott Morrison didn't care about the thousands of community sports clubs who deserved funding and missed out. All he cared about was gaming the system to help his Government.

But understand this: SportsRorts is no one-off.

It's not the biggest nor the worst use and abuse of taxpayers' money under the Liberals.

Shadow Minister for Finance Katy Gallagher's budget analysis shows: over the past six years as Treasurer and Prime Minister, Scott Morrison has perfected the art of syphoning billions of public funds into special purpose funds which, sitting as large pots of cash, standing ready to be deployed for politically convenient purposes - particularly in the lead up to an election.

At just \$100m SportRorts is small fry compared to where the main game is.

Let's take just one example with Community Development Grants.

These grants were established in 2013 with a relatively modest \$340m under the Abbott Government.

But Scott Morrison – as Treasurer – recognised the political benefit of sitting on large amounts of unallocated money in the budget.

Morrison has topped Community Development Grants up - budget after budget - until it now sits at a whopping \$2.5 billion.

And no pesky colour coded sheets to trip you up with this program – the beauty of the Community Development Grants is that to get a grant you have to be invited by the Morrison Government to apply!

So, no guessing which electorates have done the best out of these grants – overall, 70% of the funds to date have gone to coalition seats, last year alone, 75% of Community Development Grant money went to coalition seats.

It's not just the massive multi-billion-dollar Community Development Grants and Sports Rorts that Morrison had up his sleeve in the lead up to the 2019 election; he had also cashed up

the \$150m Female Facilities and Water Safety Program, with no guidelines, tenders or application process, where the funds went to 11 Liberal and National seats

- the \$3b Urban Congestion Fund, 83% of which went to Coalition held or marginal Labor seats.

There's also the:

- \$1billion Building Better Regions Fund
- \$650million Commuter Car Park Fund
- \$300million Drought Communities Program
- \$22million Communities Environment Program
- \$55million Safer Communities Fund

The list goes on and on.

Billions of dollars in public funds, discreetly parked in the budget and given away – usually at the complete discretion of Ministers – because no-one needs the auditor to come sniffing again – money to be provided to hand-picked electorates when the electoral timing is right.

The perfect pork barrel programmed into the budget year after year, normalising a blatant misuse of taxpayers' funds for the Liberal party's political purposes.

But the use of taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party money extends beyond the billions of dollars in grants and rorts.

While Scott Morrison cuts JobKeeper, JobSeeker and cuts the wages of ordinary Australians, he makes sure his mates have access to secure jobs and good pay.

Eight years after the election of this Liberal Government, half of the ministers in Tony Abbott's first government have left Parliament and have been well rewarded by their Liberal mates.

Fifteen of 30 ministers in Tony Abbott's first ministry have received appointments or other favours from the Liberal Government, got jobs with organisations they worked with as Ministers, or lobby their colleagues for cash.

This means that, right now, Scott Morrison is quietly spending millions of taxpayers' dollars to fund the lifestyles of former Abbott Government Ministers.

Jobs for mates extends beyond giving a soft landing to former ministers. There are also the secretive contracts to Liberal Party connections and using government resources to prop up Liberal Party advertisements.

Eight years of this Liberal Government, and Australians still don't know:

- Why the Liberals gave half a billion dollars to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation – a tiny organisation that never asked for the funds, and despite its name, had little experience in protecting the Reef.
- Why millions of dollars of advertising and market research contracts are being handed to mates of Scott Morrison, mates like former Crosby Textor pollster Jim Reed, who got \$1m to provide market research to inform Scott Morrison's "Our Comeback" marketing campaign. The Morrison Government refuses to release the Reed research.
- Why a tiny company called Paladin, registered to a beach shack on Kangaroo Island, was given \$500million without a tender to run Peter Dutton's offshore detention centres.
- Why the Morrison Government paid \$30million for land in the Leppington Triangle for the second Sydney Airport, when it was only worth \$3million
- Why, while Australians were suffering from bushfires last year, Scott Morrison rolled out Liberal Party advertising politicising the Australian Defence Force – a move that 'discomforted' the Chief of the ADF Angus Campbell.
- Or why, last week, the Liberal Party rolled out a social media advertisement that politicised the COVID vaccine and the Health Department Secretary, Professor Brendan Murphy.

Scott Morrison – or Scotty from Marketing as he is sometimes known -- is using \$75million of taxpayers' money to fund his COVID recovery advertising blitz, including \$7million to promote the failed COVIDSafe App and \$15million to fund the "Our Comeback" Campaign – a campaign that amounted to little more than an over-worn and now abandoned catchphrase in parliamentary question time.

This comes on top of \$140million the Morrison Government spent in 2019 to promote themselves.

Wherever Scott Morrison goes, the marketing budget grows.

Scott Morrison can come up with a pithy marketing line about what he stands for, but when we look at his actions, we can see whose side he is on – and who he leaves behind.

Scott Morrison announced in a media conference that his government would take responsibility for keeping older, vulnerable Australians in residential aged care safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Scott Morrison knew our aged care system was in crisis before COVID hit.

After all, the Royal Commission Interim Report into Aged Care was handed down in 2019. It detailed shocking, horrifying reports of aged care residents with maggots in open

wounds, chemically restrained, and left to lie in their own urine and excrement.

The Royal Commission Interim report says that there were 4,000 notifications of alleged or suspected assaults in one year, and that up to half of Australia's frailest aged-care residents are malnourished.

This is not a report from a Third World country; this is a report of what is going on in Scott Morrison's aged care system, summed up in one word, the report's title: Neglect.

As Treasurer, Scott Morrison cut \$1.7bn from the aged care budget, but since the Liberal Government came to power in 2013, they've spent \$1bn in advertising telling us what a good job they are doing.

When COVID hit aged care, Scott Morrison wasn't on the side of Australians in aged care and their families like he promised.

We knew from what was already happening overseas with the pandemic that aged care residents were particularly vulnerable to COVID, and what extra measures did Scott Morrison take?

None.

No extra precaution and no personal protective equipment and no pandemic training for aged care staff.

Surge workforce plans were developed too late.

685 aged care residents died from COVID-19, making Australia one of the worst countries in the world for aged care deaths as a proportion of all COVID deaths.

Families were separated from their loved ones and aged care residents – our parents and grandparents – died alone, suffering, and sometimes without their families even aware they had passed away.

Over the past year my colleagues and I have met with dozens of aged care workers. They are the unsung heroes in Australia. They have sought, at every turn, to give older Australians the care, dignity and protection they deserve.

Aged care workers in Australia are understaffed and underpaid. They are starved of resources. They know that the Neglect detailed in the Royal Commission report is the direct result of Government cuts to funding and policy decisions.

An aged care worker with many years' experience – often a woman, often in her 50s or 60s – is most likely paid less than a 19-year-old retail worker in his first job.

I acknowledge here today Gerard Hayes and the Health Services Union, who have launched a landmark work value case with the Fair Work Commission to get a proper pay rise for these caring and dedicated workers.

Unfortunately, when it comes to jobs in aged care, there is only one job on Scott Morrison's mind: in his reshuffle, the Prime Minister left Richard Colebeck in the Aged Care portfolio.

A job for a mate was a higher priority for Scott Morrison than the safety and well-being of older Australians.

How can older Australians and their families rely on Scott Morrison to deliver on the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care when he has never been on their side?

Scott Morrison also stood up in a media conference and announced he would get Australians stranded overseas home by Christmas.

As a member of the COVID-19 Senate Committee, I have heard story after story from distressed Australians stranded overseas.

Working families like Vowels from Newcastle in NSW, who were stranded for months in the UK with their 5 children, living out of a caravan and about to lose their jobs and their home in Australia.

As Deanne Vowels said, "It's mentally, financially and physically detrimental. If you can get high-paying actors and politicians and cricket players....and even lobsters in and out of Australia, surely you can get hard-working, good-working Aussies home."

I'm happy to say that the Vowels family did finally get home, but only after a lot of publicity generated by their appearance at COVID Committee hearings.

Funny that, pretty much every stranded Australian who has appeared at the COVID Committee Senate hearings has found they get a flight almost within days.

Sometimes Katy Gallagher and I muse that we might need to have all 40,000 stranded Aussies appear so we can get them all home.

Scott Morrison promised they'd all be home by Christmas, but they weren't.



As Peta Stoyanovich-Kristie, whose husband and mother-in-law were stranded in Serbia said, “they are not stranded, they are abandoned.”

Abandoned. Scott Morrison has not been on the side of stranded Australians.

There’s no national quarantine plan, and no national leadership.

The man who bought a trophy for himself to celebrate his border management, now refuses to accept federal responsibility for quarantine.

If you want to bring a horse into Australia, it goes into a federal quarantine facility.

If you are an Australian wanting to come into Australia, Scott Morrison has washed his hands of you.

He doesn’t want the political risk for quarantine: better the premiers have it, he thinks.

Scott Morrison’s refusal to be responsible for the international borders is putting all Australian citizens – at home and overseas – at greater risk.

Scott Morrison also stood up here, at this very lectern last May, to announce his so-called JobMaker plan.

It really was breaking news: it was the first time the federal department responsible for employment had ever heard of the plan.

We know that the Prime Minister is always there for the photo opp, never there for the follow up.

But even by Mr Morrison’s standards, the JobMaker speech was a triumph of announcement over delivery.

Not only is Job Maker leaving nearly a million Australians behind by excluding them from hiring subsidies,

But now the Morrison Government’s Industrial Relations Bill will allow employers to cut the pay of Australian workers.

What’s worse, the Prime Minister is using COVID as cover for this wage cut. That is no way to thank the workers who got us through the pandemic.

The Morrison Government keeps insisting that their Industrial Relations Bill won’t mean a



pay cut for workers.

Scott Morrison and Christian Porter say employers simply would not take advantage of the Industrial Relations Bill to cut wages now, and that employees would never agree to it anyway.

Well, HelloWorld.

Last week travel firm HelloWorld wrote to their employees seeking to impose pay cuts of up to 20% when JobKeeper ends in March.

HelloWorld shows us two things in black and white:

One, we can see what employers are willing to do when JobKeeper ends. The end of JobKeeper will be a trigger, and we should expect that more employers will look to cut wages – especially when the Morrison Government's Industrial Relations Bill makes it easier for them to do so.

Two, it should come as no surprise that the first employer we see making a pay cut is a company headed by a former Liberal Party federal treasurer.

How can the Morrison Government be looking after your job and your wages, when they're so busy looking after themselves and their mates?

And what choice do HelloWorld and other workers really have? With 2 million Australians unemployed or underemployed, of course workers feel vulnerable.

For many the choice is the Morrison pay cut, or no job.

The Industrial Relations Bill isn't just a problem for workers on JobKeeper. It is a problem for the wider economy.

Right now, what the economy needs is for people to be spending. But families won't spend money if they are worried about a pay cut.

Scott Morrison and Christian Porter just assert in a Trumpian fashion that pay cuts won't happen if this bill passes.

Well, as Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations Tony Burke points out, if they want to ensure Australian workers don't get a pay cut, then don't legislate to allow it to happen.

And if you think the pay cut will be isolated to a few companies, think again. It has the

capacity to spread across entire industries.

Take a Labour Hire company with not many employees. The company gets an agreement through under Morrison's Industrial Relations Bill that cuts wages.

Then the Labour Hire company starts to expand across an industry.

In order to remain competitive, what are other employers in that industry supposed to do?

Make no mistake, they will be forced to cut wages.

Scott Morrison isn't on the side of Australian workers.

Labor set a really simple test for the Industrial Relations Bill. We said we would support the changes if they delivered secure jobs with decent pay.

This bill fails that test, and we will fight it.

Labor is always on the side of Australian workers.

More than two years ago, Scott Morrison announced he would establish a Commonwealth Integrity Commission.

He has not delivered it.

All the Morrison Government has produced is a draft bill for a weak, secretive and compromised Commission that would cover up corruption, not expose it.

In the years since Scott Morrison made that announcement, the need for an integrity commission has only grown stronger with

the Leppington Triangle dodgy land deal, the cash for visas scandal - which has allowed some individuals to actually purchase Australian citizenship, and the explosion of discretionary government grants without guidelines, applications, transparency or oversight.

But Scott Morrison won't even allow the Commonwealth Integrity Commission Bill to be debated in the parliament.

It seems he wants the Australian public to be cynical about their government.

It suits his political interests if Australians' trust in government declines, and transparency in government is dimmed.

It makes it easier for him to ignore what the Australian people want and need, and look after his own interests.

Being in government must be about more than self-interest. It must be about the national interest.

Australians deserve a Government that acts in their interest, that is on their side.

No less than the future of Australian democracy – and the capacity of government to make changes in the interest of the Australian people – rests on integrity in government and trust between elected representatives and citizens.

That's why, as a major step to restoring integrity to our democratic system, Labor will create a strong and effective National Integrity Commission.

Powerful, transparent, independent.

With the powers, independence and resources of a standing Royal Commission.

The pandemic is not an excuse to delay an integrity commission – if anything, it is a reason to establish one.

There is a heightened risk of corruption in the current environment, with the prevalence of government contracts being awarded without tender, and appointments to government bodies and advisory boards being made without adequate transparency, a national integrity commission is more important than ever.

Building trust between governments and citizens also requires robust freedom of the press, stronger protections for whistle-blowers, and Governments that take seriously their legal responsibility to respond to Freedom of Information requests.

Australia got through the pandemic as well as we did because – in a moment of crisis - unions, employers, the parliament and the people came together and trusted one another.

As the crisis passes, and the recovery begins, Australians need and want a Government that is on their side to rebuild an economy that works for them.

I might pause here and let you in, just a little bit, on the sausage-making process.

One of the reasons our slogan is “on your side” is because it unifies Labor's two key objectives in opposition

One, to present a positive plan for national reconstruction squarely focused on jobs – good, secure jobs with fair pay and conditions.

Labor is on the side of working families, and Anthony will outline the next part of that plan tomorrow in Brisbane.

And two, to hold the Government to account:

- for their waste, mismanagement and scandals, and their use of taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party money – all of which hurts Australian families,
- but also for their disregard for the fundamental aspects of democracy: transparency, accountability and integrity.
- Labor is on the side of the Australian people, who want and deserve transparency and accountability in their government.

How can the Morrison Government look after you, when they are so busy looking after themselves?

So, if you want good, secure jobs with fair pay and conditions, Labor is on your side.

If you want a properly funded education and skills system that will prepare your children for the workforce, Labor is on your side.

If you want more affordable childcare, Labor is on your side.

If you want an Australia that makes things, Labor is on your side.

If you want real action on climate change and want Australia to become a renewable energy superpower, with the jobs that it brings, Labor is on your side.

And if you want accountability and transparency in government, Labor is on your side.

An Albanese Labor Government will build a recovery where no one is held back, and no one is left behind.

Because Australians want and need, now more than ever, a government that looks after Australian families and is on their side.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**To:** [Burke, Michael](#)  
**Cc:** [NSD - Border Security & Law Enforcement Policy](#)  
**Subject:** Media Report - Minister Dutton / Safer Communities [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Wednesday, 10 February 2021 9:16:01 AM

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## OFFICIAL

Good morning Michael

The ABC (7.30) has [reported](#) this morning that Minister Dutton 'personally slashed millions in grant funding' from the Round 3 Safer Communities Funding (SCF) program, and used these funds to 'support his own handpicked list that did not follow his department's recommendations'.

The ABC reports that on January 31, 2019, the Minister 'reduced funding for 19 of the highest-scoring grant applications, in a handwritten note, by a combined total of \$5.59 million'. A 'reserve list' of funding options was created by Home Affairs and provided to the Minister, with projects ranked from highest to lowest. The Minister reportedly declined to follow the merit-based recommendations, which he is permitted to do under the grant rules, and handwrote his own rankings of the grant applications. On 31 January 2019, a Home Affairs ministerial briefing noted '[t]he applications do not represent value for money in accordance with the grant guidelines.'

7.30 has stated it is not suggesting that these projects approved by the Minister were not eligible for funding, but rather that some more highly valued projects assessed on merit were overlooked.

Minister Dutton has responded to the ABC with the following statement:

"The suggestion that the Government has done anything other than support projects worthy of support is nonsense.

I am proud of the support the Safer Communities Fund has provided to organisations such as The Scout Association, Salvation Army Trust and St Vincent de Paul who have made Australia a safer place.

Australians expect the Government to act to make the communities we live in safer. That is exactly what the Government has done through the Safer Communities Fund."

The ABC article has been published ahead of the 7.30 Report tonight on the same topic. This is gaining some coverage on twitter, but has not (yet) been picked up by other media.

We'll reach out to Home Affairs to see if they have talking points they are willing to share at this point.

Happy to discuss.

Kind regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Adviser

Border Security and Law Enforcement Policy | Homeland Security Branch  
 National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

e: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | team contact: s 47E(d)

One National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600

*The Department acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Cultures, Country and Elders both past and present.*



**From:** [Media Operations](#)  
**To:** [Media Operations](#)  
**Subject:** Media Pulse: Wednesday 10 February 2021 [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Wednesday, 10 February 2021 6:23:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)  
[Waters - Dutton grants rort renews ICAC calls.PDF](#)  
[Digital Media Analysis - Wednesday 10 February 2021.pdf](#)

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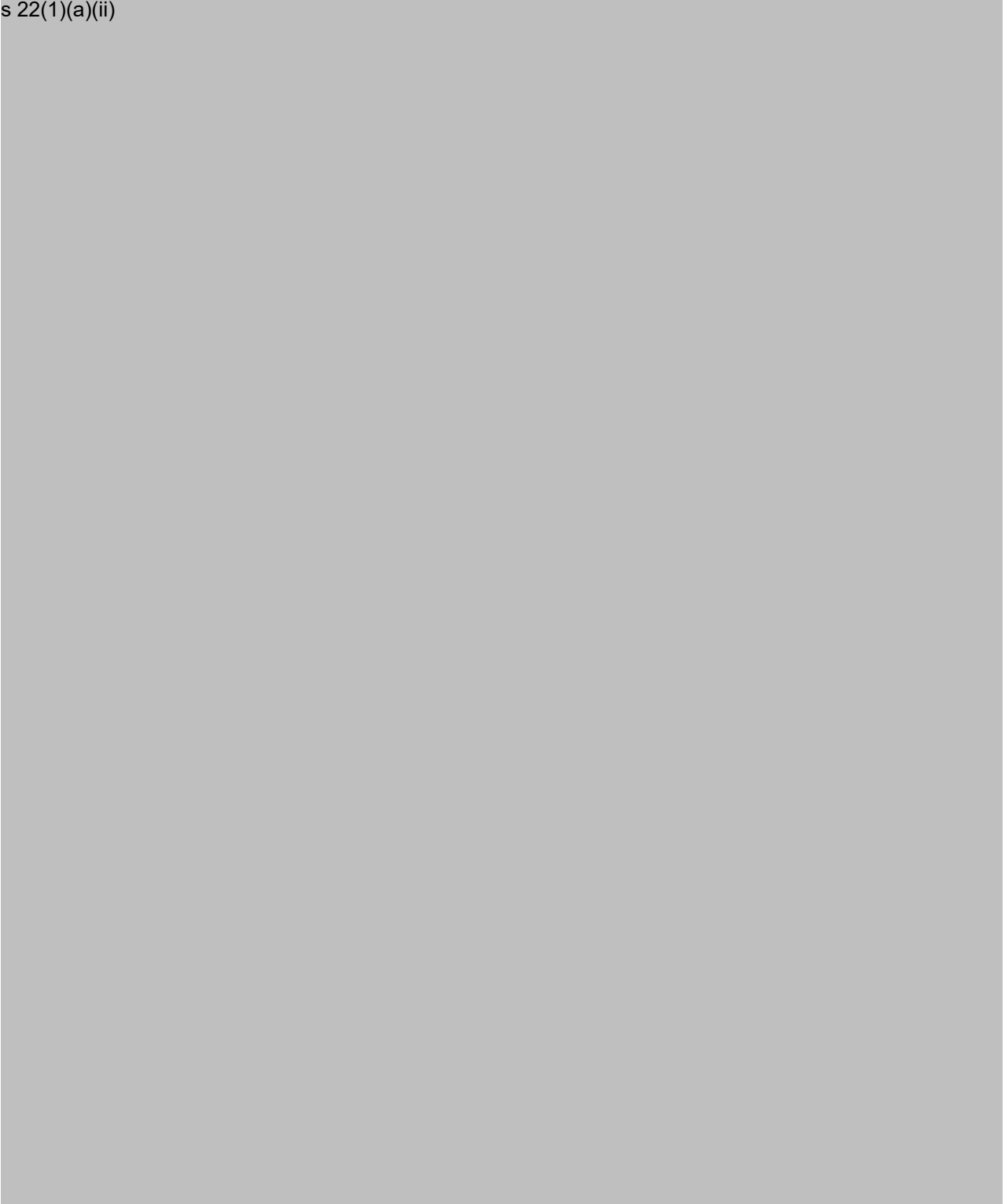
**OFFICIAL**

Good evening,


Please see below for today's Media Operations summary.

To contact the on-call media officer this evening, please call [s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

[s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)




s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**Media releases / transcripts**


s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**WATERS:** *Dutton grants port renews ICAC calls (attached)*


**Media Monitoring**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**ABC:** *Peter Dutton slashed funding for highly regarded community safety projects. Then he selected his own list to fund*


s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**DIGITAL MEDIA ANALYSIS**

Social media discussions over the past 24 hours have focused on the 730 report on the Safer Communities Fund.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**SENATOR LARISSA WATERS**

MEDIA RELEASE

**MEDIA RELEASE****DUTTON GRANTS RORT RENEWS ICAC CALLS****10.02.2021**

The Greens condemn Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton for using his ministerial powers to slash millions in grant funding for community projects recommended by his department, in favour of his own handpicked list in electorally beneficial locations.

Greens Leader in the Senate and spokesperson for democracy, Senator Larissa Waters, said:

“Another day, another pork barrelling scandal.

"Ministers picking their own pet projects against departmental recommendations to secure electoral outcomes has become commonplace under the Morrison Government.

“The rorts will keep coming because Morrison and his mates treat public money as their own kitty for keeping themselves in power.

“After Sports Rorts, the Greens moved to establish a broader Senate Inquiry into Government rorts, only for it to be blocked by the Government and One Nation.

“Minister Dutton may be in breach of Ministerial Standards but as if the Prime Minister would choose now to start enforcing them.

“This pork barrelling will only stop when we have a federal corruption watchdog that applies to all MPs.

“The Government has proposed a sham integrity commission that would shield

their mates from proper scrutiny – and it's clear why.

“My bill for a federal corruption watchdog passed the Senate a year-and-a-half ago, but Morrison – surprise, surprise – still refuses to bring it on for debate in the House.

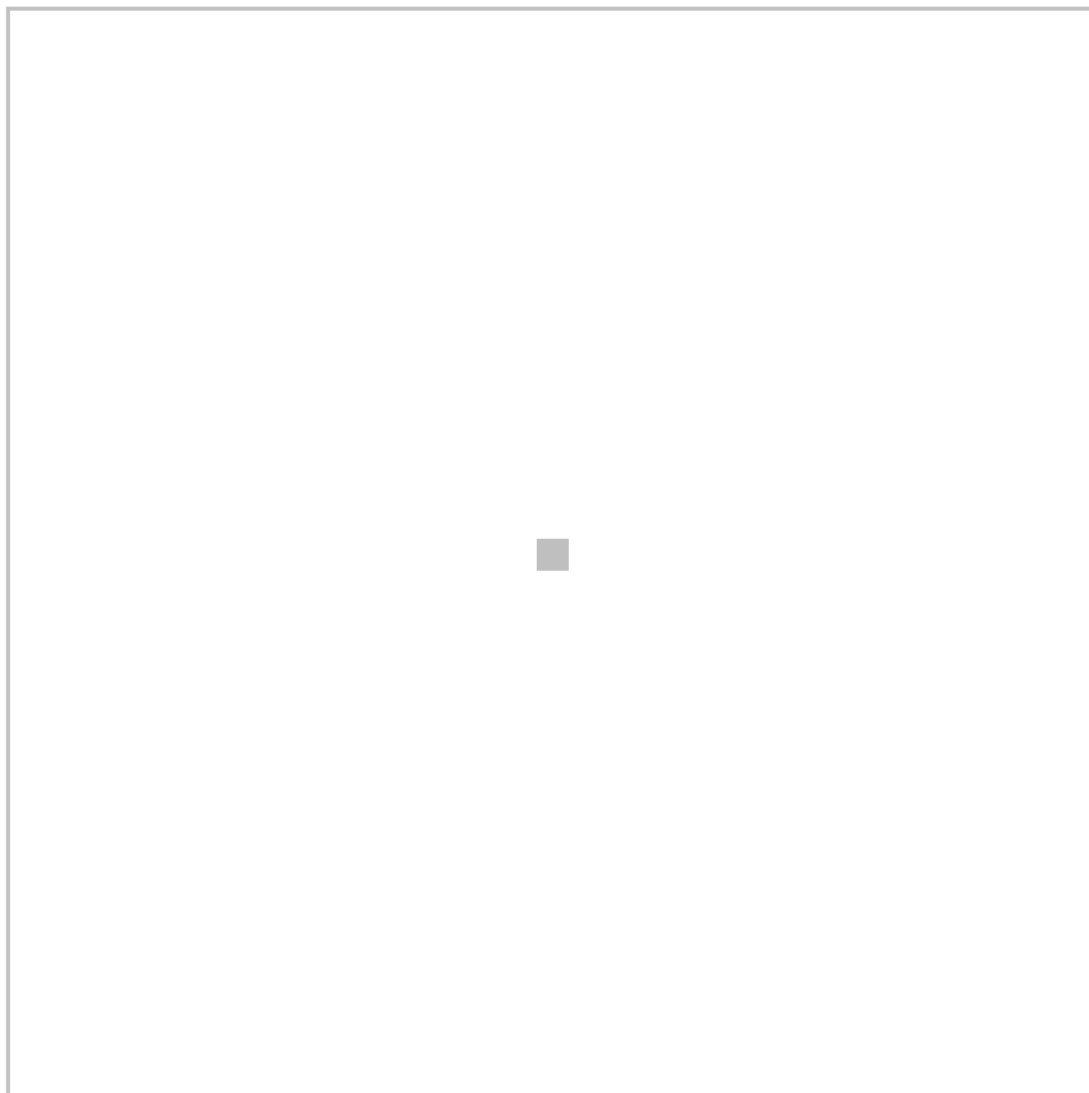
“Enough is enough. This Government is running away from integrity and transparency as fast as new corruption scandals emerge. It's time for Morrison to clean up his sideshow of scandals.”

**Media Contacts:**

WATERS - s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** MEDIA RELEASE - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DUTTON'S SAFER SEAT RORTS THUR 11 FEB, 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 6:48:05 AM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES  
DODGY DUTTON FOLLOWS MCKENZIE LEAD -  
WELCOME TO SAFER SEATS RORTS**

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton has been caught red-handed rejecting the advice of his own community safety experts and directing taxpayers' money into projects in marginal and Government-held electorates.

In an explosive story from ABC 730, freedom-of-information documents about



Round Three of the Safer Communities Fund reveal that Minister Dutton was prioritising the election fortunes of the Liberal and National Parties in the 2019 election over community safety.

ABC has also revealed that Minister Dutton provided a one-off discretionary grant to the National Retail Association one week after the Association made a donation to the Minister's election campaign.

Given that then Minister Bridget McKenzie resigned after she was found to have breached [Ministerial Standards](#) for failing to disclose a conflict of interest with an organisation to which she awarded a grant, Minister Dutton's actions raise questions as to whether a similar breach of Ministerial Standards has occurred.

The ABC also reported that Minister Dutton announced funding for two projects in the lead-up to the Braddon by-election with the then Liberal candidate, despite the grant guidelines not being written, and without expert safety advice from his own Department. Minister Dutton funded the two Braddon projects even though his own community safety experts later told him not to.

Labor's Shadow Minister for Government Accountability, Senator Kristina Keneally, said that Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Minister Dutton must immediately come clean and explain their Safer Seats Rorts scandal.

"It seems Peter Dutton was not trying to make communities safer, but rather he was using taxpayers' money to make Liberal seats safer.

"Peter Dutton's community safety experts made detailed recommendations about which communities needed help, but the Minister rejected that advice with 91 per cent of funding ending up in Government-held, independent or marginal Labor seats.

"Of course, every community around the nation would welcome more community safety funding, but why did Peter Dutton reject the advice of the community safety experts?

"Yesterday, I warned that Sports Rorts was just the tip of the iceberg for Scott Morrison treating taxpayers' money like Liberal Party money. One day later, Peter Dutton has proved this point with Safer Seats Rorts.

"This eight-year-old Liberal Government is so sneaky, but Australians deserve to know whether their community missed out on being safer because of Peter

Dutton's pre-election Safer Seats Rorts wheeling and dealing.

“Which communities needed Community Safety funding and missed out? Was there another colour-coded spreadsheet? Did Peter Dutton do any dodgy deals for donors with his Safer Seats Rorts?

“What did Scott Morrison know? Was he or his office involved, like they were with Sports Rorts?

“The Liberals treat taxpayer money like it’s Liberal Party money. How can they be looking after you, when they are so busy looking after themselves?”

Freedom-of-information documents released by ABC 730 tonight reveal that Minister Dutton:

- rejected the advice from his own community safety experts and reduced funding for 19 safety projects
- directed taxpayers' money into 53 cherry-picked projects, ahead of other safety projects his experts were said were more important
- made sure that two projects in his own electorate were funded, even though his own experts did not recommend them
- announced funding for two projects in the lead-up to the Braddon by-election with the then Liberal candidate, despite the grant guidelines not being written, and without expert safety advice from his own Department
- still funded the two Braddon projects even though his own community safety experts told him not to.

**WEDNESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2021**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

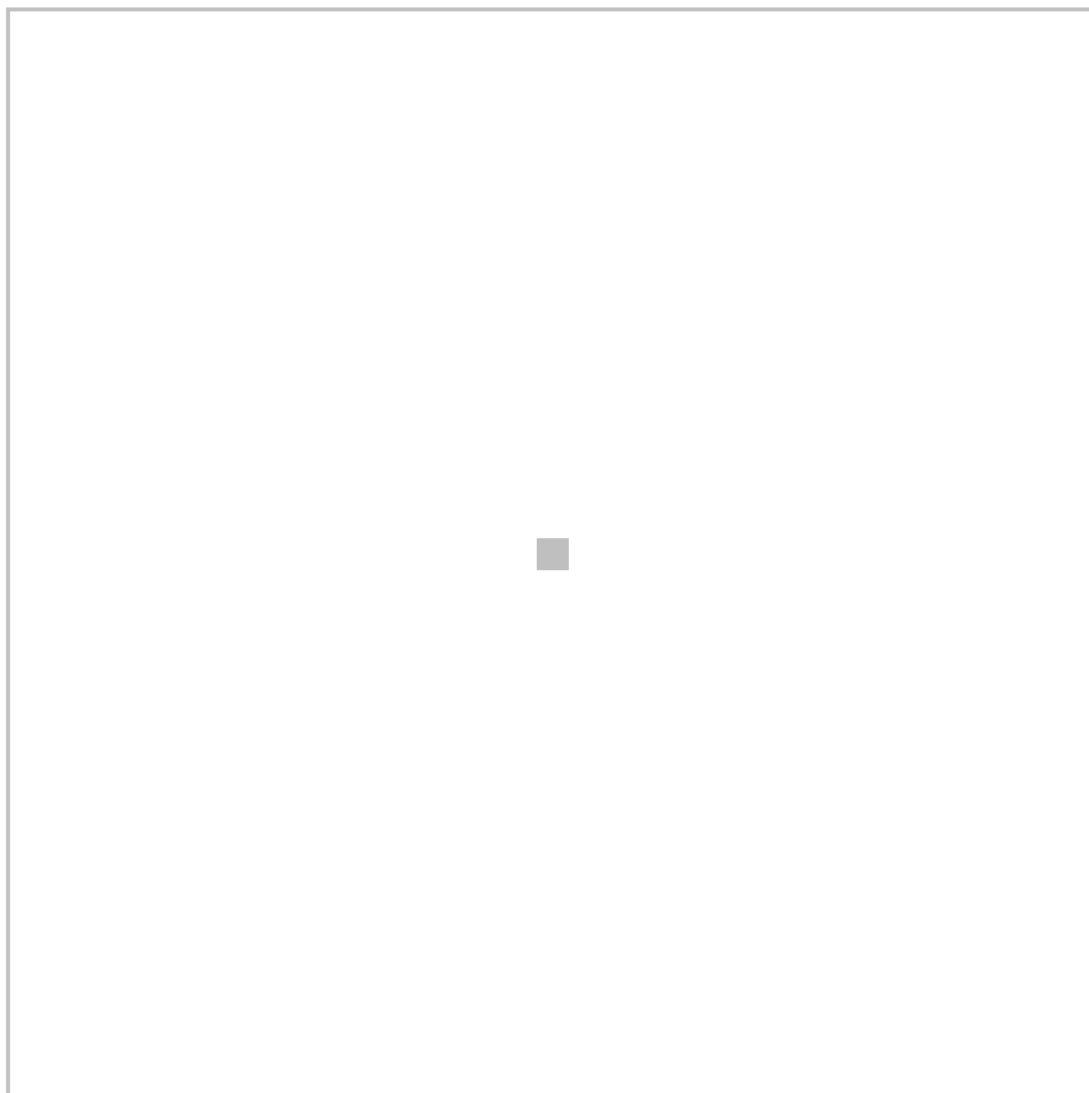
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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: MEDIA RELEASE - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DUTTON'S SAFER SEAT RORTS THUR 11 FEB, 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 6:48:06 AM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 6:47:06 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** MEDIA RELEASE - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DUTTON'S SAFER SEAT RORTS THUR 11 FEB, 2021



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY**  
**DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**  
**DODGY DUTTON FOLLOWS MCKENZIE LEAD -**  
**WELCOME TO SAFER SEATS RORTS**

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton has been caught red-handed rejecting the

advice of his own community safety experts and directing taxpayers' money into projects in marginal and Government-held electorates.

In an explosive story from ABC 730, freedom-of-information documents about Round Three of the Safer Communities Fund reveal that Minister Dutton was prioritising the election fortunes of the Liberal and National Parties in the 2019 election over community safety.

ABC has also revealed that Minister Dutton provided a one-off discretionary grant to the National Retail Association one week after the Association made a donation to the Minister's election campaign.

Given that then Minister Bridget McKenzie resigned after she was found to have breached [Ministerial Standards](#) for failing to disclose a conflict of interest with an organisation to which she awarded a grant, Minister Dutton's actions raise questions as to whether a similar breach of Ministerial Standards has occurred.

The ABC also reported that Minister Dutton announced funding for two projects in the lead-up to the Braddon by-election with the then Liberal candidate, despite the grant guidelines not being written, and without expert safety advice from his own Department. Minister Dutton funded the two Braddon projects even though his own community safety experts later told him not to.

Labor's Shadow Minister for Government Accountability, Senator Kristina Keneally, said that Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Minister Dutton must immediately come clean and explain their Safer Seats Rorts scandal.

"It seems Peter Dutton was not trying to make communities safer, but rather he was using taxpayers' money to make Liberal seats safer.

"Peter Dutton's community safety experts made detailed recommendations about which communities needed help, but the Minister rejected that advice with 91 per cent of funding ending up in Government-held, independent or marginal Labor seats.

"Of course, every community around the nation would welcome more community safety funding, but why did Peter Dutton reject the advice of the community safety experts?

"Yesterday, I warned that Sports Rorts was just the tip of the iceberg for Scott Morrison treating taxpayers' money like Liberal Party money. One day later,

Peter Dutton has proved this point with Safer Seats Rorts.

“This eight-year-old Liberal Government is so sneaky, but Australians deserve to know whether their community missed out on being safer because of Peter Dutton's pre-election Safer Seats Rorts wheeling and dealing.

“Which communities needed Community Safety funding and missed out? Was there another colour-coded spreadsheet? Did Peter Dutton do any dodgy deals for donors with his Safer Seats Rorts?

“What did Scott Morrison know? Was he or his office involved, like they were with Sports Rorts?

“The Liberals treat taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money. How can they be looking after you, when they are so busy looking after themselves?”

Freedom-of-information documents released by ABC 730 tonight reveal that Minister Dutton:

- rejected the advice from his own community safety experts and reduced funding for 19 safety projects
- directed taxpayers' money into 53 cherry-picked projects, ahead of other safety projects his experts were said were more important
- made sure that two projects in his own electorate were funded, even though his own experts did not recommend them
- announced funding for two projects in the lead-up to the Braddon by-election with the then Liberal candidate, despite the grant guidelines not being written, and without expert safety advice from his own Department
- still funded the two Braddon projects even though his own community safety experts told him not to.

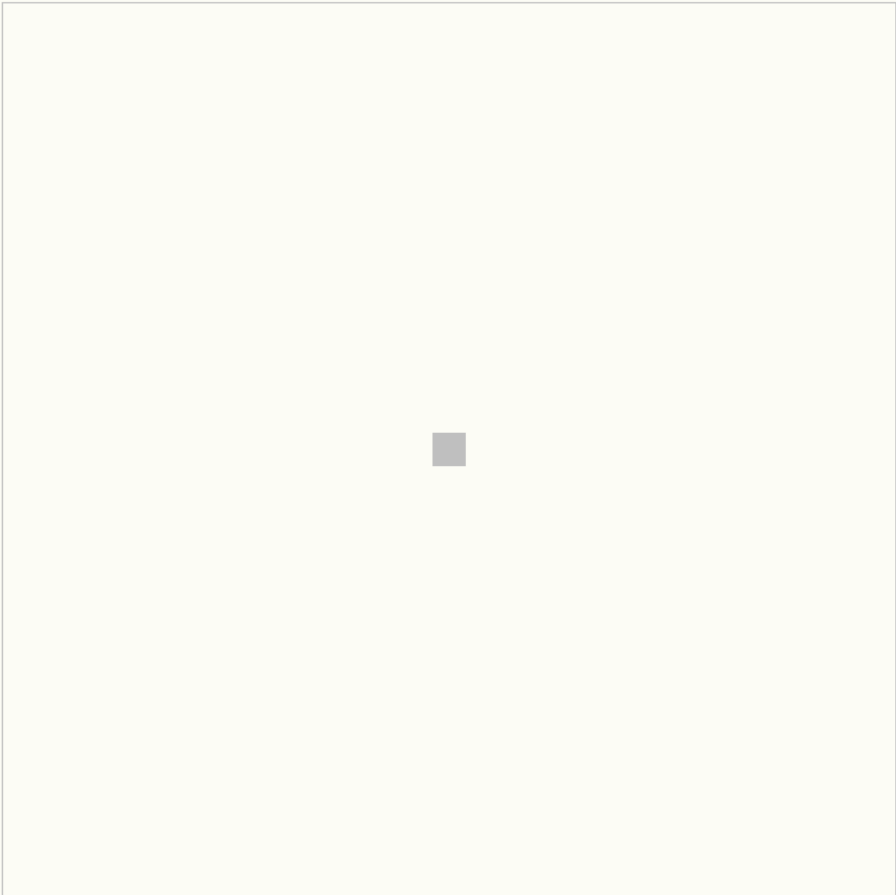
**WEDNESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2021**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**From:** [The Briefing](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** Victoria outbreak linked to nebuliser  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 7:04:05 AM

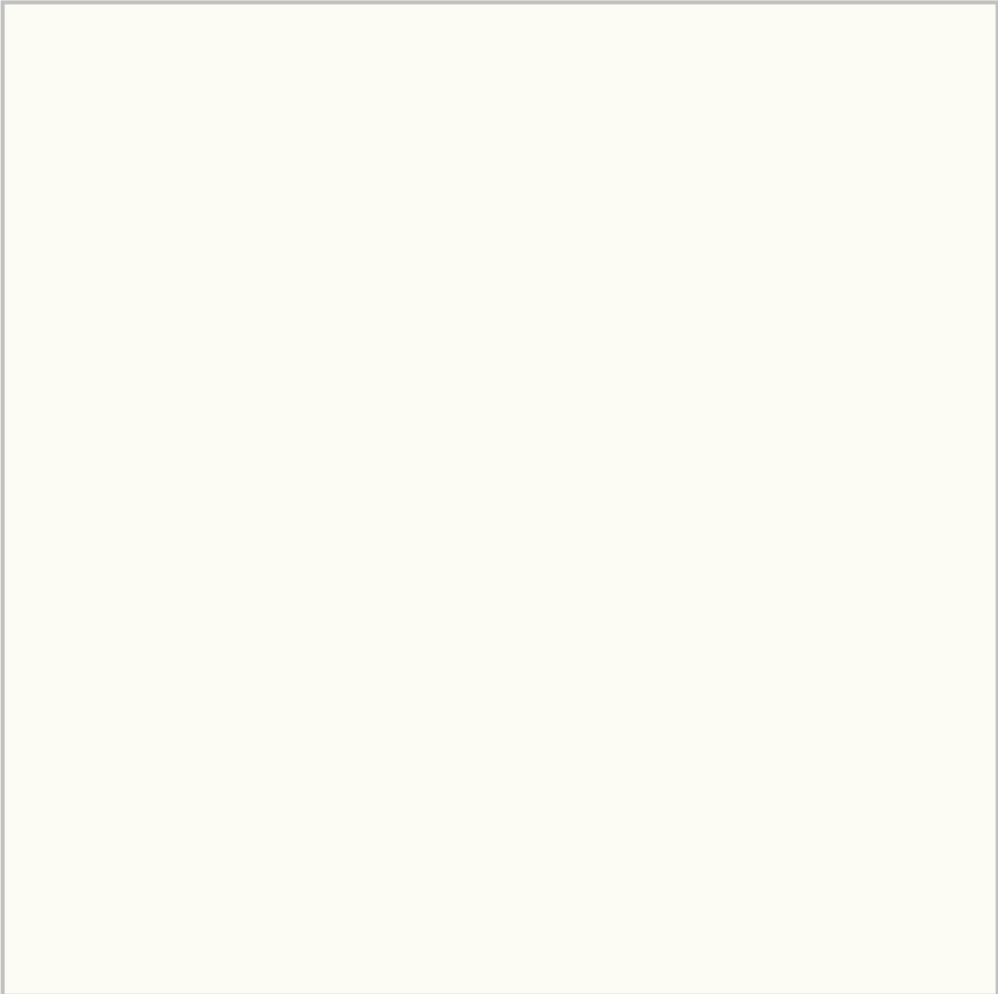
Can't view this email? [View in browser.](#)



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THURSDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2021

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## **Peter Dutton will stop at nothing to make Burnie, Wynyard, and Somerset safe ...**

“Closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras will be installed on the streets of Burnie, Somerset and Wynyard as part of a federal government safety program. Federal Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton said the federal government would allocate \$134,000 to Waratah-Wynyard Council and \$60,000 to the Burnie City Council from the Safer Communities Fund.”

**THE ADVOCATE (FROM 2018)**



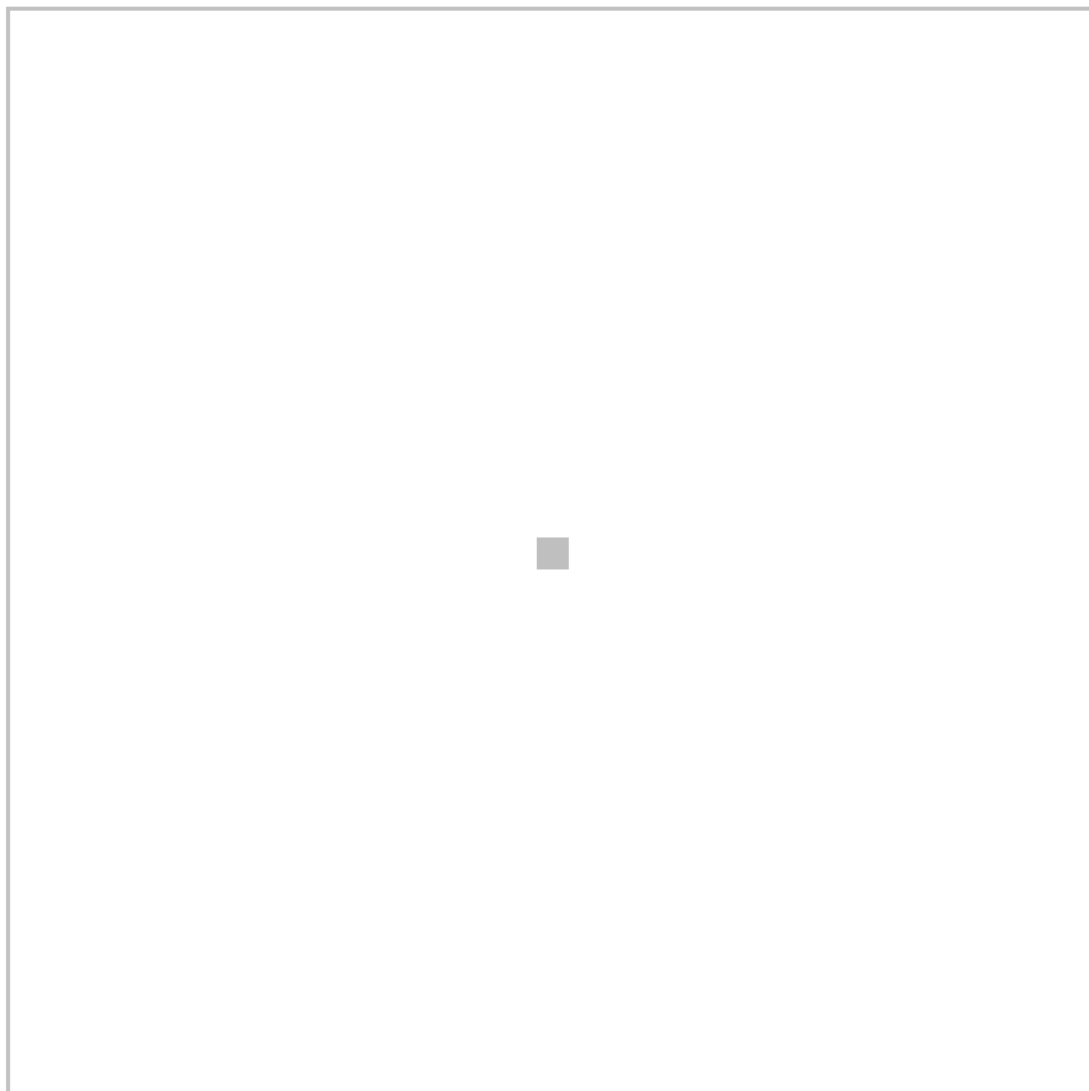
**... safe seats, that is.**

“Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton personally slashed millions in grant funding from organisations that were strongly recommended by his department to improve community safety ... Dutton also used the funds to support grants for two councils — in the lead up to a by-election in a highly marginal seat — that his department recommended should not be funded at all. On July 16, 2018, Mr Dutton announced security camera funding for Waratah-Wynyard Council and Burnie City Council.”

**ABC**

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - TELEVISION INTERVIEW - ABC NEWS BREAKFAST - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 9:55:06 AM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
TELEVISION INTERVIEW  
ABC NEWS BREAKFAST  
THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SUBJECTS:** *Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts, Peter Dutton's possible breach of Ministerial Standards, the Liberals treating taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money; National Integrity Commission; Scott Morrison's fear of public accountability; Christian Porter's bald-face lie over industrial relations.*

**LISA MILLAR, HOST:** Kristina Keneally is the Shadow Home Affairs Minister and joins us now from Brisbane. Good morning, Senator. Welcome to News Breakfast.

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT**

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Good morning, Lisa. Good morning to your viewers.

**MILLAR:** So, is this just the partisan commentary from Labor aligned councils as Peter Dutton went on to say in that statement that he gave?

**KENEALLY:** Lisa, Scott Morrison and the Liberals treat taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party money. These grants that Peter Dutton is giving out - they come from the Safer Communities Fund.

But it seems Peter Dutton wasn't using the money to keep communities safe, he was using it to make Liberal held and marginal, independent and Labor seats safer for the Liberal Party.

What kind of government rejects the advice from community safety experts in the Department of Home Affairs, and denies communities at risk - communities in danger - of the safety equipment they need, and instead uses that money to prop up their own electoral fortunes?

Quite frankly, for Scott Morrison's Liberal Government, Australians today will be asking, how can the Morrison Government be looking out for them when they're so busy looking out for themselves?

**MILLAR:** We asked the Minister if he come on this morning to explain his decision making in this process, but he did decline. But what should happen now?

**KENEALLY:** On the face of it, one of the most concerning aspects of the 730 story last night is that Minister Peter Dutton accepted a political donation from an organization, and then a week later gave them a grant - totally within his discretion - without any oversight or guidelines.

Now this looks on the face of it worse than the Sports Rorts scandal that saw the resignation of then Minister Bridget McKenzie.



Bridget McKenzie resigned because she was found to have breached ministerial standards, because she didn't disclose - she gave a grant to an organization to which she had a conflict of interest.

Peter Dutton needs to come clean today. And quite frankly, the Prime Minister Scott Morrison needs to speak up today and make clear whether or not Peter Dutton has breached ministerial standards.

Now on the face of it, it looks like he has, but that needs to come clean.

The other thing that needs to happen here is we need scrutiny and transparency. We know this Government has promised a national integrity commission two years ago, they have not delivered it.

We need to ensure through the various forms of the Parliament and oversight, that this Safer Communities Fund is actually going to make communities safer, and in that, Lisa, the Government must release the list of those communities that were rejected by Minister Dutton.

**MILLAR:** The Community Development Grants has certainly grown over the years since it's been created. It comes from the proceeds of crime. People were pretty happy with its creation in the beginning, but now it's worth \$2.5 billion, I think. Would you keep it if Labor won government, or just change the way it was operated?

**KENEALLY:** But in fact, the Community Development Grants is another grant that they've been rorting that started at \$340 million in 2013. Scott Morrison has grown it to \$2.5 billion, and you have to be invited by the Morrison Government to even apply.

So no, no prizes for guessing what electorates get that money - 70% of it goes to Liberal and National seats.

But this is a different fund, the community safer, the Safer Communities Fund is another one they've rorted.

And let's understand this, Scott Morrison as Treasurer, and now as Prime Minister has set up these pots of money right throughout the budget, money given away at complete ministerial discretion most often

**MILLAR:** But, what would...

**KENEALLY:** Ready to be doled out for electorate purposes.

**MILLAR:** But what would the Labor Government do to improve accountability? Because you've said that the proposal for the national integrity commission isn't strong enough, would you support that to at least get something on the books, something that you think perhaps is too weak?

**KENEALLY:** Absolutely, Lisa. Lisa, we absolutely support a national integrity commission. What Scott Morrison has proposed is weak.

**MILLAR:** But would you support it, then to get something...

**KENEALLY:** This is hypothetical because... Lisa, this is this is a hypothetical because Scott Morrison won't even let the bill be debated in Parliament. He won't even let the bill be debated in Parliament.

That is how scared of scrutiny Scott Morrison is.

It suits his electoral purposes if the Australian people are kept in the dark about his misuse of taxpayer money, as if it is Liberal Party.

Labor is crystal clear on this. Labor is crystal clear on this. We support a strong, independent, transparent national integrity commission - one with the powers of a standing Royal Commission, because, what the Australian people want and deserve is a government that's on their side that upholds integrity and transparency in government.

**MILLAR:** Senator Keneally, I want to ask you about the IR reforms. I realize it's out of your portfolio, but you are a senior member of the opposition. Clearly there's going to be an election issue. The government and business groups are saying that what's been proposed as far as making entitlements movable is going to cost \$20 billion. Hasn't Labor opened itself up to constant attacks when it comes to this?

**KENEALLY:** Lisa, let's be clear here. Christian Porter is lying. Christian Porter is simply making things up.

It's very much like Donald Trump, isn't it, the way that Christian Porter and Scott Morrison are just bald-face lying about this industrial relations bill and bald-face lying about what it is Labor proposes to do to ensure that we're delivering secure, well paid jobs for the Australian people. Now let's start with the industry relations bill.

**MILLAR:** We may not have the time to...

**KENEALLY:** [inaudible]... even bring back work. And let's be clear, last night Anthony Albanese outlined Labor's plan - the first plank of Labor's plan for secure well-paid jobs

that includes, that includes consulting with the states and territories about portable entitlements.

We know that work is growing more insecure. We need to... The pandemic exposed that.

We need to ensure that the retail workers and the cleaners and aged care workers who got us through this pandemic have their wages and their entitlements protected.

**MILLAR:** The battle is well and truly on over IR, that's for sure. We'll have to leave it there. Senator Keneally, thank you.

**KENEALLY:** Thank you.

***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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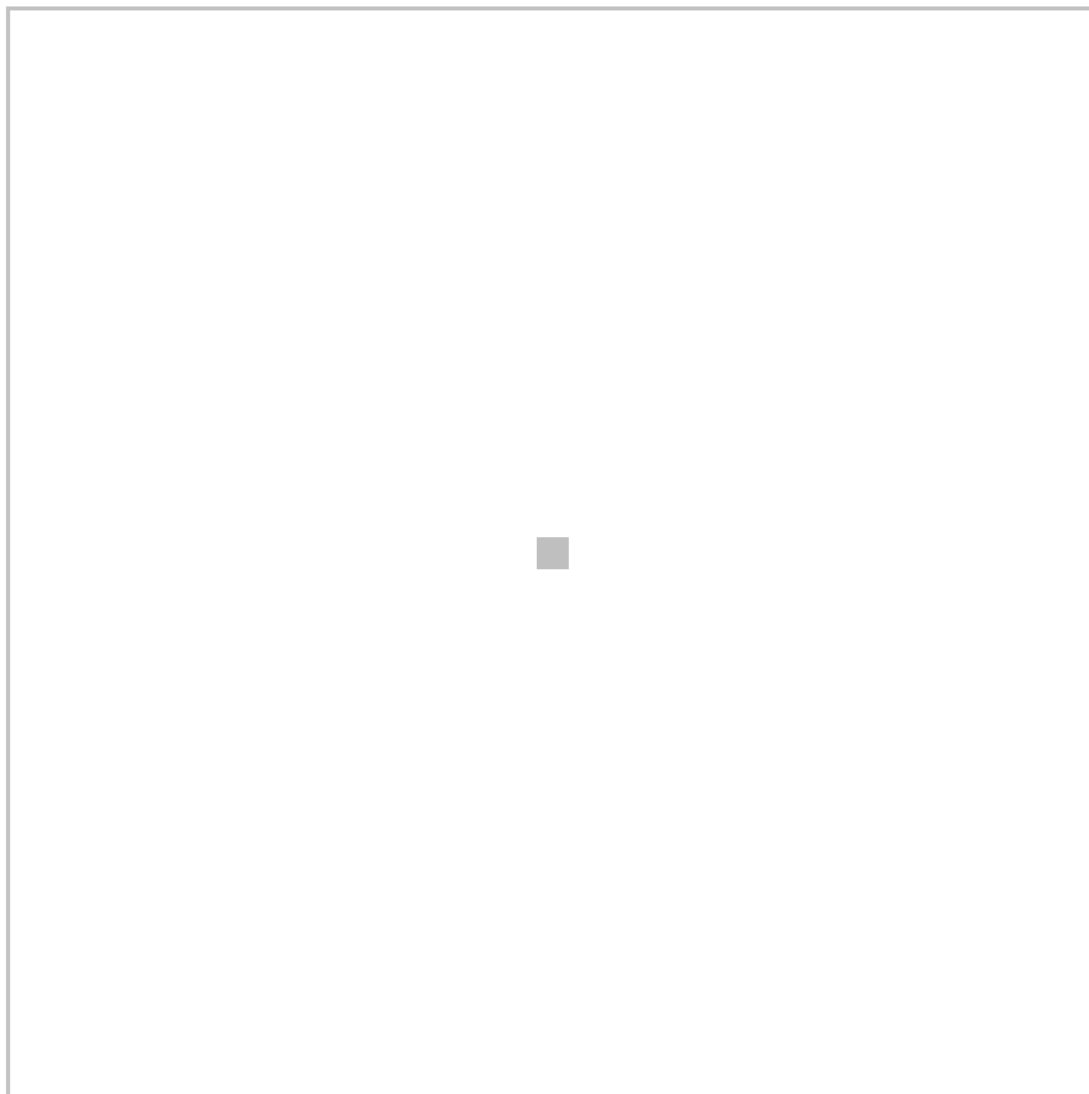
Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - TELEVISION INTERVIEW - ABC NEWS BREAKFAST - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 9:55:07 AM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 9:54:25 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - TELEVISION INTERVIEW - ABC NEWS BREAKFAST - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY**  
**DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**  
**TELEVISION INTERVIEW**  
**ABC NEWS BREAKFAST**  
**THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SUBJECTS:** *Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts, Peter Dutton's possible breach of Ministerial Standards, the Liberals treating taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money; National Integrity Commission; Scott Morrison's fear of public accountability; Christian Porter's bald-face lie over industrial relations.*

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**KENEALLY:** Thank you.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

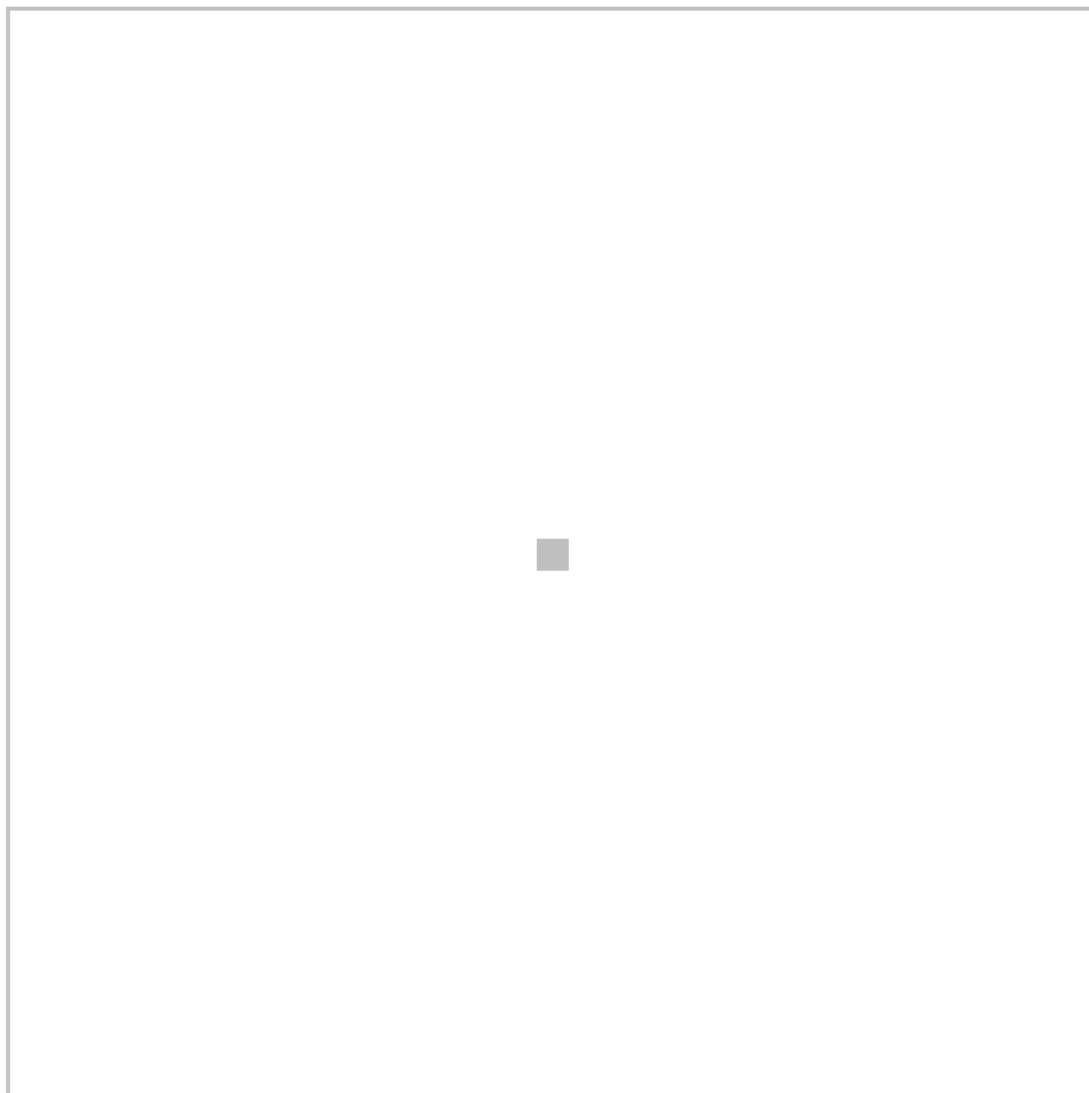
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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** \*\*\* MEDIA ALERT - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DOORSTOP - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - 1PM, TODAY \*\*\*  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 11:35:06 AM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

The Shadow Minister for Government Accountability, Kristina Keneally, is in **Canberra** today and will hold a doorstep to discuss Safer Seats Rorts - Peter Dutton's use of Safer Communities Fund to become another rort for the Liberal Party.

**1PM**  
THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021

**OPPOSITION LEADER'S COURTYARD**  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
**CANBERRA**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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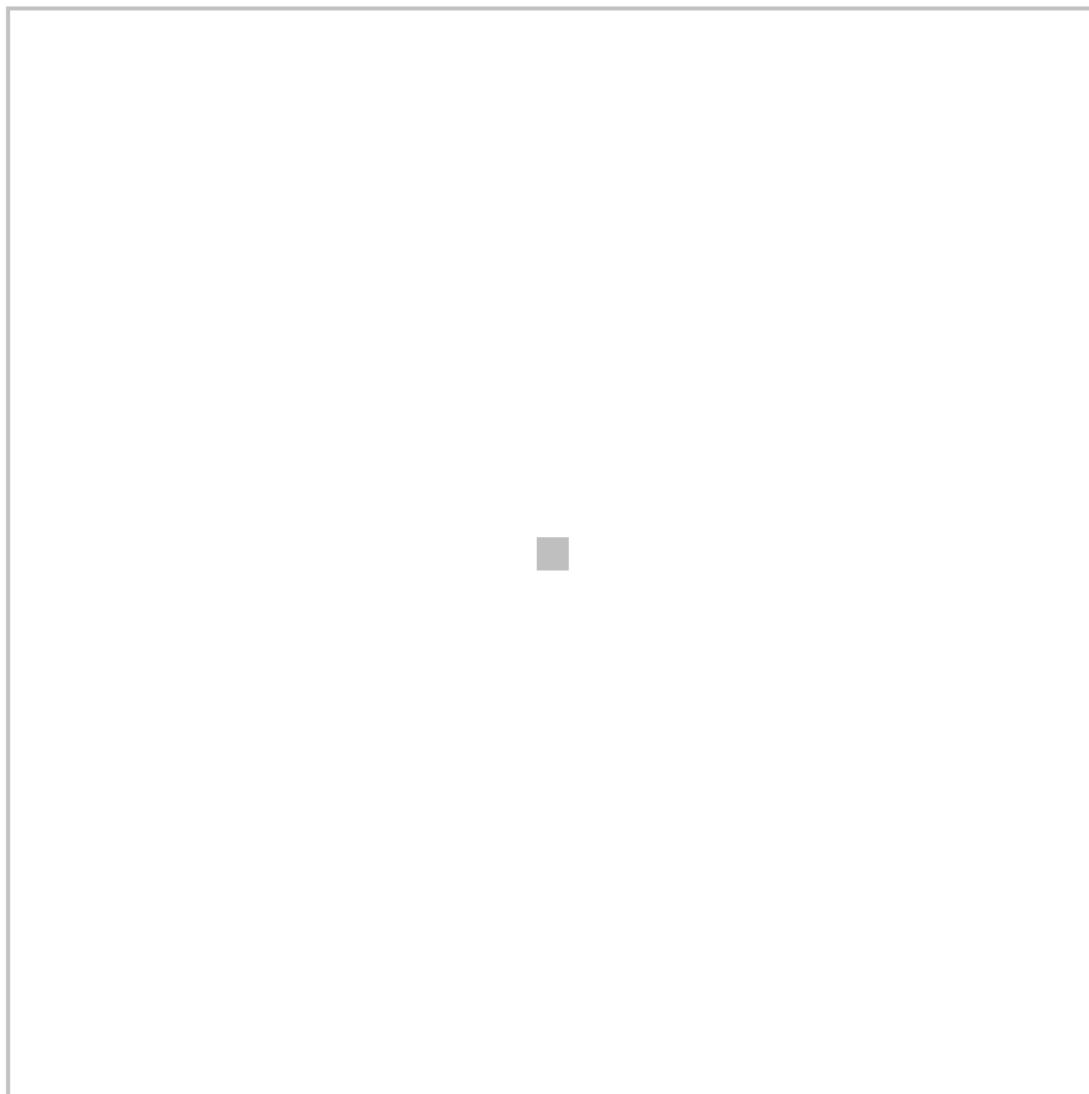
Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: \*\*\* MEDIA ALERT - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DOORSTOP - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - 1PM, TODAY \*\*\*  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 11:37:07 AM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 11:34:05 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** \*\*\* MEDIA ALERT - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DOORSTOP - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - 1PM, TODAY \*\*\*



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
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**1PM**

THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021

**OPPOSITION LEADER'S COURTYARD**  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
**CANBERRA**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**To:** [Huggins, Gemma](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Media Report - Minister Dutton / Safer Communities [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 1:58:28 PM

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## OFFICIAL

Gemma

This is the latest ABC [article](#) on Minister Dutton's involvement in handing out grants under the SCF.

This article, and part of the focus of 7.30 last night, was about Minister Dutton's one-off grant to the National Retail Association (NRA). Minister Dutton requested NRA's grant proposal be considered sooner, after he attended an NRA event, and NRA gave a donation to the Queensland LNP in November 2018. The Minister approved the funding grant in March 2019, following advice from Home Affairs which said the grant "represents value for money and a proper use of Commonwealth resources".

The CEO of the NRA said the grant proposal was not discussed at the event.

There is minor reference to PM&C in this article in relation to Ministerial Standards: *'Prime Minister Scott Morrison can seek advice from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) for guidance on whether there has been a breach of ministerial standards.'*

Media attention appears limited to ABC and the Guardian at this stage.

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Adviser

Border Security and Law Enforcement Policy | Homeland Security Branch

National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

e: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | team contact: s 47E(d)

One National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600

*The Department acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Cultures, Country and Elders both past and present.*

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**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Sent:** Wednesday, 10 February 2021 9:16 AM

**To:** Burke, Michael

**Cc:** NSD - Border Security & Law Enforcement Policy

**Subject:** Media Report - Minister Dutton / Safer Communities [SEC=OFFICIAL]

## OFFICIAL

Good morning Michael

The ABC (7.30) has [reported](#) this morning that Minister Dutton 'personally slashed millions in grant funding' from the Round 3 Safer Communities Funding (SCF) program, and used these funds to 'support his own handpicked list that did not follow his department's recommendations'.

The ABC reports that on January 31, 2019, the Minister 'reduced funding for 19 of the highest-scoring grant applications, in a handwritten note, by a combined total of \$5.59 million'. A 'reserve list' of funding options was created by Home Affairs and provided to the Minister, with projects ranked from highest to lowest. The Minister reportedly declined to follow the merit-based recommendations, which he is permitted to do under the grant rules, and handwrote his own rankings of the grant applications. On 31 January 2019, a Home Affairs ministerial briefing noted '[t]he applications do not represent value for money in accordance with the grant guidelines.'

7.30 has stated it is not suggesting that these projects approved by the Minister were not eligible

for funding, but rather that some more highly valued projects assessed on merit were overlooked.

Minister Dutton has responded to the ABC with the following statement:

"The suggestion that the Government has done anything other than support projects worthy of support is nonsense.

I am proud of the support the Safer Communities Fund has provided to organisations such as The Scout Association, Salvation Army Trust and St Vincent de Paul who have made Australia a safer place.

Australians expect the Government to act to make the communities we live in safer. That is exactly what the Government has done through the Safer Communities Fund."

The ABC article has been published ahead of the 7.30 Report tonight on the same topic. This is gaining some coverage on twitter, but has not (yet) been picked up by other media.

We'll reach out to Home Affairs to see if they have talking points they are willing to share at this point.

Happy to discuss.

Kind regards

**s 22(1)(a)(ii)** | Adviser

Border Security and Law Enforcement Policy | Homeland Security Branch

National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**s 22(1)(a)(ii)**

e: **s 22(1)(a)(ii)** | team contact: **s 47E(d)**

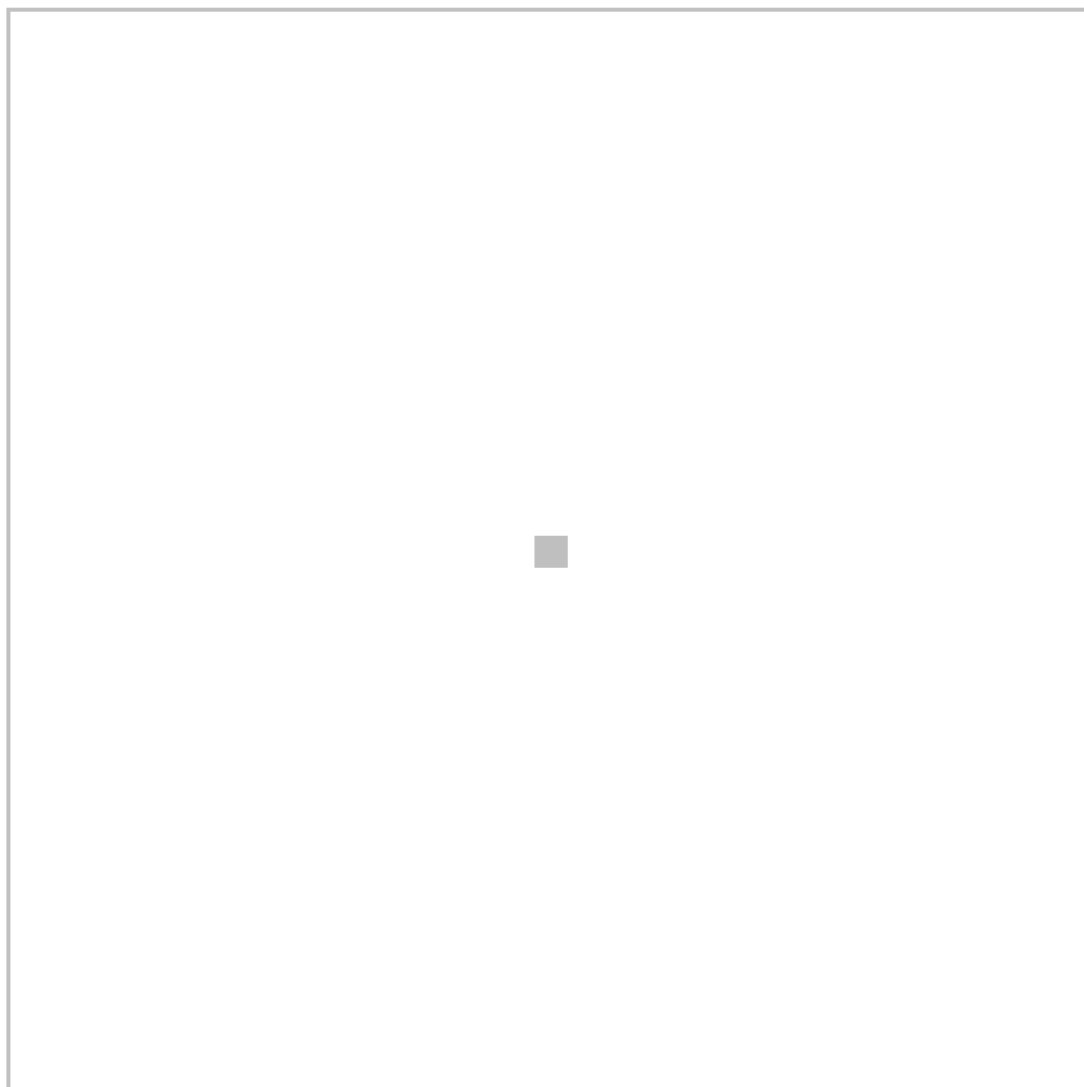
One National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600

*The Department acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Cultures, Country and Elders both past and present.*

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: KRISTINA KENEALLY - STATEMENT - LABOR ASKS AUDIT OFFICE TO INVESTIGATE DODGY DUTTON'S SAFER SEATS RORTS - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 2:38:08 PM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 2:36:27 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - STATEMENT - LABOR ASKS AUDIT OFFICE TO INVESTIGATE DODGY DUTTON'S SAFER SEATS RORTS - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021



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**DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

## **LABOR ASKS AUDIT OFFICE TO INVESTIGATE DODGY DUTTON'S SAFER SEATS RORTS**

Today I have written to the Auditor-General asking him to consider conducting a performance audit of Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts through the Safer Communities Fund.

Documents obtained by the ABC under Freedom of Information laws and released last night reveal the Home Affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, rejected the advice of his own community safety experts and directed taxpayers' money into projects in marginal and Government-held electorates.

This includes Peter Dutton announcing funding for two projects in the lead-up to the Braddon by-election with the then Liberal candidate despite the grant guidelines not being written and without expert safety advice from his own Department. Later his Department recommended against funding these projects.

I have also asked the Auditor-General to consider whether it was appropriate for Peter Dutton to provide a one-off discretionary grant to the National Retail Association after the Association made a donation to the Liberal-National Party in support of Mr Dutton.

Given that former Minister Bridget McKenzie resigned after she was found to have breached [Ministerial Standards](#) for failing to disclose a conflict of interest with an organisation to which she awarded a grant, Peter Dutton's actions raise questions as to whether a similar breach of Ministerial Standards has occurred.

In the lead-up to the 2019 election, it seems Peter Dutton was not trying to make communities safer, but rather he was using taxpayers' money to make Government and marginal Labor and independent seats safer for the Liberal Party.

According to the ABC, more than 90 per cent of all Safer Communities Fund round three grants approved ahead of the 2019 Federal Election were in Coalition or marginal Labor and independent seats.

Australians know that Prime Minister Scott Morrison runs from accountability. He cut the ANAO's funding after the Auditor-General revealed the depths of the Sports Rorts scandal. He promised a national integrity commission more than two years ago and he has not delivered it.

Australians deserve to know whether their community missed out on needed safety equipment, like CCTV cameras, and being safer because of Peter Dutton's pre-election Safer Seats Rorts wheeling and dealing.

Just last year, the Auditor-General reported to the Parliament on the award of funding under the Community Sport Infrastructure Program. The Auditor identified serious distortions in the grant process ahead of the 2019 Federal Election.

Notwithstanding the budget difficulties of the ANAO, I believe a performance audit of Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts is urgently required to reveal the extent to which Peter Dutton is using taxpayers' money as if it was Liberal Party money.

**THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

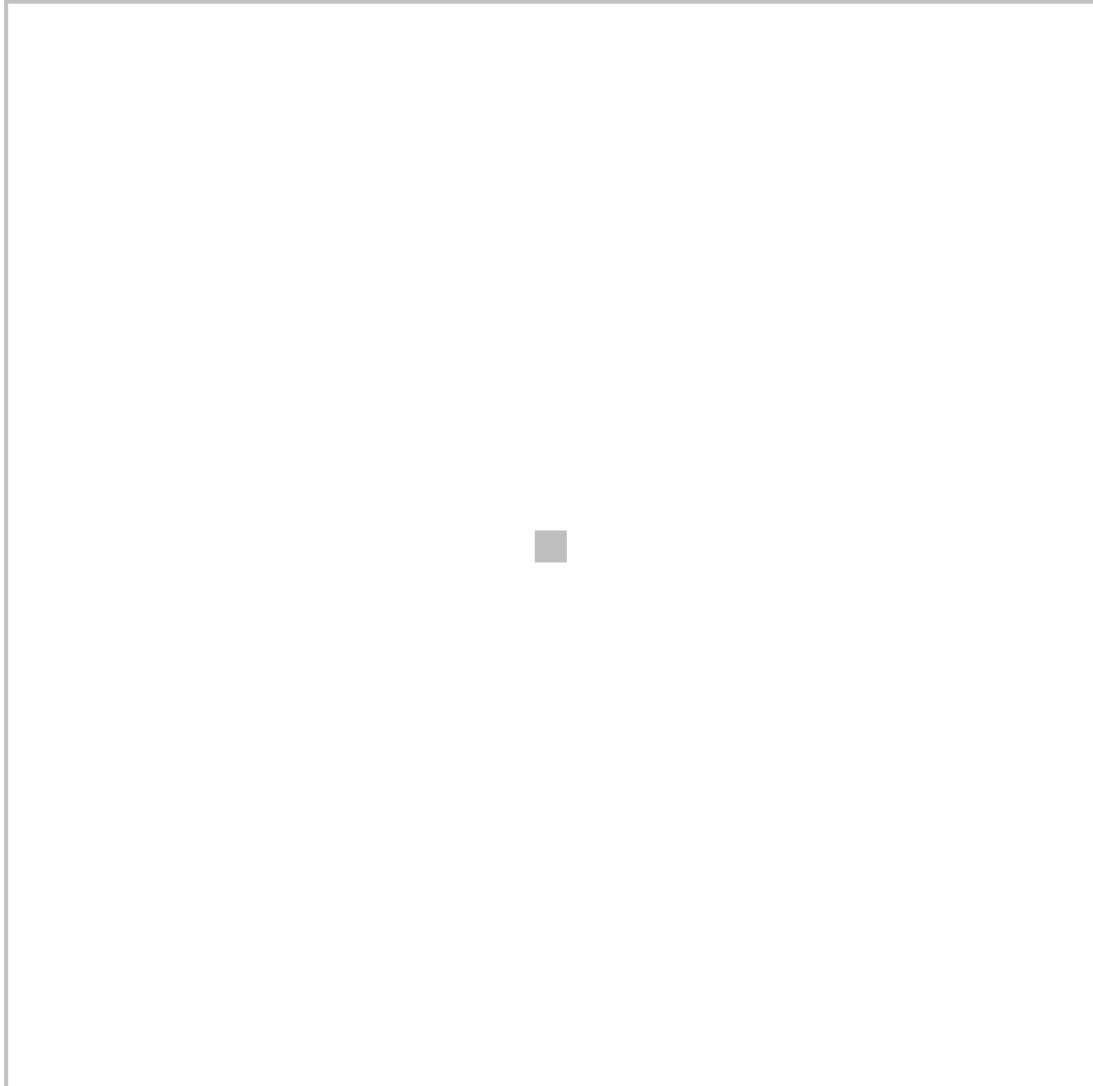
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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 3:48:06 PM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
DOORSTOP INTERVIEW  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA  
THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**



***SUBJECTS: Labor letter to Auditor General regarding Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts; Peter Dutton's possible breach of Ministerial Standards; the Liberals treating taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money; National Integrity Commission.***

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS:**Today I have written to the Auditor General asking him to consider an examination of Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts through the Safer Communities Fund. This Safer Communities Fund I spoke about in my National Press Club address earlier this week when I talked about Scott Morrison as Treasurer, and now as Prime Minister, is squirreling away billions of dollars in taxpayer money in grant programs to be delivered, often without any guidelines or oversight or even sometimes an application form, at the complete discretion of Ministers to be given out to Liberal and National Party candidates in election campaigns. This is bordering on an industrial scale. This is Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton treating taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party money.

When it comes to the Safer Communities Fund, it seems that Peter Dutton is not interested in making communities safer. He was instead interested in making Government and marginal states safer for the Liberal Party.

Now these disturbing revelations from the ABC in FOI documents obtained by the ABC. The 730 Report last night revealed that Peter Dutton gave out two grants from the Safer Communities Fund in the Braddon by-election. Even though the guidelines hadn't been established, the application process was an open and later on his Department actually recommended against those grants saying they did not represent value for money.

Yet with Peter Dutton, it didn't stop him, he went down to Tasmania, stood next to the Liberal candidate in the Braddon by-election and announced these grants. The Liberals using taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party campaign money.

One of the other disturbing allegations brought forward by ABC's 730 last night, is that Peter Dutton accepted a political donation from the National Retailers Association directly for his campaign. And then one week later, gave that association a grant completely through his own discretion. Again, no application, no guidelines, no oversight. Peter Dutton gets a donation and a week later gives that same organisation several hundred thousand dollars in a grant. Now, this on the face of it seems worse than the Bridget McKenzie

scandal.

You remember sports-rorts of course, Bridget McKenzie, then a Minister was found to have breached ministerial standards. Not for her colour-coded spreadsheets, not for the 136 emails between Bridget McKenzie's office and the Prime Minister's Office. But she was found to have breached ministerial standards because she failed to disclose she had a conflict of interest with one of the organisations she gave a grant to. In short, she was a member of an organization, she gave them a grant, she failed to disclose that. That was found that she had reached ministerial standards and she should lose her job.

What we have here is Peter Dutton accepting money, a political donation from an organization, and then one week later, giving them a discretionary grant with almost a million dollars. On the face of it, this seems far worse than the Bridget McKenzie scandal.

So, Peter Dutton has some serious questions to answer here and so does Scott Morrison. Did Peter Dutton disclose that conflict of interest? Did Scott Morrison know about that conflict of interest? And, what is Scott Morrison going to do?

Because we know that Scott Morrison avoids scrutiny like the plague. Scott Morrison promised a National Integrity Commission two years ago, he has not delivered it. Scott Morrison continues to treat taxpayer money as if its Liberal Party money.

And the people around Australia today with these revelations on top of Sports Rorts will be asking themselves, how can the Government take money from communities that are in danger and at risk? Who need things like CCTV cameras and say: 'No, we're not going to do that. We're going to give it to the seats that benefit us electorally' How can the Liberal Party be looking after you when they're so busy looking after themselves? Happy to take any questions.

**JOURNALIST:** What do you hope that an investigation by the Auditor General will achieve? Even the Prime Minister didn't take action against Bridget McKenzie until after his own Department investigated that matter.

**KENEALLY:** Well, let's understand that the Prime Minister was forced into action because of the oversight and the scrutiny that was brought to bear by the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General report into the Sports Rorts affair is quite damning and makes clear he has never seen such extensive involvement from a Prime Minister's office and rewarding grants such as was done in Sports Rorts. What we know from these FOI documents is that over 90% of the grants

that Peter Dutton gave out from the Safer Communities Fund went to Government seats or marginal Labor and independent seats.

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Peter Dutton, handwritten notes, rejecting them, and re-numbering the projects, according to the electorates that he wanted to fund. And, if you look at these documents that show he actually groups them, it seems quite random at first, but he actually groups these by electorate. He had electoral considerations, not community safety considerations in mind when he made those decisions. That's what these documents suggest. The Auditor-General can get to the bottom of what was if anything, the Minister's criteria in assessing these grants.

**JOURNALIST:** You've said on the face of it, this is worse than Sports Rorts. But given as you pointed out, even after the Auditor-General, Bridget McKenzie was really just removed on a technicality. What confidence do you have then, if what you're saying is true, that action will be taken against the Minister for Home Affairs?

**KENEALLY:** My job is Shadow Minister for Home Affairs, but is also Shadow Minister for Government Accountability. And Labor will, as we have done with sport sports, continue to put the pressure and the scrutiny on this Government. This Liberal Government after eight years continues to treat taxpayer money as if it's Liberal Party money. The Australian people, particularly now that we coming out of the worst recession in a century, deserve a government that is on their side. Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton are not on the side of communities that need things like CCTV, cameras or fencing. They are on the side of themselves and their own electoral interests.

So make no mistake, Bridget McKenzie had to resign. Scott Morrison found a fig leaf of an excuse so he can preserve his own reputation and integrity. But let's understand this: Scott Morrison set up in the Budget these grant schemes. He set up these pockets of money.

Take the Community Development grants, I spoke about this in my National Press Club speech, started at \$340 million under the Abbott Government in



2013, now it's been topped up every year by Scott Morrison, first as Treasurer, now as Prime Minister to \$2.5 billion. And you know how you get a grant from the Community Development Fund? You have to be invited by the Morrison Government to apply. There aren't any guidelines or oversight.

This is what Scott Morrison is doing: building up billions of dollars of taxpayer money in the Budget so that he can give it out at election time to suit his own electoral interests.

**JOURNALIST:** Just quickly. Are you saying, are you alleging any breach of the law?

**KENEALLY:** What I'm being clear about is that this Government is setting up a secretive budget and setting up grants and funds where they don't have to answer for accountability or transparency. Where things can be done in secret. Where things do not have to be oversighted by pesky auditors, or indeed, things like the National Integrity Commission.

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You've got a Government that is not interested in what the Australian people want and need. And, frankly, taxpayer money is not there to be used as Liberal Party money. It is there for the uses of the Australian people.

That's what we need to examine and expose in this roting – these Safer Seats Rorts - through the Safer Communities Fund.

**JOURNALIST:** The rules don't actually prohibit ministerial discretion. Are you saying a Labor Government would do that for programs like this?

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Let us not forget, this is the same eight year old Liberal government that walked into a half hour meeting and gave half a billion dollars to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, when the Foundation didn't even know that they were up for the money. Hadn't even asked for it. There was no application process. There was no transparency there were no guidelines. If a company was run like this, people would be... the Board would be demanding the sacking of the CEO. In politics, the consequences are far more serious because we grow the community trust in government. We cannot [inaudible] democracy - small 'l' liberal democracy - allow the trust [inaudible].

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**KENEALLY:** So is the argument here that Scott Morrison was okay, because Scott Morrison hasn't broken any rules of a program Scott Morrison set up where there are no rules?

Understand this, Scott Morrison set up grant programs where there are no rules and now their defence is that, well we didn't break any rules. When you have got taxpayer dollars, when the Australian people entrust you with their money, you have to return that trust. You have to show that you are spending it in the best interest of Australian communities. I mean, Sports Rorts was bad. Let's be clear about that.

But it's it's one thing to say to a community, you're not going to get a change room, this community is. You're not going to get a swimming pool, this community is. It is entirely another thing, when you have communities that are under threat, at risk of safety, who need infrastructure like CCTV cameras or bollards or fencing.

And Peter Dutton says, 'No, I'm rejecting your needs. I'm rejecting the advice of the community safety experts. I'm not following that. Because I want to give money to this electorate. Well, I've got an electoral interest, where the Liberal Party's trying to win that seat. What kinds of government puts its own electoral interests above the community safety of ordinary Australians?

**JOURNALIST:** If you are saying it's worse than the McKenzie scandal and she resigned, are you calling for Peter Dutton to resign?

**KENEALLY:** Well, I have said in fact that Peter Dutton and Prime Minister Scott Morrison have serious questions to answer. Did Peter Dutton disclose his conflict of interest with the National Retailers Association?

He took a direct donation to his campaign. He was at the event. The Association made clear that the donation was delivered directly to the benefit of Peter Dutton's election campaign. And then a week later he gave them a grant. A discretionary grant. No oversight, no application process, no guidelines. He gave them a grant of nearly a million dollars. Did he disclose that just...

Did he disclose that conflict of interest? Did the Prime Minister know about that conflict of interest? And if the Prime Minister didn't, what is he going to do about it?

**JOURNALIST:** If he didn't disclose it, what you call a conflict, should he resign?

**KENEALLY:** Well, if Bridget McKenzie has to resign because she was merely a member of a club that she gave a grant to, and she didn't disclose that. Surely, Peter Dutton would have to go, if it is the case that he took a donation, didn't disclose it and turned around and gave a completely discretionary grant to the same organisation.

**JOURNALIST:** On the issue of industrial relations, can you explain why the speech delivered by Anthony Albanese differs quite significantly from the original? And was that because of the Government's claim that this policy that Labor has announced would cost \$20 billion? And if so, did the Opposition Leader jump the gun with an alternative policy?

**KENEALLY:** I'm not aware of the specifics you mentioned there in terms of different versions.

But let's be clear, Labor's policy is this. When it comes to portable entitlements,



we're going to consult the states and territories to work out what can be done for those workers who in casual work, who often work for more than one employer or move around from different employers to be able to have portable entitlements.

This is not a new thing. This is already done in certain industries. Indeed, the Keneally Labor Government in New South Wales delivered portable entitlements for cleaners. The ACT Labor Government here has delivered portable entitlements. Other governments have done this in Victoria and in Queensland.

This is simply a commitment to consult with the states and territories because they need to be fundamental and making it happen. When Christian Porter says that this is going to cost billions of dollars, he's simply lying. He's making things up. He is simply making things up. What he is doing, is creating his own policy or his own version of a Labor policy and putting a cost on it.

Now, when we talk about consulting with the states and territories, that's exactly what we're committing to do but understand this. Understand this. The linchpin of what Anthony spoke about last night, is to ensure that Australians have access to secure jobs with fair pay and conditions, with their pay and conditions protected. And that includes putting job security at the heart of the Fair Work Commission.

And it includes ensuring that people who are hired by labour hire companies, doing the same job right alongside an employee of a company, are getting the same pay. Same job, same pay. That's what Australians expect. Fairness in the workplace.

**JOURNALIST:** If it is not going to cost employers \$20 billion, how much will it cost?

**KENEALLY:** Well, what we're talking about here is consulting with the states and territories about what legal entitlements for certain industries and are needed.

So, for example, when it came to cleaners in New South Wales, long service leave was something that they very much wanted. Many cleaners had worked for more than a decade in the cleaning industry, but had no long service leave because they've worked for multiple employers.

So it's about in consulting with unions, states and territories to work out what is feasible and needed in different industries.

**JOURNALIST:** And would that apply to casuals or not?

**KENEALLY:** It's possible that it might because much of what we are talking about here is casual work. Some cleaners, aged care workers, retail workers often do work in a casual form of employment.

But understand this, another key plank to what Anthony spoke about last night was in terms of having definitions, clear definitions of what is a casual worker, because the Morrison Government wants to essentially through its industrial relations bill legalise wage theft and make it harder, not easier, but harder for casual employees to become permanent employees.

**JOURNALIST:** So do you think that process then where you will get a better idea of the cost well before the election?

**KENEALLY:** Sorry?

**JOURNALIST:** Getting that process of consultation... Getting that cost, do you think that will be before the election?

**KENEALLY:** We will make clear all of our commitments prior to the next election. We will make that quite clear. Anthony, in fact, in the speech last night, make clear that there is more to come in this space because Labor's primary focus, as we come out of the health crisis, and into what we hope is the economic recovery, is that while we are in Opposition, we hold this government to account. We hold them to account. And that means fighting their industrial relations bill, which means a pay cut - the Morrison pay cut for Australian workers.

But it also means laying out what an Albanese Labor Government will do and that will be to ensure that Australians have access to secure good jobs with fair pay and conditions, that no Australian is left behind, and every Australian has a chance to get ahead.

Thanks, everyone.

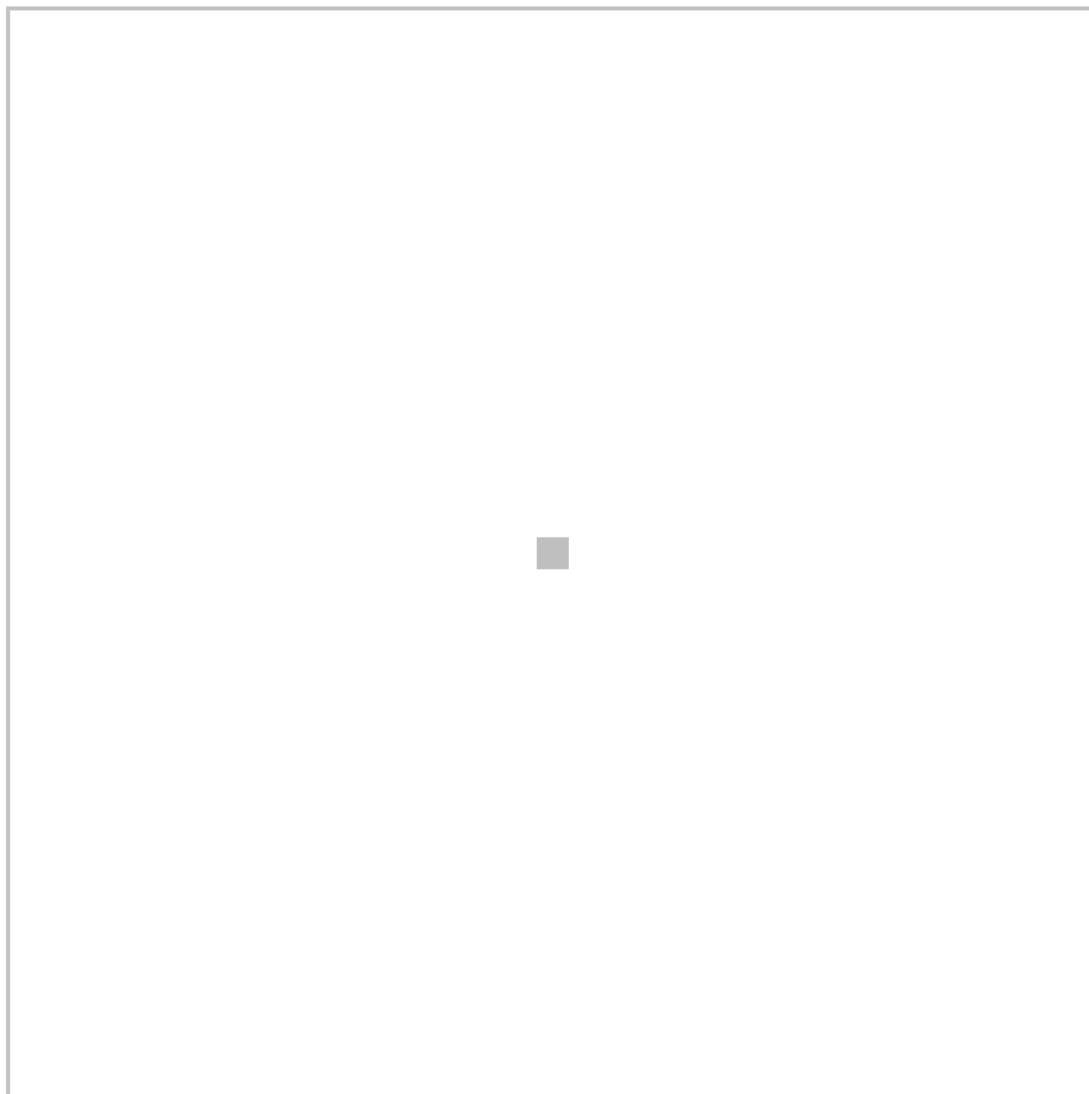
**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 3:48:09 PM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 3:47:07 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021



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**SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
DOORSTOP INTERVIEW  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA  
THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**

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Now these disturbing revelations from the ABC in FOI documents obtained by the ABC. The 730 Report last night revealed that Peter Dutton gave out two grants from the Safer Communities Fund in the Braddon by-election. Even though the guidelines hadn't been established, the application process was an open and later on his Department actually recommended against those grants saying they did not represent value for money.

Yet with Peter Dutton, it didn't stop him, he went down to Tasmania, stood next to the Liberal candidate in the Braddon by-election and announced these grants. The Liberals using taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party campaign money.

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association a grant completely through his own discretion. Again, no application, no guidelines, no oversight. Peter Dutton gets a donation and a week later gives that same organisation several hundred thousand dollars in a grant. Now, this on the face of it seems worse than the Bridget McKenzie scandal.

You remember sports-rorts of course, Bridget McKenzie, then a Minister was found to have breached ministerial standards. Not for her colour-coded spreadsheets, not for the 136 emails between Bridget McKenzie's office and the Prime Minister's Office. But she was found to have breached ministerial standards because she failed to disclose she had a conflict of interest with one of the organisations she gave a grant to. In short, she was a member of an organization, she gave them a grant, she failed to disclose that. That was found that she had reached ministerial standards and she should lose her job.

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Did he disclose that conflict of interest? Did the Prime Minister know about that conflict of interest? And if the Prime Minister didn't, what is he going to do about it?

**JOURNALIST:** If he didn't disclose it, what you call a conflict, should he resign?

**KENEALLY:** Well, if Bridget McKenzie has to resign because she was merely a member of a club that she gave a grant to, and she didn't disclose that. Surely, Peter Dutton would have to go, if it is the case that he took a donation, didn't disclose it and turned around and gave a completely discretionary grant to the same organisation.

**JOURNALIST:** On the issue of industrial relations, can you explain why the speech delivered by Anthony Albanese differs quite significantly from the original? And was that because of the Government's claim that this policy that Labor has announced would cost \$20 billion? And if so, did the Opposition Leader jump the gun with an alternative policy?

**KENEALLY:** I'm not aware of the specifics you mentioned there in terms of different versions.

But let's be clear, Labor's policy is this. When it comes to portable entitlements, we're going to consult the states and territories to work out what can be done for those workers who in casual work, who often work for more than one employer or move around from different employers to be able to have portable entitlements.

This is not a new thing. This is already done in certain industries. Indeed, the Keneally Labor Government in New South Wales delivered portable entitlements for cleaners. The ACT Labor Government here has delivered portable entitlements. Other governments have done this in Victoria and in Queensland.

This is simply a commitment to consult with the states and territories because they need to be fundamental and making it happen. When Christian Porter says that this is going to cost billions of dollars, he's simply lying. He's making things up. He is simply making things up. What he is doing, is creating his own policy or his own version of a Labor policy and putting a cost on it.

Now, when we talk about consulting with the states and territories, that's exactly what we're committing to do but understand this. Understand this. The linchpin of what Anthony spoke about last night, is to ensure that Australians have access to secure jobs with fair pay and conditions, with their pay and conditions protected. And that includes putting job security at the heart of the Fair Work Commission.

And it includes ensuring that people who are hired by labour hire companies, doing the same job right alongside an employee of a company, are getting the same pay. Same job, same pay. That's what Australians expect. Fairness in the workplace.

**JOURNALIST:** If it is not going to cost employers \$20 billion, how much will it cost?

**KENEALLY:** Well, what we're talking about here is consulting with the states and territories about what legal entitlements for certain industries and are needed.

So, for example, when it came to cleaners in New South Wales, long service leave was something that they very much wanted. Many cleaners had worked for more than a decade in the cleaning industry, but had no long service leave

because they've worked for multiple employers.

So it's about in consulting with unions, states and territories to work out what is feasible and needed in different industries.

**JOURNALIST:** And would that apply to casuals or not?

**KENEALLY:** It's possible that it might because much of what we are talking about here is casual work. Some cleaners, aged care workers, retail workers often do work in a casual form of employment.

But understand this, another key plank to what Anthony spoke about last night was in terms of having definitions, clear definitions of what is a casual worker, because the Morrison Government wants to essentially through its industrial relations bill legalise wage theft and make it harder, not easier, but harder for casual employees to become permanent employees.

**JOURNALIST:** So do you think that process then where you will get a better idea of the cost well before the election?

**KENEALLY:** Sorry?

**JOURNALIST:** Getting that process of consultation... Getting that cost, do you think that will be before the election?

**KENEALLY:** We will make clear all of our commitments prior to the next election. We will make that quite clear. Anthony, in fact, in the speech last night, make clear that there is more to come in this space because Labor's primary focus, as we come out of the health crisis, and into what we hope is the economic recovery, is that while we are in Opposition, we hold this government to account. We hold them to account. And that means fighting their industrial relations bill, which means a pay cut - the Morrison pay cut for Australian workers.

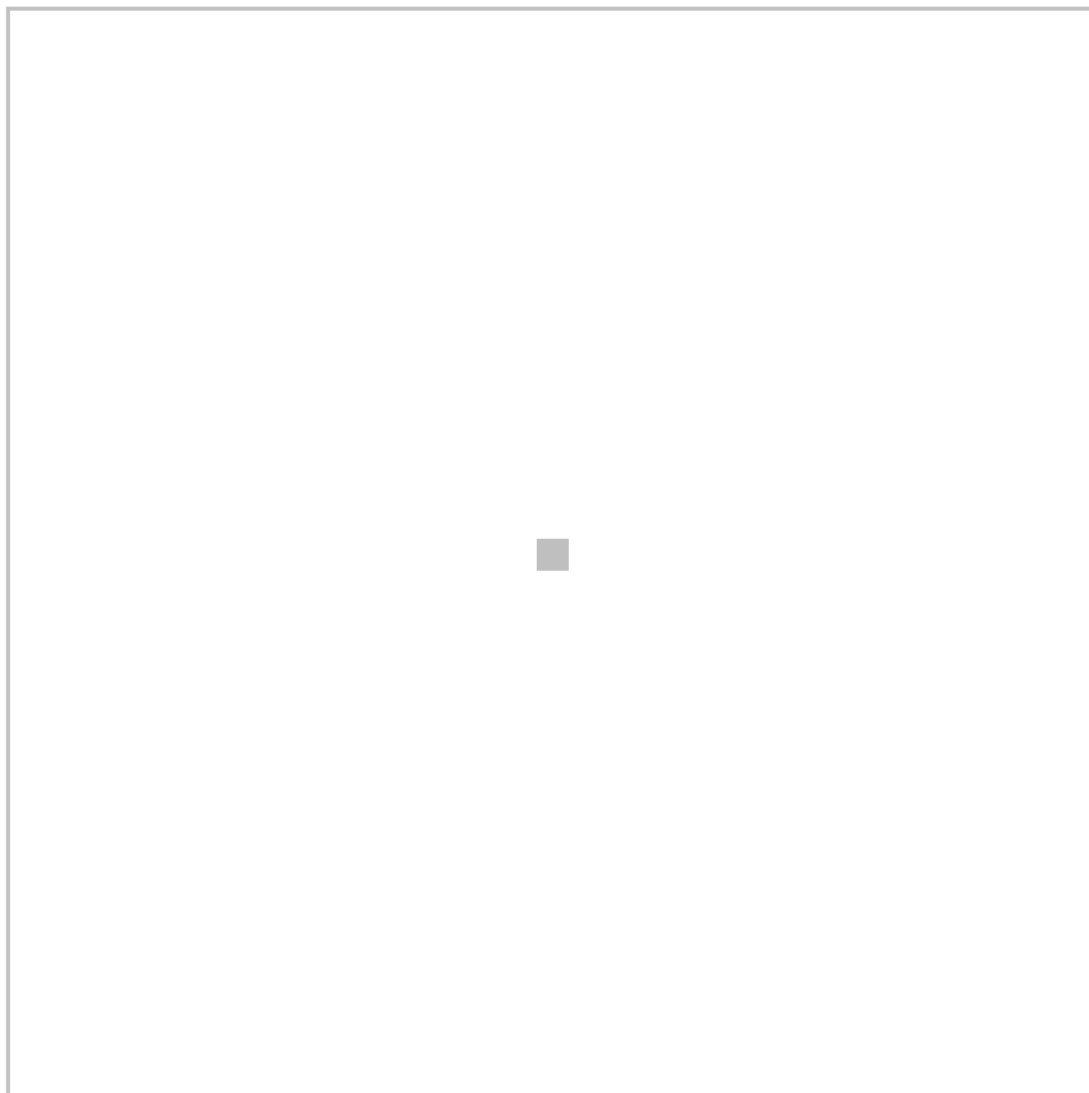
But it also means laying out what an Albanese Labor Government will do and that will be to ensure that Australians have access to secure good jobs with fair pay and conditions, that no Australian is left behind, and every Australian has a chance to get ahead.

Thanks, everyone.

**ENDS**

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** [DLO Wyatt](#)  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - TELEVISION INTERVIEW - SKY NEWS - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 6:08:07 PM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
TV INTERVIEW  
SKY NEWS AFTERNOON AGENDA  
THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**



**SUBJECTS:** *Angus Taylor's interview; Coalition Government's lack of energy and climate policy; no national quarantine plan; IR bill; Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts.*

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS:** Can we start with that interview - what the hell was that?

**KIERAN GILBERT, SKY NEWS, HOST:** The carbon tariffs...

**KENEALLY:** I'm sorry...

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**KENEALLY:** I just want to say this. First of all. I understand that Angus Taylor is a Minister in the Government but that was just nonsense. It was as if somebody told him to say a bunch of words in random order - "energy efficiency" and...

**GILBERT:** What was the problem? What was your problem with that?

**KENEALLY:** Well, I gotta say, it's not that, I shouldn't laugh because if you are a refinery worker in this country; if you work in the power industry; if you are a family struggling to pay your electricity bill; you would sit back in despair watching that interview. I mean, this is a government that's had 22 energy plans, they are in utter divided chaos. Well their Technology Roadmap is a road to nowhere because there is no sense of where they're going. They can't even agree on defining the problem when it comes to reducing emissions. They are utterly divided in their party room. What hope do manufacturers, or workers, or Australian families have when they've got a Minister - not only, he's not even on their side, he's not even really grasping the key issues in his portfolio.

**GILBERT:** When you criticise the Technology Roadmap don't use support funds into hydrogen, and that sort of next generation energy?

**KENEALLY:** Understand this about the Technology Roadmap - Angus Taylor put out two years ago his report on the climate and the projections around energy and emissions and the like. Technology Roadmap comes out the next report comes out, it's actually no different. Technology Roadmap actually from this government. It's not a plan. It's just a description of technology that's happening.

**GILBERT:** They are also investing in...

**KENEALLY:** Let me give you this....

**GILBERT:**...programs like the hydrogen...

**KENEALLY:** Sure and that's fine, but they can agree on where they're going, so they're just describing a lot of things that are currently happening, a lot of it being led by industry, not by government and industry wants that certainty. Let me give you this analogy, Kieran. When you get into your car and you want to turn on your GPS, you tell it where you want to go and then it figures out the way to get there. Right? These guys, they're like getting in the car and just putting in random roads and saying, well, where will that take us? Where will we end up at the end of that? But don't let it end up at net zero emissions by 2050 because then we have a problem with Matt Canavan and Bridget McKenzie and all the other nationals.

**GILBERT:** The same can be said of Labor in not having a midterm target?

**KENEALLY:** Oh come on, Kieran.

**GILBERT:** Why not?

**KENEALLY:** A unanimity in the Labour Party agree on net zero emissions by 2050. A clear commitment from Chris Bowen, that we will have our midterm targets outlined before the election. Angus Taylor says they'll have their midterm targets announced after the election - that's his commitment. Thirdly, there are a lot of things happening this year, particularly with the election of Joe Biden, the Glasgow conference later on this year, that are going to define how the world is going to respond to the challenge of net zero by 2050 and you know the only people who are outside that conversation? The Australian Government. The Morrison government. 120 countries, every state and territory. The BCA the National Farmers Federation. They've all signed up to net zero emission by 2050.

**GILBERT:** On the fuel security front, should the government be looking to acquire a refinery given the departure of two in four months?

**KENEALLY:** Let's start with the fact the government seems to have been blindsided by this announcement, despite their fuel security plan announced last September, which they said would create 1,000 jobs we now seen it, that we've not seen 1,000 jobs lost. We saw 600 and 300 previously and now 300/350 here with this with this closure of Exxon Mobil. So they're flat footed they've been caught off guard. And no fuel security plan another announcement over delivery example from the Morrison Government.

**GILBERT:** You've been looking at a few different ideas when it comes to quarantine for returned travellers - does that become redundant though, the things like Howard Springs and so on, if we expand them now, once all the workers get the vaccines, are we within sight of having the solution rather than going and spending a heap and looking elsewhere?



**KENEALLY:** Kieran, when is this magic time when everyone's going to have a vaccine?

**GILBERT:** October. They're saying by October.

**KENEALLY:** The Morrison Government also said by mid-March 4 million Australians would be vaccinated. There is not, that's not happening. We're not going to have 4 million doses in the country by mid-March. The Morrison Government said Australia would be at the front of the queue when it comes to vaccines.

**GILBERT:** So you think it will be years?

**KENEALLY:** There are 60 countries ahead of us. I think it is now up to 74 ahead of us in the queue.

**GILBERT:** So do you think it'll be years before we're all vaccinated?

**KENEALLY:** I think it's quite likely that it's going to extend beyond October, sure. I mean, the Morrison government needs to explain to the Australian people, which they haven't done yet, how is this rollout happening? I've talked to doctors and pharmacists who say they have no idea how are people supposed to register? When are they going to get the vaccine? What, how is this going to work? There are so many fundamental questions that haven't been answered by the Morrison Government when it comes to the rollout of the vaccine...

**GILBERT:** But once the vaccine is there then...The idea of the remote quarantining becomes redundant...?

**KENEALLY:** But Kieran, we've got 40,000 Australians right now stranded overseas that can't get home. And Jane Halton in her review made clear that that was a problem and our, she says quite clearly that the effective vaccine is a long way away. She says, and the rollout will take time. She says the current system is unsustainable. That the federal government can run quarantine, and it should do so to have a surge capacity to get all of these stranded Australians home. She also makes the point that there are facilities like Howard Springs and Learmonth RAAF and immigration detention centre facilities, the Commonwealth's not using. But let me make this last point, Kieran. If you want to bring a horse into Australia, it's going to go into a federal quarantine facility. But if you're an Australian who wants to come into Australia, Scott Morrison has washed his hands of you. He has said: "you are the state's problem." When did Scott Morrison become the guy who no longer was in charge of our international borders? Isn't there one fundamental thing a federal government does - keep the border safe, but Scott Morrison has decided he'd rather have the Premiers have the political risk of quarantine because he doesn't do

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**GILBERT:** Oh industrial relations to the Anthony Albanese have somewhat of an own goal by not giving a bit more detail, costings or whatever else, in terms of that casual worker proposal last night? I know Tony Burke says it's a it's a word for consultation. But, so it wasn't really a policy, it was just a proposal to consult, is that a better way to describe it?

**KENEALLY:** Sure, and that's what Anthony said. I mean, let's understand what Anthony announced last night was the first plank of our plan to deliver secure well paid jobs to the Australian people. Jobs of fair pay and conditions. Now there are multiple planks to that plan. At the height of it was to ensure ensuring that job security was one of the objects of the Fair Work Act and one of the objects of the Fair Work Commission. However, it's important to look at what the, what the pandemic revealed and that is that a lot of workers are denied entitlements because of the nature of their work, they might work in casualisation or contract roles, aged care workers often work at multiple sites we've seen that through this pandemic, whether retail, hospitality, cleaners. And so, what a number of states including New South Wales when I was Premier did was deliver portable leave entitlements. So for example cleaners in New South Wales now have long portable long service leave because they might work for multiple agencies over a decade. So it's about consulting with states and territories who have to be part of this as well as unions and industry...

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**KENEALLY:** Well first of all, those are two separate issues. So first, there's the safer communities fund, where more than 90% of the grants, went to government held or marginal independent or Labor seats, it wasn't about making communities safer it was about making seats safer for the Liberal Party. And Peter Dutton you can see in the FOI

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**GILBERT:** Kristina Keneally, appreciate it. Talk to you soon.

**KENEALLY:** Thank you.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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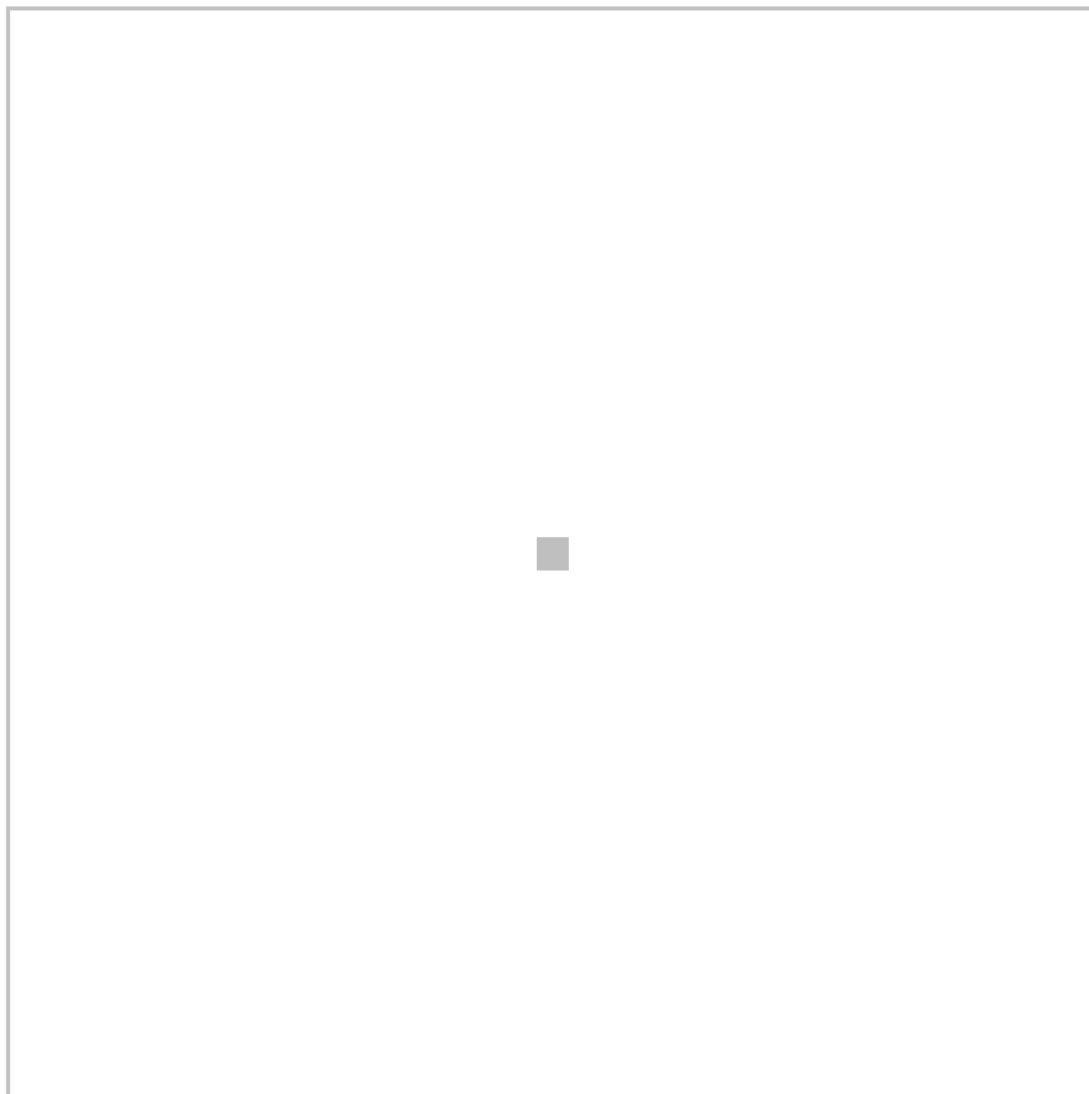
Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - TELEVISION INTERVIEW - SKY NEWS - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 6:08:09 PM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 6:06:23 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - TELEVISION INTERVIEW - SKY NEWS - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY**  
**DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE**  
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**GILBERT:** Kristina Keneally, appreciate it. Talk to you soon.

**KENEALLY:** Thank you.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [Media Operations](#)  
**To:** [Media Operations](#)  
**Subject:** Media Pulse: Thursday 11 February 2021 [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 6:30:09 PM  
**Attachments:** [Keneally - Dodgy Dutton follows McKenzie lead - welcome to Safer Seats rorts.pdf](#)  
[Keneally - Transcript of interview with Lisa Millar, ABC News Breakfast.PDF](#)  
[Keneally - Transcript of doorstep interview, Parliament House.pdf](#)  
s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
[Digital Media Analysis - 11 Feb 2021.pdf](#)

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## OFFICIAL

Good evening,

Please see below for today's Media Operations summary.

To contact the on-call media officer this evening, please call s 22(1)(a)(ii)

### Minister for Home Affairs


s 22(1)(a)(ii)

#### • HA – s 47F

**The Guardian :** Asked about the Safer Communities Fund. **Media Operations responded saying** no grants of \$1 million were awarded to the City of Swan under the Safer Communities Fund in 2019. A grant of \$847,017 was provided to the City of Swan under round one of the Safer Communities Fund on 2 June 2017. In compliance with the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs) from 31 December 2017 all grants awarded under the Safer Communities Fund are published on GrantConnect within 21 calendars days of the grant agreement for the grant taking effect. For grants awarded under Safer Communities Fund prior to 31 December 2017 refer to the Attorney Generals Department [website](#). This Department is unable to comment on grants awarded under programs that are not the responsibility of the Department of Home Affairs.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)


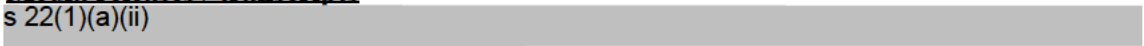
s 22(1)(a)(ii)



*NB: The above media responses are summaries only*

**Media releases / transcripts**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)





**KENEALLY:** *Transcript of doorstep interview, Parliament House (attached)*

**KENEALLY:** *Transcript of interview, ABC News Breakfast (attached)*

**KENEALLY:** *Dodgy Dutton follows McKenzie lead – welcome to Safer Seats voters (attached)*

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**Media Monitoring**

**7 News:** *Labor wants Dutton's grant-giving probed*

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**The Guardian:** *Kristina Keneally asks auditor general to investigate Peter Dutton over grants*

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**News.com.au:** *Labor senator Kristina Keneally ramps up attack over government grants*

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

#### **DIGITAL MEDIA ANALYSIS**

Social media discussions over the past 24 hours have again focused on the 7:30 report on the Safer Communities Fund, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**DODGY DUTTON FOLLOWS MCKENZIE LEAD -  
WELCOME TO SAFER SEATS RORTS**

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton has been caught red-handed rejecting the advice of his own community safety experts and directing taxpayers' money into projects in marginal and Government-held electorates.

In an explosive story from ABC 730, freedom-of-information documents about Round Three of the Safer Communities Fund reveal that Minister Dutton was prioritising the election fortunes of the Liberal and National Parties in the 2019 election over community safety.

ABC has also revealed that Minister Dutton provided a one-off discretionary grant to the National Retail Association one week after the Association made a donation to the Minister's election campaign.

Given that then Minister Bridget McKenzie resigned after she was found to have breached [Ministerial Standards](#) for failing to disclose a conflict of interest with an organisation to which she awarded a grant, Minister Dutton's actions raise



questions as to whether a similar breach of Ministerial Standards has occurred.

The ABC also reported that Minister Dutton announced funding for two projects in the lead-up to the Braddon by-election with the then Liberal candidate, despite the grant guidelines not being written, and without expert safety advice from his own Department. Minister Dutton funded the two Braddon projects even though his own community safety experts later told him not to.

Labor's Shadow Minister for Government Accountability, Senator Kristina Keneally, said that Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Minister Dutton must immediately come clean and explain their Safer Seats Rorts scandal.

“It seems Peter Dutton was not trying to make communities safer, but rather he was using taxpayers’ money to make Liberal seats safer.

“Peter Dutton's community safety experts made detailed recommendations about which communities needed help, but the Minister rejected that advice with 91 per cent of funding ending up in Government-held, independent or marginal Labor seats.

“Of course, every community around the nation would welcome more community safety funding, but why did Peter Dutton reject the advice of the community safety experts?

“Yesterday, I warned that Sports Rorts was just the tip of the iceberg for Scott Morrison treating taxpayers’ money like Liberal Party money. One day later, Peter Dutton has proved this point with Safer Seats Rorts.

“This eight-year-old Liberal Government is so sneaky, but Australians deserve to know whether their community missed out on being safer because of Peter

Dutton's pre-election Safer Seats Rorts wheeling and dealing.

“Which communities needed Community Safety funding and missed out? Was there another colour-coded spreadsheet? Did Peter Dutton do any dodgy deals for donors with his Safer Seats Rorts?

“What did Scott Morrison know? Was he or his office involved, like they were with Sports Rorts?

“The Liberals treat taxpayer money like it’s Liberal Party money. How can they be looking after you, when they are so busy looking after themselves?”

Freedom-of-information documents released by ABC 730 tonight reveal that Minister Dutton:

- rejected the advice from his own community safety experts and reduced funding for 19 safety projects
- directed taxpayers' money into 53 cherry-picked projects, ahead of other safety projects his experts were said were more important
- made sure that two projects in his own electorate were funded, even though his own experts did not recommend them
- announced funding for two projects in the lead-up to the Braddon by-election with the then Liberal candidate, despite the grant guidelines not being written, and without expert safety advice from his own Department
- still funded the two Braddon projects even though his own community safety experts told him not to.

**WEDNESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2021**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**TRANSCRIPT**



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
TELEVISION INTERVIEW  
ABC NEWS BREAKFAST  
THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts, Peter Dutton's possible breach of Ministerial Standards, the Liberals treating taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money; National Integrity Commission; Scott Morrison's fear of public accountability; Christian Porter's bald-face lie over industrial relations.***

**LISA MILLAR, HOST:** Kristina Keneally is the Shadow Home Affairs Minister and joins us now from Brisbane. Good morning, Senator. Welcome to News Breakfast.

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Good morning, Lisa. Good morning to your viewers.

**MILLAR:** So, is this just the partisan commentary from Labor aligned councils as Peter Dutton went on to say in that statement that he gave?

**KENEALLY:** Lisa, Scott Morrison and the Liberals treat taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party money. These grants that Peter Dutton is giving out - they come from the Safer Communities

Fund.

But it seems Peter Dutton wasn't using the money to keep communities safe, he was using it to make Liberal held and marginal, independent and Labor seats safer for the Liberal Party.

What kind of government rejects the advice from community safety experts in the Department of Home Affairs, and denies communities at risk - communities in danger - of the safety equipment they need, and instead uses that money to prop up their own electoral fortunes?

Quite frankly, for Scott Morrison's Liberal Government, Australians today will be asking, how can the Morrison Government be looking out for them when they're so busy looking out for themselves?

**MILLAR:** We asked the Minister if he come on this morning to explain his decision making in this process, but he did decline. But what should happen now?

**KENEALLY:** On the face of it, one of the most concerning aspects of the 730 story last night is that Minister Peter Dutton accepted a political donation from an organization, and then a week later gave them a grant - totally within his discretion - without any oversight or guidelines.

Now this looks on the face of it worse than the Sports Rorts scandal that saw the resignation of then Minister Bridget McKenzie.

Bridget McKenzie resigned because she was found to have breached ministerial standards, because she didn't disclose - she gave a grant to an organization to which she had a conflict of interest.

Peter Dutton needs to come clean today. And quite frankly, the Prime Minister Scott Morrison needs to speak up today and make clear whether or not Peter Dutton has breached ministerial standards.

Now on the face of it, it looks like he has, but that needs to come clean.

The other thing that needs to happen here is we need scrutiny and transparency. We know this Government has promised a national integrity commission two years ago, they have not

delivered it.

We need to ensure through the various forms of the Parliament and oversight, that this Safer Communities Fund is actually going to make communities safer, and in that, Lisa, the Government must release the list of those communities that were rejected by Minister Dutton.

**MILLAR:** The Community Development Grants has certainly grown over the years since it's been created. It comes from the proceeds of crime. People were pretty happy with its creation in the beginning, but now it's worth \$2.5 billion, I think. Would you keep it if Labor won government, or just change the way it was operated?

**KENEALLY:** But in fact, the Community Development Grants is another grant that they've been rorting that started at \$340 million in 2013. Scott Morrison has grown it to \$2.5 billion, and you have to be invited by the Morison Government to even apply.

So no, no prizes for guessing what electorates get that money - 70% of it goes to Liberal and National seats.

But this is a different fund, the community safer, the Safer Communities Fund is another one they've rorted.

And let's understand this, Scott Morrison as Treasurer, and now as Prime Minister has set up these pots of money right throughout the budget, money given away at complete ministerial discretion most often

**MILLAR:** But, what would...

**KENEALLY:** Ready to be doled out for electorate purposes.

**MILLAR:** But what would the Labor Government do to improve accountability? Because you've said that the proposal for the national integrity commission isn't strong enough, would you support that to at least get something on the books, something that you think perhaps is too weak?

**KENEALLY:** Absolutely, Lisa. Lisa, we absolutely support a national integrity commission.

What Scott Morrison has proposed is weak.

**MILLAR:** But would you support it, then to get something...

**KENEALLY:** This is hypothetical because... Lisa, this is this is a hypothetical because Scott Morrison won't even let the bill be debated in Parliament. He won't even let the bill be debated in Parliament.

That is how scared of scrutiny Scott Morrison is.

It suits his electoral purposes if the Australian people are kept in the dark about his misuse of taxpayer money, as if it is Liberal Party.

Labor is crystal clear on this. Labor is crystal clear on this. We support a strong, independent, transparent national integrity commission - one with the powers of a standing Royal Commission, because, what the Australian people want and deserve is a government that's on their side that upholds integrity and transparency in government.

**MILLAR:** Senator Keneally, I want to ask you about the IR reforms. I realize it's out of your portfolio, but you are a senior member of the opposition. Clearly there's going to be an election issue. The government and business groups are saying that what's been proposed as far as making entitlements movable is going to cost \$20 billion. Hasn't Labor opened itself up to constant attacks when it comes to this?

**KENEALLY:** Lisa, let's be clear here. Christian Porter is lying. Christian Porter is simply making things up.

It's very much like Donald Trump, isn't it, the way that Christian Porter and Scott Morrison are just bald-face lying about this industrial relations bill and bald-face lying about what it is Labor proposes to do to ensure that we're delivering secure, well paid jobs for the Australian people. Now let's start with the industry relations bill.

**MILLAR:** We may not have the time to...

**KENEALLY:** [inaudible]... even bring back work. And let's be clear, last night Anthony



Albanese outlined Labor's plan - the first plank of Labor's plan for secure well-paid jobs that includes, that includes consulting with the states and territories about portable entitlements.

We know that work is growing more insecure. We need to... The pandemic exposed that.

We need to ensure that the retail workers and the cleaners and aged care workers who got us through this pandemic have their wages and their entitlements protected.

**MILLAR:** The battle is well and truly on over IR, that's for sure. We'll have to leave it there.  
Senator Keneally, thank you.

**KENEALLY:** Thank you.

***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**TRANSCRIPT**

**ON YOUR SIDE.**

**Labor**



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**

**DOORSTOP INTERVIEW**

**PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA**

**THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Labor letter to Auditor General regarding Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts; Peter Dutton's possible breach of Ministerial Standards; the Liberals treating taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money; National Integrity Commission.***

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS:** Today I have written to the Auditor General asking him to consider an examination of Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts through the Safer Communities Fund. This Safer Communities Fund I spoke about in my National Press Club address earlier this week when I talked about Scott Morrison as Treasurer, and now as Prime Minister, is squirreling away billions of dollars in taxpayer money in grant programs to be delivered, often without any guidelines or oversight or even sometimes an application form, at the complete discretion of Ministers to be given out to Liberal and National Party candidates in election campaigns. This is bordering on an industrial scale. This is Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton

treating taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party money.

When it comes to the Safer Communities Fund, it seems that Peter Dutton is not interested in making communities safer. He was instead interested in making Government and marginal states safer for the Liberal Party.

Now these disturbing revelations from the ABC in FOI documents obtained by the ABC. The 730 Report last night revealed that Peter Dutton gave out two grants from the Safer Communities Fund in the Braddon by-election. Even though the guidelines hadn't been established, the application process was an open and later on his Department actually recommended against those grants saying they did not represent value for money.

Yet with Peter Dutton, it didn't stop him, he went down to Tasmania, stood next to the Liberal candidate in the Braddon by-election and announced these grants. The Liberals using taxpayer money as if it is Liberal Party campaign money.

One of the other disturbing allegations brought forward by ABC's 730 last night, is that Peter Dutton accepted a political donation from the National Retailers Association directly for his campaign. And then one week later, gave that association a grant completely through his own discretion. Again, no application, no guidelines, no oversight. Peter Dutton gets a donation and a week later gives that same organisation several hundred thousand dollars in a grant. Now, this on the face of it seems worse than the Bridget McKenzie scandal.

You remember sports-orts of course, Bridget McKenzie, then a Minister was found to have breached ministerial standards. Not for her colour-coded spreadsheets, not for the 136 emails between Bridget McKenzie's office and the Prime Minister's Office. But she was found to have breached ministerial standards because she failed to disclose she had a conflict of interest with one

of the organisations she gave a grant to. In short, she was a member of an organization, she gave them a grant, she failed to disclose that. That was found that she had reached ministerial standards and she should lose her job.

What we have here is Peter Dutton accepting money, a political donation from an organization, and then one week later, giving them a discretionary grant with almost a million dollars. On the face of it, this seems far worse than the Bridget McKenzie scandal.

So, Peter Dutton has some serious questions to answer here and so does Scott Morrison. Did Peter Dutton disclose that conflict of interest? Did Scott Morrison know about that conflict of interest? And, what is Scott Morrison going to do?

Because we know that Scott Morrison avoids scrutiny like the plague. Scott Morrison promised a National Integrity Commission two years ago, he has not delivered it. Scott Morrison continues to treat taxpayer money as if its Liberal Party money.

And the people around Australia today with these revelations on top of Sports Rorts will be asking themselves, how can the Government take money from communities that are in danger and at risk? Who need things like CCTV cameras and say: 'No, we're not going to do that. We're going to give it to the seats that benefit us electorally' How can the Liberal Party be looking after you when they're so busy looking after themselves? Happy to take any questions.

**JOURNALIST:** What do you hope that an investigation by the Auditor General will achieve? Even the Prime Minister didn't take action against Bridget McKenzie until after his own Department investigated that matter.

**KENEALLY:** Well, let's understand that the Prime Minister was forced into action because of the oversight and the scrutiny that was brought to bear by the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General report into the Sports Rorts affair is quite

damning and makes clear he has never seen such extensive involvement from a Prime Minister's office and rewarding grants such as was done in Sports Rorts. What we know from these FOI documents is that over 90% of the grants that Peter Dutton gave out from the Safer Communities Fund went to Government seats or marginal Labor and independent seats.

This wasn't about community safety - this was about building safer electorates for the Liberal and National Party. And so the Auditor General has extraordinary powers that can be used to examine the guidelines as such: why they were rejected by the Minister? Now what we have here in these documents is the Minister Peter Dutton, his handwritten notes, writing rejected to communities that were ranked quite highly by the community safety experts in the Department of Home Affairs.

Peter Dutton, handwritten notes, rejecting them, and re-numbering the projects, according to the electorates that he wanted to fund. And, if you look at these documents that show he actually groups them, it seems quite random at first, but he actually groups these by electorate. He had electoral considerations, not community safety considerations in mind when he made those decisions. That's what these documents suggest. The Auditor-General can get to the bottom of what was if anything, the Minister's criteria in assessing these grants.

**JOURNALIST:** You've said on the face of it, this is worse than Sports Rorts. But given as you pointed out, even after the Auditor-General, Bridget McKenzie was really just removed on a technicality. What confidence do you have then, if what you're saying is true, that action will be taken against the Minister for Home Affairs?

**KENEALLY:** My job is Shadow Minister for Home Affairs, but is also Shadow Minister for Government Accountability. And Labor will, as we have done with sport sports, continue to put the pressure and the scrutiny on this Government. This Liberal Government after eight years continues to treat taxpayer money as

if it's Liberal Party money. The Australian people, particularly now that we coming out of the worst recession in a century, deserve a government that is on their side. Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton are not on the side of communities that need things like CCTV, cameras or fencing. They are on the side of themselves and their own electoral interests.

So make no mistake, Bridget McKenzie had to resign. Scott Morrison found a fig leaf of an excuse so he can preserve his own reputation and integrity. But let's understand this: Scott Morrison set up in the Budget these grant schemes. He set up these pockets of money.

Take the Community Development grants, I spoke about this in my National Press Club speech, started at \$340 million under the Abbott Government in 2013, now it's been topped up every year by Scott Morrison, first as Treasurer, now as Prime Minister to \$2.5 billion. And you know how you get a grant from the Community Development Fund? You have to be invited by the Morrison Government to apply. There aren't any guidelines or oversight.

This is what Scott Morrison is doing: building up billions of dollars of taxpayer money in the Budget so that he can give it out at election time to suit his own electoral interests.

**JOURNALIST:** Just quickly. Are you saying, are you alleging any breach of the law?

**KENEALLY:** What I'm being clear about is that this Government is setting up a secretive budget and setting up grants and funds where they don't have to answer for accountability or transparency. Where things can be done in secret. Where things do not have to be oversighted by pesky auditors, or indeed, things like the National Integrity Commission.

But understand this: when you put 90% of all the funds in a Safer Community



Fund going to Government held, or marginal Labor or independents seats in the lead up to an election, when you have the Minister rejecting the advice of community safety experts, and deciding to fund projects to suit his electoral interests, rather than the safety interests of communities, you've got a Government that's not on the side of the Australian people.

You've got a Government that is not interested in what the Australian people want and need. And, frankly, taxpayer money is not there to be used as Liberal Party money. It is there for the uses of the Australian people.

That's what we need to examine and expose in this roting – these Safer Seats Rorts - through the Safer Communities Fund.

**JOURNALIST:** The rules don't actually prohibit ministerial discretion. Are you saying a Labor Government would do that for programs like this?

**KENEALLY:** We are abundantly clear, that when it comes to the use of taxpayer funds, there needs to be accountability, transparency, and oversight. We know that Scott Morrison promised a National Integrity Commission more than two years ago. All he's done is produce a draft bill for a weak commission that would conceal corruption not expose it. Labor is fundamentally clear - crystal clear and different, starkly different from Scott Morrison on this point.

We want a National Integrity Commission that has all the powers of a standing royal commission, that is independent, transparent, and ensures that government acts in the interest of the Australian people.

Now, of course, of course, there is always some room for discretion in government funding. There are always some projects, once in a while, that don't neatly fit into a particular program. But when you have a government that has set up billions of dollars in funds that have no guidelines, that have no accountability, that don't even sometimes have an application process. \$2.5

billion in Community Development Grants - no application process, you simply have to be invited, invited by the Morrison Government. This is an art form that Scott Morrison, as Treasurer and Prime Minister has perfected.

Let us not forget, this is the same eight year old Liberal government that walked into a half hour meeting and gave half a billion dollars to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, when the Foundation didn't even know that they were up for the money. Hadn't even asked for it. There was no application process. There was no transparency there were no guidelines. If a company was run like this, people would be... the Board would be demanding the sacking of the CEO. In politics, the consequences are far more serious because we grow the community trust in government. We cannot [inaudible] democracy - small 'l' liberal democracy - allow the trust [inaudible].

**JOURNALIST:** While this might be wrong, technically no rules, on the face of it, no rules have been broken?

**KENEALLY:** So is the argument here that Scott Morrison was okay, because Scott Morrison hasn't broken any rules of a program Scott Morrison set up where there are no rules?

Understand this, Scott Morrison set up grant programs where there are no rules and now their defence is that, well we didn't break any rules. When you have got taxpayer dollars, when the Australian people entrust you with their money, you have to return that trust. You have to show that you are spending it in the best interest of Australian communities. I mean, Sports Rorts was bad. Let's be clear about that.

But it's it's one thing to say to a community, you're not going to get a change room, this community is. You're not going to get a swimming pool, this community is. It is entirely another thing, when you have communities that are under threat, at risk of safety, who need infrastructure like CCTV cameras or

bollards or fencing.

And Peter Dutton says, 'No, I'm rejecting your needs. I'm rejecting the advice of the community safety experts. I'm not following that. Because I want to give money to this electorate. Well, I've got an electoral interest, where the Liberal Party's trying to win that seat. What kinds of government puts its own electoral interests above the community safety of ordinary Australians?

**JOURNALIST:** If you are saying it's worse than the McKenzie scandal and she resigned, are you calling for Peter Dutton to resign?

**KENEALLY:** Well, I have said in fact that Peter Dutton and Prime Minister Scott Morrison have serious questions to answer. Did Peter Dutton disclose his conflict of interest with the National Retailers Association?

He took a direct donation to his campaign. He was at the event. The Association made clear that the donation was delivered directly to the benefit of Peter Dutton's election campaign. And then a week later he gave them a grant. A discretionary grant. No oversight, no application process, no guidelines. He gave them a grant of nearly a million dollars. Did he disclose that just...

Did he disclose that conflict of interest? Did the Prime Minister know about that conflict of interest? And if the Prime Minister didn't, what is he going to do about it?

**JOURNALIST:** If he didn't disclose it, what you call a conflict, should he resign?

**KENEALLY:** Well, if Bridget McKenzie has to resign because she was merely a member of a club that she gave a grant to, and she didn't disclose that. Surely, Peter Dutton would have to go, if it is the case that he took a donation, didn't disclose it and turned around and gave a completely discretionary grant to the same organisation.

**JOURNALIST:** On the issue of industrial relations, can you explain why the speech delivered by Anthony Albanese differs quite significantly from the original? And was that because of the Government's claim that this policy that Labor has announced would cost \$20 billion? And if so, did the Opposition Leader jump the gun with an alternative policy?

**KENEALLY:** I'm not aware of the specifics you mentioned there in terms of different versions.

But let's be clear, Labor's policy is this. When it comes to portable entitlements, we're going to consult the states and territories to work out what can be done for those workers who in casual work, who often work for more than one employer or move around from different employers to be able to have portable entitlements.

This is not a new thing. This is already done in certain industries. Indeed, the Keneally Labor Government in New South Wales delivered portable entitlements for cleaners. The ACT Labor Government here has delivered portable entitlements. Other governments have done this in Victoria and in Queensland.

This is simply a commitment to consult with the states and territories because they need to be fundamental and making it happen. When Christian Porter says that this is going to cost billions of dollars, he's simply lying. He's making things up. He is simply making things up. What he is doing, is creating his own policy or his own version of a Labor policy and putting a cost on it.

Now, when we talk about consulting with the states and territories, that's exactly what we're committing to do but understand this. Understand this. The linchpin of what Anthony spoke about last night, is to ensure that Australians have access to secure jobs with fair pay and conditions, with their pay and conditions protected. And that includes putting job security at the heart of the Fair Work

Commission.

And it includes ensuring that people who are hired by labour hire companies, doing the same job right alongside an employee of a company, are getting the same pay. Same job, same pay. That's what Australians expect. Fairness in the workplace.

**JOURNALIST:** If it is not going to cost employers \$20 billion, how much will it cost?

**KENEALLY:** Well, what we're talking about here is consulting with the states and territories about what legal entitlements for certain industries and are needed.

So, for example, when it came to cleaners in New South Wales, long service leave was something that they very much wanted. Many cleaners had worked for more than a decade in the cleaning industry, but had no long service leave because they've worked for multiple employers.

So it's about in consulting with unions, states and territories to work out what is feasible and needed in different industries.

**JOURNALIST:** And would that apply to casuals or not?

**KENEALLY:** It's possible that it might because much of what we are talking about here is casual work. Some cleaners, aged care workers, retail workers often do work in a casual form of employment.

But understand this, another key plank to what Anthony spoke about last night was in terms of having definitions, clear definitions of what is a casual worker, because the Morrison Government wants to essentially through its industrial relations bill legalise wage theft and make it harder, not easier, but harder for casual employees to become permanent employees.

**JOURNALIST:** So do you think that process then where you will get a better idea of the cost well before the election?

**KENEALLY:** Sorry?

**JOURNALIST:** Getting that process of consultation... Getting that cost, do you think that will be before the election?

**KENEALLY:** We will make clear all of our commitments prior to the next election. We will make that quite clear. Anthony, in fact, in the speech last night, make clear that there is more to come in this space because Labor's primary focus, as we come out of the health crisis, and into what we hope is the economic recovery, is that while we are in Opposition, we hold this government to account. We hold them to account. And that means fighting their industrial relations bill, which means a pay cut - the Morrison pay cut for Australian workers.

But it also means laying out what an Albanese Labor Government will do and that will be to ensure that Australians have access to secure good jobs with fair pay and conditions, that no Australian is left behind, and every Australian has a chance to get ahead.

Thanks, everyone.

***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**From:** [noreply@stroom.com.au](mailto:noreply@stroom.com.au) on behalf of [Prime Minister and Cabinet via Stroom](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** Friday 12 February 2021  
**Date:** Friday, 12 February 2021 12:02:12 AM

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## DAILY MEDIA BRIEFING



s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)




## **Dutton diverted grant money to handpicked safety upgrades in marginal seats**

**WA Today** by Katina Curtis

Thursday 11 February 2021, 1:23pm

Labor has referred Peter Dutton's Safer Communities Fund to the auditor-general after nine in 10 grants were given in Coalition seats or marginal electorates.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

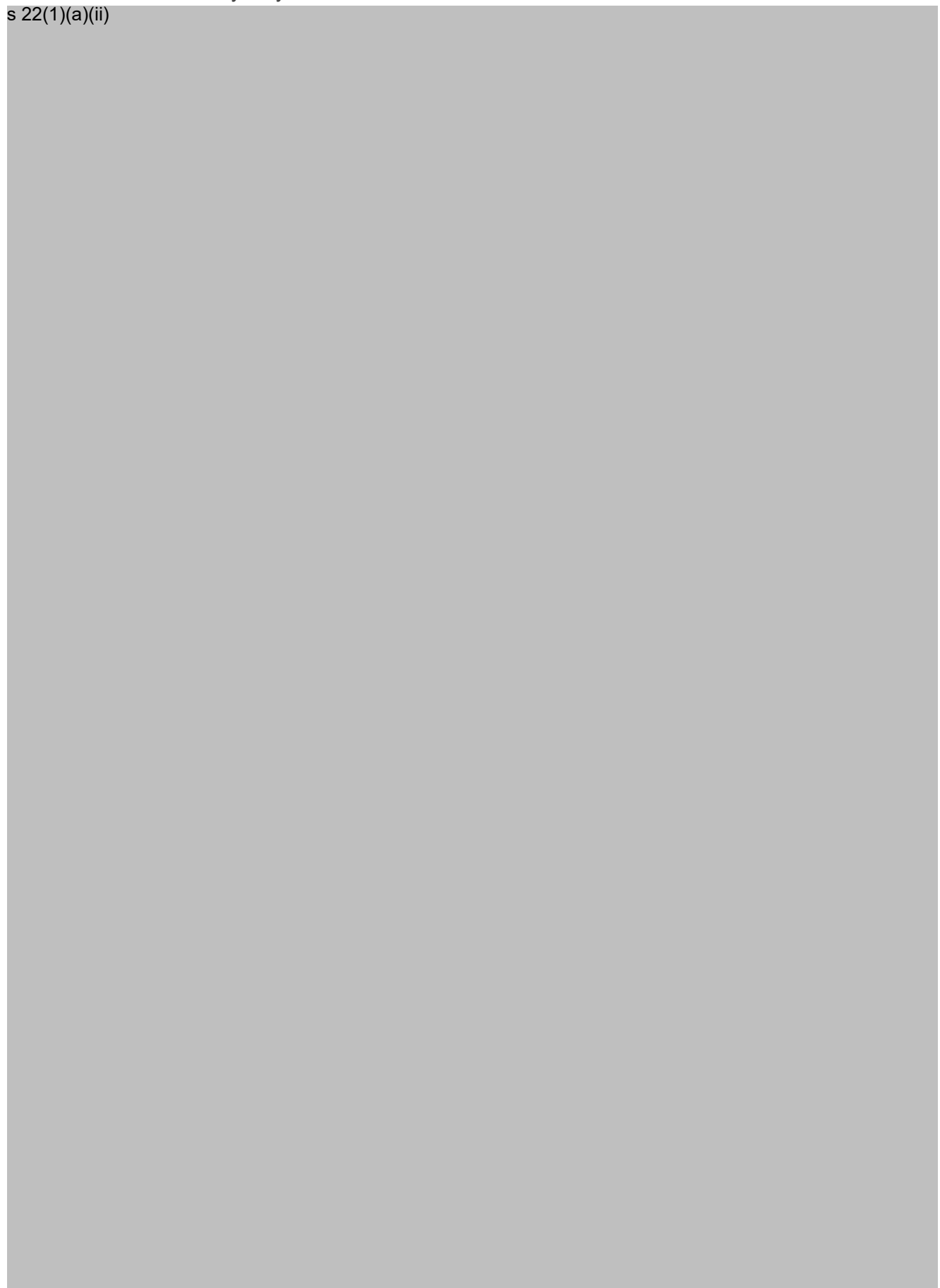


**@AlboMP**

11 February 2021, 2:06pm

Peter Dutton interfering with community safety grants against independent advice. **Greg Hunt** putting the Liberal logo on a government announcement about vaccines. They only look out for themselves.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Prime Minister and Cabinet via Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** Health media (304 mentions) - Friday 12 February 2021  
**Date:** Friday, 12 February 2021 1:02:11 AM

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## DAILY MEDIA BRIEFING



s 22(1)(a)(ii)



## **Dutton moved grant money to marginal seats**

**The Sydney Morning Herald** by Katina Curtis

Friday 12 February 2021, 12:00am - Page 4

**Keywords:** Greg Hunt's (1)

[VIEW PDF](#)



## **Dutton tips safety grants to Lib-Nats, unsafe seats**

**The Age** by Katina Curtis

Friday 12 February 2021, 12:00am - Page 3

**Keywords:** Greg Hunt's (1)

[VIEW PDF](#)



## **Dutton diverted grant money to handpicked safety upgrades in marginal seats**

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**Keywords:** Greg Hunt's (1)

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<!--[endif]-->**SYNDICATION**

**Brisbane Times, The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH), WA Today**



**Anthony Albanese**

**@AlboMP** 

11 February 2021, 2:06pm

Peter Dutton interfering with community safety grants against independent advice. **Greg Hunt** putting the Liberal logo on a government announcement about vaccines. They only look out for themselves.

**Keywords:** Greg Hunt (1)

**Follower Count:** 258,396 **Impact Score:** 98

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**From:** [Isentia Daily Briefings](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** Department of Home Affairs Daily Briefing 12 Feb 2021  
**Date:** Friday, 12 February 2021 5:56:14 AM

Isentia Logo



s 22(1)(a)(ii)

### **Dutton grants referred to A-G**

Australian Financial Review, General News, 12/02/2021, Ronald Mizen, Page 11

Labor has asked the Auditor-General to conduct a review into the Morrison government's Safer Communities Fund following revelations Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton handpicked projects against official advice. Documents obtained under Freedom of Information by the ABC reveal Mr Dutton reduced funding to the top 19 projects recommended for round three of the program to free up \$5.59 million for other projects.

Also reported by: [Australian Financial Review \(Online\)](#)

[Read More](#)

## **Dutton moved grant money to marginal seats**

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 12/02/2021, Katina Curtis, Page 1

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton handpicked 53 projects to share in \$8.5 million for security cameras and safety lighting ahead of the last federal election, only five of which were in safe Labor seats. The opposition has asked the Auditor-General to examine the Safer Communities Fund after departmental documents revealed Mr Dutton diverted almost half the total pool of funding away from recommended projects to his handpicked ones in January 2019.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#)

[Read More](#)

## **Dutton has questions to answer**

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 12/02/2021, David Crowe, Page 25

A huge amount of taxpayer money is spent in a secretive grants process that gives ministers total power. Liberal ministers talked a big game when they took power in 2013 and promised to toughen the test on how they would spend taxpayers' cash.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [WA Today \(Online\)](#)

[Read More](#)

## **Senator eyes Dutton safety grants**

Canberra Times, General News, 12/02/2021, Sarah Basford Canales, Page 18

Senator Kristina Keneally has called on the audit office to investigate whether Peter Dutton directed funds for a community security program toward Liberal electorates in the lead up to the 2019 election. The Labor senator said on Thursday she had written a letter to the Auditor-General asking the office to undertake a performance audit on a fund, administered by Home Affairs, dedicated to improving community safety.

Also reported by: [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Warrnambool\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Tamworth\)](#)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

### **ABC, 7:30, 11/02/2021, Leigh Sales**

After 7:30 reported an investigation into the administration of grants by Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton, the Opposition has asked the Auditor-General to investigate the matter. The Safer Communities Program was set up five years ago to fund projects which can reduce crime in communities across the country.

[Play Now](#)

### **ABC, The Drum, 11/02/2021, Katherine Robertson**

Continuing Panel Discussion with Jenna Price, ANU and Sydney Morning Herald, Adam Creighton, The Australian, Feyi Akindoyeni, partner, Newgate Communications, and Sonia Arakkal, co-founder Think Forward. Robertson says serious questions are being asked the allocation of funds by Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton.

[Play Now](#)

### **SBS, World News Australia, 11/02/2021, Janice Petersen**

Labor is urging the Auditor-General's office to investigate Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton over his handling of the cipher community's crime-prevention fund.

[Play Now](#)

### **2GB, 16:00 News, 11/02/2021**


Federal Labor wants the Auditor General to investigate Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton's allocations of public funds amid accusations he went against the advice of his department.

[Play Now](#)

**From:** [Crikey Worm](#)  
**To:** [Rush, Peter](#)  
**Subject:** Cluster flux  
**Date:** Friday, 12 February 2021 6:58:14 AM

---

s 22(1)(a)(ii)




s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Peter Dutton**

reportedly diverted \$8.5 million to 53 handpicked projects ahead of the 2019 election, only five of which were in safe Labor seats.

It's the news you need to know.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



## RORT RED-HANDED?

According to *The Age*, Labor has asked the Auditor-General to examine the federal Safer Communities Fund after department documents revealed **Peter Dutton** diverted \$8.5 million to 53 handpicked projects ahead of the 2019 election, only five of which were in safe Labor seats.

The documents, first revealed under Freedom of Information by *7.30*, show Dutton personally moved almost half the total pool of funding away from recommended security cameras and safety lighting projects to his handpicked ones in January 2019.


In other rort news, **Bridget McKenzie** is due to appear today 3pm AEDT at the Senate Inquiry into the Administration of Sports Grants.

**PS:** As Australia continues to wait for a *worse-than-toothless* national anti-corruption body, *The Australian (\$)* reports the Morrison government is developing plans for a new agency capable of investigating allegations of corruption, sexual harassment and bullying against judges.

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Cluster flux  
**Date:** Friday, 12 February 2021 7:01:33 AM

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)




s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)





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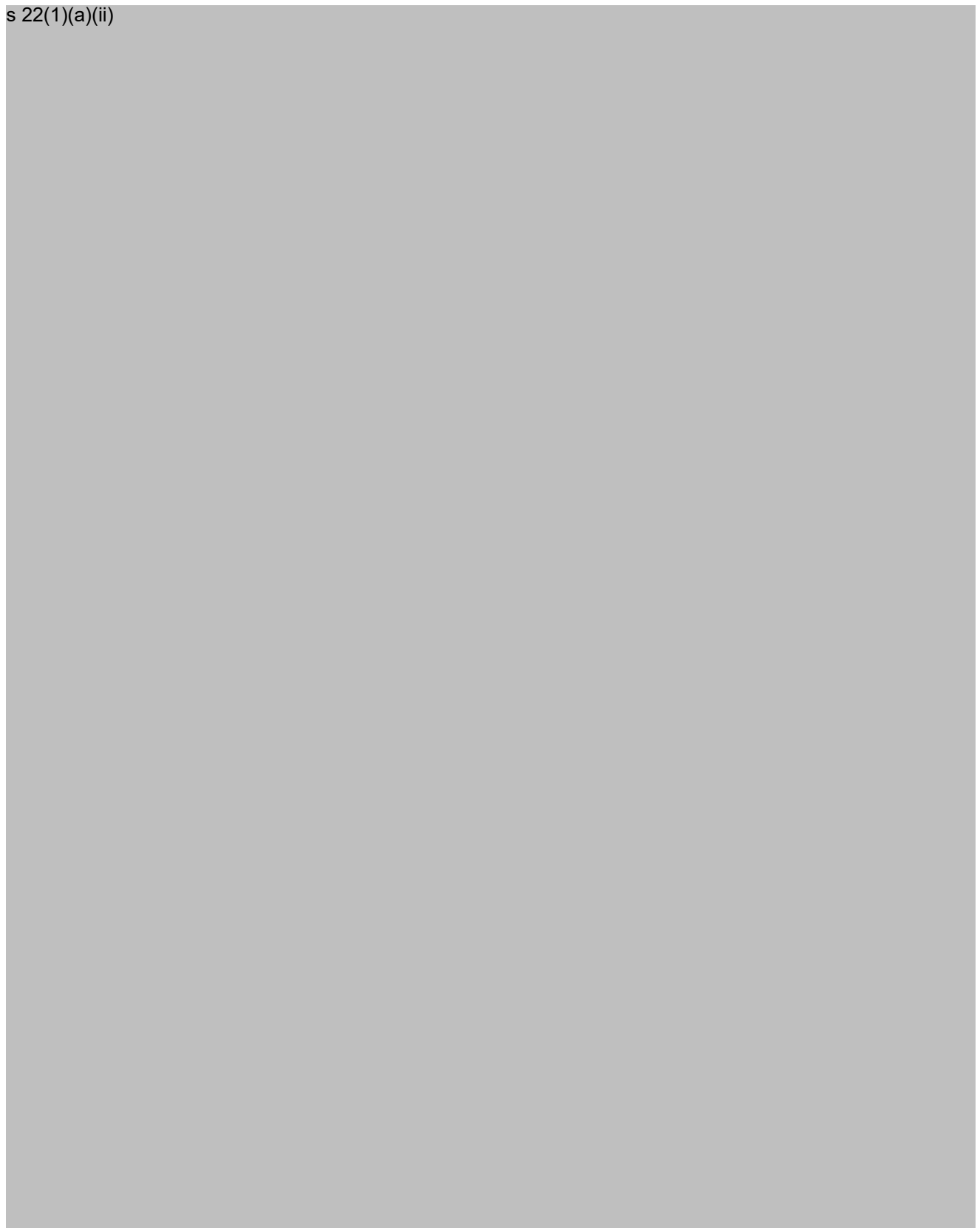
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s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**From:** [ABIX – Roy Morgan Daily News](#)  
**To:** [Power, Neville](#)  
**Subject:** Today's ABIX – Roy Morgan Daily News Summary  
**Date:** Friday, 12 February 2021 7:45:14 AM

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)



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## Kristina Keneally asks auditor general to investigate Peter Dutton over grants

The Guardian Australia - Page Online : 12 February 2021

*Original article by Daniel Hurst, Paul Karp*

### Roy Morgan Summary

Shadow home affairs minister Kristina Keneally has asked the Australian National Audit Office to consider investigating Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton's handling of the safer communities fund. Her call comes after it was revealed that the National Retail Association was awarded a grant of \$880,000 to help retailers respond to armed offender incidents as a result of Dutton's intervention. Dutton's actions came not long after the NRA made a \$1,500 donation to the Liberal-National Party of Queensland. [\[Click to view full article here\]](#)

[Top](#)

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**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**To:**  
**Cc:** [NSD - Border Security & Law Enforcement](#)  
**Subject:** RE: SCF Round 3 - Request for guideline development timeframe [SEC=PROTECTED]  
**Date:** Friday, 12 February 2021 10:39:14 AM  
**Attachments:** [RE For Review Safer Communities Fund Round 3 - Infrastructure Grants DLMFor-Official-Use-Only SECPROTECTED DLMsensitiveCabinet.msg](#)  
[ADD2018\\_3508448 Safer Communities Round Three - Signed Letter from the Finance Minister approving guidelines\(2\).pdf](#)

---

**PROTECTED**

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Please find attached the email sent by the DISER grants hub (Monday, 2 July 2018 7:28 PM s 22(1)(a)(ii) s 22(1)(a)(ii)) seeking PM&C and DoF's consideration of the SCF round 3 guidelines.  
 Also attached is a copy of the then Finance Minister's agreement to the round 3 guidelines (for both the infrastructure streams and early intervention streams) following PM&C's and DoF's agreement to these Guidelines. This letter was copied to the Prime Minister and Treasurer.  
 Just FYI – both sets of SCF round 3 guidelines were approved by then Assistant Minister for Home Affairs, Alex Hawke. Minister Dutton approved the grant funding for both streams.  
 Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Crime Prevention Section  
 Law Enforcement Policy Branch  
 Law Enforcement Policy Division  
 Department of Home Affairs

E: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

P: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**PROTECTED**

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Friday, 12 February 2021 9:38 AM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii) Crime Prevention  
[<crimeprevention@homeaffairs.gov.au>](mailto:crimeprevention@homeaffairs.gov.au)  
**Cc:** s 47E(d) s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Subject:** SCF Round 3 - Request for guideline development timeframe [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good morning s 22(1)(a)(ii)

We're in the process of pulling together our internal understanding of the SCF Round 3 guidelines.

Given some time has passed, and the team here wasn't around at the time, we'd be grateful if you could provide indicative timeframes on when the SCF Round 3 grant guidelines were being developed. Given PM&C would have been involved in this process, we'll be able to pull out

relevant information from our systems using this date range.

Thanks for your assistance.

Kind regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Adviser

Border Security and Law Enforcement Policy | Homeland Security Branch

National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

p: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | m: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

e s 22(1)(a)(ii) | team contact: s 47E(d)

One National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600

*The Department acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Cultures, Country and Elders both past and present.*

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**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: For Review: Safer Communities Fund Round 3 - Infrastructure Grants [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]  
 [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]  
**Date:** Tuesday, 3 July 2018 12:59:38 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.jpg](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[Supporting Document - Hawke - Letterhead \(003\).docx](#)

---

~~PROTECTED, Sensitive:Cabinet~~

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Thanks for sending this through. s 47C

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thanks

s 22(1)(a)(i)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

A/g Director, Crime Prevention Section  
 Law Enforcement Policy Branch | National Security and Law Enforcement Policy Division  
 Policy Group  
 Department of Home Affairs  
 P: s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
 E: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

~~PROTECTED, Sensitive:Cabinet~~

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Sent:** Monday, 2 July 2018 7:28 PM

**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Cc:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

AusIndustry Engagement

**Subject:** For Review: Safer Communities Fund Round 3 - Infrastructure Grants [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

The 3rd Round of the Safer Communities Fund is scheduled to open for applications in mid-August. Round 3 will provide up to \$30 million across two grant opportunities:

- approximately \$18 million is available for Infrastructure Grants (which is a continuation of the existing Safer Communities Fund and is the subject of this email)
- approximately \$12 million is available for Early Intervention Grants (which is a new grant opportunity under the Safer Communities Fund and we expect to submit those Grant Guidelines for your review within the next week)

The previous Infrastructure guidelines have been reviewed and updated to align with the Department of Finance's Grant Opportunity Guidelines template and the following changes have been implemented for Round 3 based on the lessons learnt from previous rounds. The changes are largely administrative in nature and do not change the scope or intent of the program.

- The introduction of a minimum grant amount of \$1,000. Based on program data to



date setting a minimum threshold of \$1,000 will help to deliver projects that represent the best value for money in the context of the objectives and outcomes of the program.

- To ensure applications are better focussed on delivering projects that directly benefit the wider community and community organisations, for-profit businesses are no longer able to apply. In round 2 a number of applications from businesses were received that intended to install security infrastructure on private premises for the benefit of individual businesses. This is at odds with the policy intent so in round 3 applications will be restricted to 'incorporated not for profit organisations' and 'Australian local government agencies or bodies'. Due diligence has been conducted to ensure this change should have no unintended consequences on entities encouraged to apply.
- In line with the change outlined above, the eligible projects, activities and expenditure sections of the guidelines have been updated to emphasise that projects need to deliver benefits to the wider community or community organisations.
- In round 3 applicants are able to submit evidence to validate their project costs as part of merit criterion 2 rather than part of the eligibility criteria. This will lead to a significant reduction in the ineligibility rate seen in Round 2 but will still provide an appropriate mechanism to manage the risk of applicants submitting unrealistic budgets and providing assurance around value for money.

The following documents are attached for your review:

- Safer Communities Fund Round 3 – Infrastructure Grant Opportunity Guidelines
- Safer Communities Fund Round 3 – Infrastructure Grants Risk Analysis

Happy to discuss as required

Kind regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Program Design and Onboarding

Business Grants Hub

AusIndustry – Business Services

Phone s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Internet: [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au) | [Subscribe to news updates](#)

Department of Industry, Innovation and Science

Level 4, 341 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000

GPO Box 9839, Sydney NSW 2001

ABN 74 599 608 295



For Official Use Only



**THE HON ALEX HAWKE MP**  
**ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**

Ref No: MS18-002426

Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann  
Minister for Finance  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I am writing to seek your approval of program guidelines for round three of the Safer Communities Fund (SCF) program. This is in accordance with Estimates Memorandum 2014/17 *'Process for seeking Finance Minister Agreement before the release of New or Revised Programme Guidelines'* (EM 2014/17) and the s 42 [REDACTED]

The SCF program implements the Australian Government's commitment to boost the efforts of local councils and community organisations to address crime and anti-social behaviour by funding local crime prevention initiatives.

The 2018-19 Budget announced an additional \$30 million to expand the SCF program to a third round, funded using amounts confiscated under the *Proceeds of Crime Act 2002* (s 34(2) [REDACTED]).

To give effect to this decision, the enclosed program guidelines and risk assessments have been developed by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, in consultation with the Department of Home Affairs, for infrastructure and early intervention streams. Separate guidelines were required due to the different scope and eligibility criteria between the two streams. These guidelines and risk assessments have been reviewed by your Department and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

s 42 [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

s 34(3) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

. As noted in your letter

to the former Minister for Justice on 26 September 2017 when agreeing to release round two guidelines, s 42 [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I would like the program to open for applications by 14 August 2018 at the latest. Noting the 10 business day lead-time required after your approval is given before program guidelines can be published, your earliest consideration is appreciated.

Should your office require any further information, the responsible adviser for this matter in my office is s 47F [REDACTED], who can be contacted on s 47F [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

ALEX HAWKE

/ / 2018

Encl:

- Safer Communities Fund – Round Three Guidelines (infrastructure)
- Program guidelines self-assessment risk analysis for Round Three Guidelines (infrastructure)
- Safer Communities Fund – Round Three Guidelines (early intervention)
- Program guidelines self-assessment risk analysis for Round Three Guidelines (early intervention)

**SENATOR THE HON MATHIAS CORMANN****Minister for Finance****Leader of the Government in the Senate**

REF: MC18-002300

The Hon Alex Hawke MP  
Assistant Minister for Home Affairs  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Assistant Minister

Thank you for your letter of 29 July 2018 seeking my agreement to two sets of grant guidelines for the 'infrastructure' and 'early intervention' streams of the third round of the Safer Communities Fund (the Guidelines). I note that you wish to open the two streams for grant applications by 14 August 2018.

s 42  


I note that s 34(3)

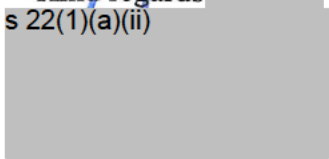
s 34(3)  


Therefore, I agree to the release of the Guidelines for both streams.


I have copied this letter to the Prime Minister and the Treasurer.



Kind regards s 22(1)(a)  
(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)  


Mathias Cormann  
**Minister for Finance**

 August 2018

**From:** [Media Operations](#)  
**To:** [Media Operations](#)  
**Subject:** Media Pulse: Friday 12 February 2021 [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Friday, 12 February 2021 6:36:14 PM  
**Attachments:** [Keneally - Transcript of interview, Sky News Afternoon Agenda.pdf](#)  
[Digital Media Analysis - Friday 12 February 2021.pdf](#)

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**OFFICIAL**

Good evening,


Please see below for today's Media Operations summary.

To contact the on-call media offices over the weekend, please call s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**Media Monitoring**

**ABC:** *Peter Dutton rejects 'absurd' criticism of his handling of multi-million-dollar grants program*


s 22(1)

(a)(ii)




**DIGITAL MEDIA ANALYSIS**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



- 730 report on the Safer Communities fund

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**OFFICIAL**

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**TRANSCRIPT**



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**

**TV INTERVIEW**

**SKY NEWS AFTERNOON AGENDA**

**THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS:** Angus Taylor's interview; Coalition Government's lack of energy and climate policy; no national quarantine plan; IR bill; Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts.*

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS:** Can we start with that interview - what the hell was that?

**KIERAN GILBERT, SKY NEWS, HOST:** The carbon tariffs...

**KENEALLY:** I'm sorry...

**GILBERT:** That is against Australian trade...

**KENEALLY:** I just want to say this. First of all. I understand that Angus Taylor is a Minister in the Government but that was just nonsense. It was as if somebody told him to say a bunch of words in random order - "energy efficiency" and...



**GILBERT:** What was the problem? What was your problem with that?

**KENEALLY:** Well, I gotta say, it's not that, I shouldn't laugh because if you are a refinery worker in this country; if you work in the power industry; if you are a family struggling to pay your electricity bill; you would sit back in despair watching that interview. I mean, this is a government that's had 22 energy plans, they are in utter divided chaos. Well their Technology Roadmap is a road to nowhere because there is no sense of where they're going. They can't even agree on defining the problem when it comes to reducing emissions. They are utterly divided in their party room. What hope do manufacturers, or workers, or Australian families have when they've got a Minister - not only, he's not even on their side, he's not even really grasping the key issues in his portfolio.

**GILBERT:** When you criticise the Technology Roadmap don't use support funds into hydrogen, and that sort of next generation energy?

**KENEALLY:** Understand this about the Technology Roadmap - Angus Taylor put out two years ago his report on the climate and the projections around energy and emissions and the like. Technology Roadmap comes out the next report comes out, it's actually no different. Technology Roadmap actually from this government. It's not a plan. It's just a description of technology that's happening.

**GILBERT:** They are also investing in...

**KENEALLY:** Let me give you this....

**GILBERT:**....programs like the hydrogen...

**KENEALLY:** Sure and that's fine, but they can agree on where they're going, so they're just describing a lot of things that are currently happening, a lot of it being led by industry, not by government and industry wants that certainty. Let me give you this analogy, Kieran. When you get into your car and you want to turn on your GPS, you tell it where you want to go and then it figures out the way to get there. Right? These guys, they're like getting in the car and just putting in random roads and saying, well, where will that take us? Where will we end up at the

end of that? But don't let it end up at net zero emissions by 2050 because then we have a problem with Matt Canavan and Bridget McKenzie and all the other nationals.

**GILBERT:** The same can be said of Labor in not having a midterm target?

**KENEALLY:** Oh come on, Kieran.

**GILBERT:** Why not?

**KENEALLY:** A unanimity in the Labour Party agree on net zero emissions by 2050. A clear commitment from Chris Bowen, that we will have our midterm targets outlined before the election. Angus Taylor says they'll have their midterm targets announced after the election - that's his commitment. Thirdly, there are a lot of things happening this year, particularly with the election of Joe Biden, the Glasgow conference later on this year, that are going to define how the world is going to respond to the challenge of net zero by 2050 and you know the only people who are outside that conversation? The Australian Government. The Morrison government. 120 countries, every state and territory. The BCA the National Farmers Federation. They've all signed up to net zero emission by 2050.

**GILBERT:** On the fuel security front, should the government be looking to acquire a refinery given the departure of two in four months?

**KENEALLY:** Let's start with the fact the government seems to have been blindsided by this announcement, despite their fuel security plan announced last September, which they said would create 1,000 jobs we now seen it, that we've not seen 1,000 jobs lost. We saw 600 and 300 previously and now 300/350 here with this with this closure of Exxon Mobil. So they're flat footed they've been caught off guard. And no fuel security plan another announcement over delivery example from the Morrison Government.

**GILBERT:** You've been looking at a few different ideas when it comes to quarantine for returned travellers - does that become redundant though, the things like Howard Springs and so on, if we expand them now, once all the workers get the vaccines, are we within sight of having the solution rather than going and spending a heap and looking elsewhere?

**KENEALLY:** Kieran, when is this magic time when everyone's going to have a vaccine?

**GILBERT:** October. They're saying by October.

**KENEALLY:** The Morrison Government also said by mid-March 4 million Australians would be vaccinated. There is not, that's not happening. We're not going to have 4 million doses in the country by mid-March. The Morrison Government said Australia would be at the front of the queue when it comes to vaccines.

**GILBERT:** So you think it will be years?

**KENEALLY:** There are 60 countries ahead of us. I think it is now up to 74 ahead of us in the queue.

**GILBERT:** So do you think it'll be years before we're all vaccinated?

**KENEALLY:** I think it's quite likely that it's going to extend beyond October, sure. I mean, the Morrison government needs to explain to the Australian people, which they haven't done yet, how is this rollout happening? I've talked to doctors and pharmacists who say they have no idea how are people supposed to register? When are they going to get the vaccine? What, how is this going to work? There are so many fundamental questions that haven't been answered by the Morrison Government when it comes to the rollout of the vaccine...

**GILBERT:** But once the vaccine is there then...The idea of the remote quarantining becomes redundant...?

**KENEALLY:** But Kieran, we've got 40,000 Australians right now stranded overseas that can't get home. And Jane Halton in her review made clear that that was a problem and our, she says quite clearly that the effective vaccine is a long way away. She says, and the rollout will take time. She says the current system is unsustainable. That the federal government can run quarantine, and it should do so to have a surge capacity to get all of these stranded Australians home. She also makes the point that there are facilities like Howard Springs and Learmonth RAAF and immigration detention centre facilities, the Commonwealth's not using. But let me make this last point, Kieran. If you want to bring a horse into Australia, it's going to

go into a federal quarantine facility. But if you're an Australian who wants to come into Australia, Scott Morrison has washed his hands of you. He has said: "you are the state's problem." When did Scott Morrison become the guy who no longer was in charge of our international borders? Isn't there one fundamental thing a federal government does - keep the border safe, but Scott Morrison has decided he'd rather have the Premiers have the political risk of quarantine because he doesn't do anything that's going to damage his own self-interest.

**GILBERT:** Oh industrial relations to the Anthony Albanese have somewhat of an own goal by not giving a bit more detail, costings or whatever else, in terms of that casual worker proposal last night? I know Tony Burke says it's a it's a word for consultation. But, so it wasn't really a policy, it was just a proposal to consult, is that a better way to describe it?

**KENEALLY:** Sure, and that's what Anthony said. I mean, let's understand what Anthony announced last night was the first plank of our plan to deliver secure well paid jobs to the Australian people. Jobs of fair pay and conditions. Now there are multiple planks to that plan. At the height of it was to ensure ensuring that job security was one of the objects of the Fair Work Act and one of the objects of the Fair Work Commission. However, it's important to look at what the, what the pandemic revealed and that is that a lot of workers are denied entitlements because of the nature of their work, they might work in casualisation or contract roles, aged care workers often work at multiple sites we've seen that through this pandemic, whether retail, hospitality, cleaners. And so, what a number of states including New South Wales when I was Premier did was deliver portable leave entitlements. So for example cleaners in New South Wales now have long portable long service leave because they might work for multiple agencies over a decade. So it's about consulting with states and territories who have to be part of this as well as unions and industry...

**GILBERT:** So what about this \$20 billion cost?

**KENEALLY:** Well that's Christian Porter's fantasy. That's a Christian Porter made up. Christian Porter made up policy.

**GILBERT:** You could have nullified that for that by having dollar figure yourself...

**KENEALLY:** I don't know quite how you put a dollar figure on, we're going to consult with

states and territories, businesses, and unions in order to determine who needs casual leave or sorry, portable leave entitlements, and how where going to deliver them.

**GILBERT:** Finally, Peter Dutton, he you know the report on the ABC last night suggested, he's given a handful of grants without you know following his Departmental advice. Do you really think he's going to give a grant, based on a \$1,500 donation? He's going to be swayed by 1,500 bucks?

**KENEALLY:** Well first of all, those are two separate issues. So first, there's the safer communities fund, where more than 90% of the grants, went to government held or marginal independent or Labor seats, it wasn't about making communities safer it was about making seats safer for the Liberal Party. And Peter Dutton you can see in the FOI documents handwritten rejecting the advice of community safety experts in his own Department, ruling out grants and reprioritizing them in handwritten notes based on electorates. So he has to answer for why he has rejected advice of community safety experts for communities at risk, and decided to give money to other electorates.

**GILBERT:** Doesn't a Minister have the authority to make judgments like that? When it comes to...

**KENEALLY:** Well only because Scott Morrison has set up fund after fund after fund in the budget, where there is very little transparency, some cases no application processes, no guidelines. And several of these grants were given out in the Braddon by-election before the guidelines for this fund were even developed and even after the department said they didn't represent value for money. It's a clear politicisation of taxpayer money. It's taxpayer money being used as Liberal Party money.

**GILBERT:** Kristina Keneally, appreciate it. Talk to you soon.

**KENEALLY:** Thank you.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**To:** [PMO MORRISON ALL STAFF](#)  
**Subject:** Insiders Summary - Sunday 14 Feb 2021 [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Sunday, 14 February 2021 11:13:37 AM

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## OFFICIAL

### INSIDERS SUMMARY

Panel – David Speers, David Crowe, David Campbell, Patricia Karvelas

#### VICTORIA

**CAMPBELL:** He has got to try and say this is a new year, new pandemic, new problem. The bottom line, though, is we've in Victoria now mucked up hotel quarantine twice. Again, there are questions about the contact tracing regime - twice. Who is to bet that it's not going to be a third go. No-one is going to put money down at the moment that this guy is going to suddenly come good. With the city in lockdown, it has escaped. It has clearly mucked up.

**PK:** Column A and column B my view is a little more nuanced, but I do agree with James there has been a blunder in hotel quarantine because we know of the nebulizer, the story around this person who was using it argues that he was told he could, and there are counters saying, "No, we didn't know about it." Quite obviously that is the mistake, we can identify what happened, but we do have a more infectious variant, I do think there is an issue around this in terms of how this multiplies, how quickly it spreads. We saw lockdowns in Perth and Brisbane through breaches of hotel quarantine there. It's not like it's the first place it has happened, in Melbourne, it has happened and there have been short, sharp lockdowns, but the problem in Victoria is that it happened and it was absolutely debilitating for the states. You don't get second chances because of the political equation and economic equation. This is not something Victoria can easily deal with. It is not the same as Brisbane or Perth because that have lived experience of 2020. That's the difference.

**CAMPBELL:** Agree. People are really not deal with this well. Everybody knows people who are not dealing with this well. It's not like it was last time, and it's not like, as Patricia said, with due respect to what happened in Perth and Brisbane, they didn't live 111 days locked up through winter. Again, it comes back to the uncertainty. What is traumatising people is partly the lockdown, but also this constant fear about what's going to happen. You see the Premier coming out at 10.30 at night, as he did a week or so ago, and everybody goes into meltdown. Kids start crying. Every time that guy comes out, we just don't know what's coming of the had the Herald Sun not broken this story on Friday morning, people would have been blindsided at lunchtime on Friday when he came out and announced that he was sending the state into lockdown. There was no hint that this was coming at all. Weimer, the contact tracing fella had been out on Thursday afternoon, it was all smiles, everybody this basically downed tools for the day and in private they basically went into meltdown.

**CROWE:** Privately there are a lot of concerns about the way Victoria is managing this, but there is no public position because Daniel Andrews says that his system is capable of doing the job here, so they are taking him at his word, that he can keep this under control, but we know behind the scenes, the Victorians were briefing federal and state officers about the fact that they were on top of the contact

tracing on Monday with only 8% of people were not being contacted within 48 hours in contact tracing. On Tuesday, that went to 43%. So something went badly wrong at the beginning of this week at the very time. Within 24 hours had not been contacted within that 24 hours, according to the background figures that are being made available here. Victoria has therefore got to answer questions about whether their contact tracing was not good enough earlier this week, and so that's a pretty fundamental issue and goes to the question about whether they're capable

of managing it from here on, because we have seen repeated mistakes. As I said, the federal position is to take Daniel Andrews at his word when he was saying he had a gold standard system earlier this week.

**PK:** That's right, he did say he had a gold standard system and we do know the contact tracing system has been overwhelmed. That's why we are having this lockdown - that's clear. The UK variant, the strain is so variant, so fast-moving that you can't keep up, that even with the bolstering, the overhauling of the contact tracing system, they just can't keep up. It's natural in Melbourne - people in Melbourne are looking around and saying, "Why does it not seem to work in New South Wales or Perth? Why is it happening here." It's partly controversial - that's why you invite me here - it has been a blunder, but there has also been bad luck, and anyone will tell you that luck has a lot to do with it. What happened in Perth and Brisbane where they shut down was also a bit of luck that it hadn't been able to spread it any further. Hopefully five days will do it and I'm actually - we're all hoping, barracking for this. Because we cannot go into a longer lockdown, this will smash this state. The state cannot take it.

**CAMPBELL:** On its own - like every journalist in Melbourne yesterday, I was ringing around trying to find out what is the number that would allow us to unlock on the date. But if you talk to epidemiologists who are informing the people who are making the decisions, two or three cases, fullback we've got that on Monday tomorrow will be the day they're most nervous about. If we're at Wednesday and we've got two cases, I suspect they won't open. They won't unlock.

**CROWE:** It is likely to land with Victoria doing its own thing and not getting a change of the regime at National Cabinet. I mean, I take Patricia's point about a need for national guidelines, but let's face it, we have a system with a strong control by each state and territory over what they're doing, and we see that with their inclination of state border controls so they like having their power over hotel quarantine. We have a Victoria problem with contact tracing and with the hotel quarantine. That hasn't proven a national problem with the hotel quarantine system. So we may see a change in the Victorian numbers without other states and the feds following suit. We do see the Federal Government talking about expanding the surge capacity at Howard Springs in the Northern Territory. They said the other day it was running at about capacity of 1,000 in a two-week period. They are talking about getting that to 2,000. That's something that is a work in progress, but that gets back to the Halton Review of hotel quarantine which recommended surge capacity which is what is happening at Howard Springs near Darwin. It is near a hospital, near an airport, has the logistical support of staff there's so a prime candidate. This hotel quarantine wasn't recommended in the Halton Review and also setting up a remote centre to do this is not just feasible, because you don't have the health workers. You need the hospital nearby, all of the support staff, plus the airport, of course. "Oh, let's make it all regional!" It's very easy to say. The risks around that and also the risks to regional communities - it's not just city communities that matter.

**PK:** I will put it this way: I am very, very sympathetic about Australians with heart breaking stories shall - I interviewed man this week, he had to go because he had to bury his mother in India, he had to get back. It is a good reason to go to India. He hasn't done anything outrageous. I understand those stories. That to me would fall under a compassionate reason. But Australians have been deprived of seeing their mothers for over a year and we have a whole system allowing people from high-risk areas to come in. I think we have to have a discussion about the pace, about the numbers. People say that Dan Andrews can't handle it, absolutely he should be scrutinised about that, but we are allowed to have a discussion about the number of Australians coming back from high-risk area, with highly virulent strains.

**CROWE:** We are going to have that discussion. We have 6,000 coming in per week or that's what is meant to happen - I think about 3,000 - a large proportion coming into Sydney, but every state



has power over that. Daniel Andrews will be able to adjust his own numbers and if he sees that it has got to go down to hundreds instead of more than a thousand, he has the power to arrange that with Scott Morrison and I think that is the outcome that we will see. But I think we are seeing also some clear contradictions in some of the political rhetoric about overseas Australians. Labor says they want more coming back here and they blame Scott Morrison for that, but they don't criticise Daniel Andrews when he wants to reduce the numbers, so I think we all need to get real about it and dial down the rhetoric.

**CAMPBELL:** I'm also convinced - I'm not so sure that the politics of this - that there is a great deal of sympathy out there in the community for people who are stuck overseas, and I'm not the only one who thinks that. There is a view that if you talk to people who do focus groups that there is a large slab of the community who thinks, "That's their problem."

**PK:** I can tell you what the view is because I do school pick-ups - drop-offs, not pick-ups, because I'm always on air, but the chatter amongst the mums and dads is, "My kid can't miss out on more education with lockdowns." Children, for a second year in Melbourne and Victoria now will be deprived of their fundamental right to an education to turn up to school.

#### **VACCINE**

**CROWE:** Definitely a problem. You might call it a challenge. Whatever the word, they are really under the gun on. This They've got to make sure that they meet those deadlines, as you say, about a week away. They're planning to do that, they're planning over the course of the week ahead to reveal more about who is going to get the first jab. We expect those jabs to be televised live and have a mix of elderly Australians plus high-profile people, no doubt, to make sure we have vaccine confidence That's all really important. I do think it's relevant that - there is a fundamental decision here that we have chosen to wait on Europe. I think that had some merit because we were able to digest, say, those findings from Norway which were concerning at first, but then were analysed and dealt with and seemed to be OK in terms of the vaccination of older people. And let's now - I think the cause for concern is that one in four adults in the UK have now been vaccinated and we haven't started here yet. Bear in mind, though, the other day 758 people died in the United Kingdom. Now, we are not in a situation like that. So I think there has been the ability to be patient and one of the lines we've got to be careful about is the line that dozens of other countries are getting vaccinated and as Mark Butler said from Labor the other day, Zimbabwe has started vaccinations Well, Zimbabwe has started with the Chinese vaccine. Brazil has started with the Russian vaccine. Indonesia has started with the Chinese vaccine. I think most Australians would rather be cautious and use the ones that are cleared by the TGA in Australia.

#### **MCMANUS INTERVIEW**

**SPEERS:** You tweeted on Friday that, "If the Federal Government had done the job of getting all the stranded Aussies home by Christmas as promised there would be no more mutant infectious virus in Australia." Do you really think it's that simple?

**MCMANUS:** I think there is a clear change from last year to this year and the fact that the virus has changed and it is more infectious, and that poses biggest threats to our community about it escaping, as it has. Clearly there is a difference. So the more we're bringing in people that have the infectious virus, the greater the risk.

**SPEERS:** What are you saying? We should somehow stop people coming in altogether?

**MCMANUS:** No, I was just making the point that if we had have done what the Prime Minister promised which was to get all the Aussies home by Christmas, we wouldn't have the mutant virus here - that simple point I was making. We would still have more people coming, though, more people coming home for compassionate reasons, tennis players, people would still be

crossing. The key issue is a vaccine rollout. The sooner we can get that vaccine to front line workers, to hotel attendants, to all the people involved in the chain of looking after people coming home, the better. Even if it reduces infection by a small amount, that will make a big difference for a more infectious strain or any strain of the coronavirus. That's the with thing we can do right now to keep us all safe.

**SPEERS:** Let me ask you about that because there is debate amongst employers and the vaccine, whether it's mandatory to have the vaccine if you want to work at this site. What do you think? What's the unions' movement's approach to this?

**MCMANUS:** The really good thing about our country at the beginning of the pandemic is we chose to take advice from medical experts and make decisions bases on what medical experts say. It should be up to medical experts, not individual employers, not individual people around the place to decide it's mandatory or not mandatory. If medical experts say that it should be for certain workers, well, we accept that. We don't think it is a good idea for there to be a divisive debate in our country about whether a vaccine should be taken or not, and that's the best course for us to take. Governments should be spending their time building confidence in the vaccine and the vaccine rollout.

**SPEERS:** Does that mean having some sort of medical authority saying, "This meatworks, or this hospital, it is mandatory. But at this mine site, it is not mandatory."

**MCMANUS:** That's exactly what happens now. People may not know, but nurses have to get the flu vaccine every year. People who work in meatworks have to because there are viruses can you catch from animals. This is a health problem and there are people who are experts and we should be taking advice from them.

**SPEERS:** Who should employers turn to and unions, I suppose, to get that awe authoritative advice on that work site?

**MCMANUS:** Well, health experts should make orders to say these particular workers into he had to take the vaccine for health reasons, and that's the way it should operate. Then we as a community need to accept that advice. (F) that's what is the right thing to do for our country and for our health, that's what we should accept.

**SPEERS:** Just on the economy at the moment, the Reserve Bank Governor, the Treasury secretary are all saying the economy is in recovery now and they seem relatively relaxed about JobKeeper coming to an end next month. What do you think? Should JobKeeper continue as is? Should something else take its place? What should happen at the end of next month?

**MCMANUS:** Well, this is a really, really important decision that the Government is going to make, whether to keep JobKeeper and whether not to, and at the moment they're saying they're not. If you are in Melbourne at the moment, you would be pretty worried about JobKeeper being removed. If you are in Queensland, North Queensland where they've been really smashed because they depend on international tourists, obviously an education sector that missed out, all of these businesses as well as manufacturing, actually, are still badly affected because of the coronavirus. What we say is JobKeeper should be extended for those businesses that are still affected by the coronavirus, through no fault of their own, they are suffering that downturn. We say that because that will save jobs. We were part of winning JobKeeper in the first place. We think it has been one of the best decisions our country has made in terms of stopping the unemployment queues and keeping people connected to work.

**SPEERS:** So any business that is still suffering, do you do another test of turnover or revenue to assess - doesn't matter if they're just in tourism, could be any business, should keep getting it?

**MCMANUS:** That's right, not just tourism, but obviously tourism is badly affected. It's also parts of manufacturing are as well and that's shown up in the ABS stats and that's because they're connected to retail. It would be wrong to just pick one sector. Obviously the aviation sector has

also been very, very badly affected and it should be supported, but if you just take one sector, you are going to leave out businesses that are also affected by the coronavirus that need support.

**SPEERS:** And run JobKeeper for another six months?

**MCMANUS:** Well, for as long as the pandemic is with us, I think.

**SPEERS:** That could be a very long time!

**MCMANUS:** Maybe, maybe not, it depends on the vaccine rollout, doesn't it?

**SPEERS:** It does, but in some form of another, international tourism is not likely to be back on its feet for a very long time?

**MCMANUS:** I think as a country, if you think about Far North Queensland in particular, they are really dependent on overseas tourism, more so than the big cities where there are other options, so I think the idea of continuing to support them and continuing to support parts of aviation and obviously higher education, there is really good arguments for that. Let's to the industrial relations debate. You've been speaking a lot about insecure work and this is what Labor's policy announcement this week is all about. I suspect a lot of people feel like they're in insecure work whether casuals or gig economy workers or even permanent employees, struggling business.

**SPEERS:** How do you define "insecure work"? Who is an insecure worker?

**MCMANUS:** There are two ways of doing it. Quite often Government or business will point to casual workers and that's about 25% of the economy, but that's not all there is. There is gig labour hire, people on fixed-term contracts, so you've got to add those people into it, but also situations where people might be in part-time work, but employers will flex their hours up and down every single week, so that's an issue, too. So anything, anything our governments can do, political party can do, to make jobs more secure is a very good thing for our country.

**SPEERS:** We are talking there in those categories, you listed three or four workers, what is your understanding of what they would get under Labor?

**MCMANUS:** What Labor has announced is addressing all of those different forms of insecure work. It would be a mistake just to focus on one because you're not dealing with just one. Effectively in our country we've let insecure work get away from us. People on fixed contracts, that's not just in the OECD, there are limits of how many fixed contracts you can be on before you are offered a permanent job. Labour hire, where people are just disposable, used via labour hire and where they're working in ex-to people who are paid more, same job, same pay. Casual workers, we have to get rid of this whole idea of permanent casual. The two words don't fit together. Finally the gig economy - if we don't address this, it won't be just delivery rider whose will be affected by losing the basic job security rights, the could be any worker where your job 'cause be reduced to task

**SPEERS:** For a gig economy worker, what security would they suddenly get?

**MCMANUS:** Gig economy workers virtually have no rights. They have less rights than what workers did in Australia 100 years ago. Under what Labor has announced, they would get all the basic rights of others. So minimum wage, sick pay, the right to bargain.

**SPEERS:** You think gig economy workers would get sick leave under Labor's policy?

**MCMANUS:** Part of what has been announced is the Fair Work Commission would say a sector are employees rather than being their own small business. Recall And once you are an employee, vu a right to all of the conditions. It might be still that they're employed as casuals, or it might be that the company decides, "Well, we're better off employing them full time." That would be just as it normally is, as everyone else, the samerights. But to be clear though, the policy is that the Fair Work Commission, the umpire would be able to look at that sector and decide what rights they are entitled to.

**SPEERS:** There is no guarantee an Uber driver would get sick leave under Labor?

**MCMANUS:** Look, it's really important that it's done this way and that's because the big tech companies around the world like Uber have been fighting governments and the unions where we've been fighting to get rights for people and they just change things, they say, "OK, you no longer wear a uniform. You to have a second job." They do things just slightly to get around the rules. This is a way of ensuring that this doesn't happen. Also making sure that people are genuinely independent contractors, your plumber out there, that they are not covered by it. If you are genuinely an independent contractor, they are not covered by these rules We are talking about the big tech companies that have grown rich on the back of exploiting people - we want to fix that.

**SPEERS:** What about casuals, though. Do you think casuals should get sick leave, long service leave, as well as the loads they get in lieu of those entitlements, or should it be one or the other? What are you suggesting?

**MCMANUS:** A lot of things. We've got to get rid of the idea of people who work regular hours and they do that for years and years and years and they don't get the basic rites. Then those workers should have a choice of permanency and if they take that choice, well then you no longer get the loading, but you do get the security and you do get the entitlements.

**SPEERS:** After a year, you should get the choice to be a permanent or a casual?

**MCMANUS:** Well, the Government is proposing a year. We would like to see that being a bit less.

**SPEERS:** What would you like to see?

**MCMANUS:** Well, six months or nine months, we think is fairer, but if it is a year, that's an improvement.

**SPEERS:** And then if the employer says no, what happens?

**MCMANUS:** This is part of what the problems with the Government's proposed laws.

**SPEERS:** I'm asking what you would like to see?

**MCMANUS:** We would like to see them converted. A worker wants a permanent job, for them to get that permanent job. At the moment what the Government is saying is that employers can have reasonable grounds and that reasonable grounds would be if they just decide they don't want to and you can't even go to the independent umpire and get that challenge.

**SPEERS:** You would like to say the law to say after six months at one workplace, if you want to be permanent, you have to be made permanent?

**MCMANUS:** So long as there are genuine hours, not if you are genuinely casual.

**SPEERS:** But the law should be that you should be required to be paid permanent?

**MCMANUS:** If the job is a permanent, ongoing job, you should have permanent rights.

**SPEERS:** With all these entitlements making portable and so on, the Government has suggested if every casual and independent contractor had these entitlements, it would cost business \$20 billion. That's an extreme example and is not going to happen, but there would be some cost to business if they do have to provide these entitlements, right? What is a level of cost that you think business should be able to bear?

**MCMANUS:** Well, it is interesting on this point of view of portability of entitlements. This is already happening in the community sector and constructive industries.

**SPEERS:** For long service leave?

**MCMANUS:** And the whole issue if you work one job, another job, another job, even though you're in the industry, that is the nature of that industry, how will you ever get those entitlements? They work very successfully. Employers like it because over a period of time they actually pay less.

**SPEERS:** But if you are saying to a business, "You have to make someone permanent after six months," and offer them all these leave entitlements," that's going to cost them, isn't it?

**MCMANUS:** No, because the employee would then not get the casual loading.

**SPEERS:** So you would lose the casual loading, become permanent and you think this is a net zero cost to business?

**MCMANUS:** Yes, yes. I actually think it is a positive for business. When people have certainty in their jobs, when they have that job security, they're more likely to spend and the thing is about our coronavirus recovery, it's going to be a grassroots recovery. You've got to look after the grassroots That's working people. That's the 12 million people that are going to be spending in local businesses. If we go about doing what the Government is proposing and that it to reduce wages, to make jobs more insecure, we will spend less - that's not going to be good for the economic recovery.

**IR**

**PK:** Yes, what Sally McManus put forward is what the ACTU would like it to look like, I don't think she has provided the detail of where Labor would like it to go - they're different. Strong influence, and I interviewed Sally this week and she said, "This is what we wanted, them saying that." Yes, absolutely. Anthony Albanese's speech certainly left out a lot of detail, no doubt about it, right, and it opened up the opportunity for the Government to run what is an obvious exaggerated, inaccurate scare campaign. \$20 billion cost to business? We know that that is a figure that is kind of a pretty much back of the envelope, right, we know that, but that was provided because the detail is not there. Now, Labor thinks that even though they haven't provided the detail - and they haven't, that's a fact - the portability of entitlements, which industries, how, when, why - we don't know any of those answers. It is a consultation with states and territories at this stage. It is an interesting idea, might have merits, but we don't have any of the parameters, but we know that inevitably it will cost business, right, we know that. Obviously if you have a creative fund and portability of entitlements or you have to pay gig economy workers more, it is a cost. Whether the public thinks it is a cost that we should be paying for, that's where the poll techs is and I reckon that's where it's at. I do think there is some sympathy for this.

**CAMPBELL:** The question is how much do people identify with the person who brings to them their take-away pizza? If they feel they have a relationship with them, if they identify with them as a person who needs to be treated with the respect that they expect in their own life, then Labor is onto something, but people who do these jobs are viewed by the vast majority of Australians as immigrants, the other, they're not a person like me, then people may resent.. Well, put it the other way. . How often do you tip these people?

**CROWE:** As PK that pointed out, there is conversation on the portability, that is actually the commitment, on consultation. On how to find work for casuals, that's a work in progress for Labor, but I think Labor can win on this argument because it's got months ahead, heading into the next election, whenever that is, to talk about conditions here, to talk about same job, same pay, that can resonate with Australian whose might be working for labour hire companies and see somebody in the workplace who is permanent getting more than them, and then this gig economy which getting back to that recall yeah conversation, does resonate with Australians about the money they are paying, or the money they are paying through the app, that the person who knocks on their door - I think that we can see that there is this underclass of Australians that is not always visible, but it's becoming more visible because they're delivering now to the door, and so I think that's a powerful argument for Labor to make. Yes, there is not enough detail yet on what they're proposing. It is a little bit like 2007 when Kevin Rudd went to the election with an IR plan that evolved through the course of that year, heading into that election. It's a bit different this way because Labor is not dismantling something as huge as WorkChoices, so I don't think we will see the same level of detail fleshed out from Labor by the time of the next election, bear in mind also that in 2007, Labor promised a different IR regime.

They didn't legislate it until 2009.

**CAMPBELL:** Look, can we just leave the gig economy to one side, the context that we talk about that this whole debate is taking place in is that the Full Bench of the Federal Court last May ruled quite clearly that if you have expectations of regular hours of work, the loadings that casuals are paid are to be treated as above-award payments. Even people who are on the right-hand side of the IR debate were unsurprised by that ruling. The Government jumped up and down about it, but I spoke to barristers who work in this space who said, "That's the way it's been since Noah was a lad." The reality is that there are going to be - this will eventually end up in the High Court, I think is the expectation, I think making its way now, if that decision is upheld, there is going to be a surge of cases of people who will be entitled to back pay, to back loading, all these sorts of things. So in a sense...I guess what I'm saying is what Albanese is talking about is almost the law of the land at the moment.

**PK:** Just one more point I would like to make: The Government has its own IR bill out there at the moment... One thing it does do is quite contentious is the suspension of the BOOT, the better off overall test, if you are an IR nerd and they want to suspend that for two years, my understanding that the Government is prepared to get rid of it because they do not want to have a fight about. This they doesn't want to have an election campaign on industrial relations. The Prime Minister Scott Morrison is a very, very, very politically astute man. He doesn't want to be fighting about IR. Labor have a massive problem in that the traditional Labor pitch where voters have been wandering off for a long time is, "The Liberals want to cut your pay. Be scared. Be scared." But they are up against a Prime Minister who spent billions of dollars keeping the economy going. The fear campaign will...

**CAMPBELL:** Well, the fear campaign from Labor will step up, with cuts to your pay and rolling it onto one. The ABC 7.30 program had an interesting story about another government grants program. This one is called The Safer Communities Fund and run by Teat Dutton this time. More than \$17 million that was to be spent on CCTV, security upgrades in communities that needed it. The department gave him a list of projects and then he, apparently according to documents obtained under FOI, allocated the funds in seats that Coalition was not interested in at the last election. Labor has referred this to the Auditor-General.

#### **DUTTON FUNDING**

**CROWE:** Ministers have total power over these grants and there are billions of dollars in discretionary grants where the minister can make the calling, so he they can override what the department says. One key point is Safer Communities is a good program, it funds security systems at Jewish schools, Islamic schools and we know there are right-wing nutters out there, we know there is anti-Semitism out there, so we know that the projects are worthy. Putter Dutton reduced funding to a whole bunch of projects that were applying, in order to increase funding elsewhere. But a couple of things happened. He gave \$827,000 to the National Retail Association in Queensland. They are a small business group. They happen to be a donor to the Liberals and to him. Now, the donations are relatively small. A handful of thousands of dollars, right. But I think there is a question there about that connection. He also made some two to three projects in the Braddon electorate just before those by-elections in 2018. So that was ahead of the formal completion of the process where he was making sure that money got paid faster. There are another couple of examples where decisions were made and you question the minister's decision there and I think scrutiny is required of how those decisions were made. Pork-barrelling is as old as politics.

**PK:** Doesn't mean we have to like it, though. I think you just said it, pork-barrelling happens under every government, but this particular scheme seems to me to be a significant problem for the Government. This whole, you know, it was within the rules - sure, then let's talk about those

rules. It always go back...

Yes, you made these rules that we don't think are very fair and we think we need to have a conversation about them and there is only one thing I intoded to say which is National Integrity Commission. Yes, where is it? Again being put aside. It does raise questions around the need for it.

#### **FINAL OBSERVATIONS**

**CAMPBELL:** Melbourne CBD is a disaster, even before this lockdown is a disaster. Something has to be done. It is the engine room of the Victorian economy and people are not returning to work, we're not returning to work. The debate about JobKeeper/JobSeeker is now a debate about how much support the Government is going to give to Victoria. That's going to be front and centre. It ain't just Cairns.

**CROWE:** There is a debate within Labor and New South Wales about who leads the Senate ticket. Whether that's Kristina Keneally or Deb O'Neill. We saw Kristina Keneally there at the Press Club a moment ago. That little with the F-word isn't going to cost her. She will lead that ticket. That is tough for Deb O'Neill. She may have to try a race in the lower house, but I think that is the outcome. That debate is pretty much done.

**PK:** This week, Monday, tomorrow, is traditionally and will sort of half be the Closing the Gap statement which, of course, since the apology to the Stolen Generations has become an annual and I think very important event and statement from the Prime Minister. This year it's totally different, though. They've refreshed and overhauled the Closing the Gap targets. From now on we will see in the middle of the year this big report card. You are not getting the report card this week which I think will be a break from a very important tradition. Indigenous groups wanted this, wanted this refreshed, but I think watch this space about how the Government marks Sorry Day and we will see tomorrow because I've been told we won't get that report card as we have in previous years. Let's hope we do provide scrutiny on governments about the way they're dealing with Closing the Gap and the national shame.

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | **Media Adviser**

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## MINISTERIAL AND EXECUTIVE

### **Dutton spent \$36,000 of public money on VIP jet for byelection**

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 15/02/2021, Lisa Visentin and Katina Curtis, Page 3

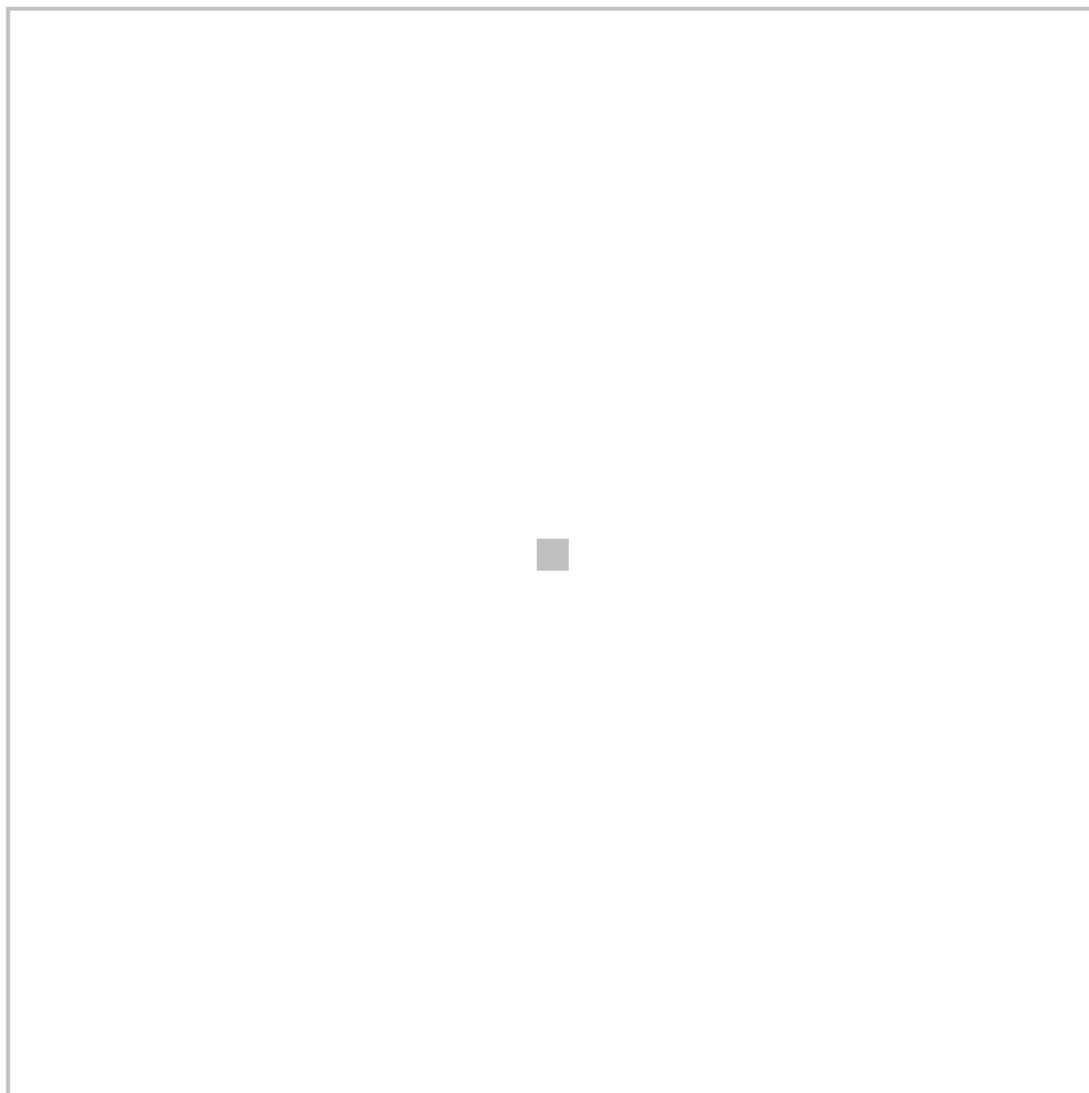
Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton charged taxpayers more than \$36,000 to charter a Royal Australian Air Force jet to Tasmania to make a grants announcement for CCTV systems for two councils during the 2018 Braddon byelection campaign. At the time Mr Dutton announced the grants for Burnie and WaratahWynyard councils, worth a combined \$194,000 in July 2018, a month before the rules for the third round of Safer Communities Fund were published and applications opened.

*Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#)*

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**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** MEDIA RELEASE - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DUTTON CHARGES TAXPAYER \$36,000 FOR FLIGHTS - MON 15 FEB, 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 6:39:05 AM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**CAPTAIN SAFE SEATS - PETER DUTTON CHARGED TAXPAYERS OVER  
\$36,000 FOR LUXURY PRIVATE JET FLIGHT TO TASMANIA**

Just days after it was revealed that Peter Dutton directed 91% of funds from the Safer Communities Fund to Coalition and marginal seats, Minister Dutton has been exposed charging taxpayers more than \$36,000 to use a luxury VIP RAAF plane to fly to Tasmania to announce the grants next to the Liberal

candidate in the Braddon upcoming by-election.

Freedom-of-information documents have revealed that Minister Dutton announced the grants for two councils in the Braddon electorate, worth a combined \$194,000 in July 2018, a month before the rules for the third round of Safer Communities Fund were published and applications opened, and against the express advice of community safety experts in the Minister's own department.

The documents revealed that Minister Dutton's community safety experts found that the two proposals were not suitable when compared to other communities in need. These experts specifically warned the Minister, "should you decide to make funding decisions that do not reflect the order of merit, you may be criticised either in the media, or by the Australian National Audit Office".

Labor's Shadow Minister for Government Accountability, Senator Kristina Keneally, said that Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Minister Dutton must immediately respond to the growing Safer Seats Rorts scandal.

"Peter Dutton wasn't making communities safer, he was making Liberal and marginal seats safer for the Liberal Party," Senator Keneally said.

"Nowhere is this clearer than in the Braddon by-election campaign, where Peter Dutton flew a luxury VIP plane to Tasmania at taxpayer expense to stand next to the Liberal candidate to announce two grants from the Safer Communities Fund, even though the guidelines for the fund hadn't been established and the application process hadn't even opened yet!

"Peter Dutton was warned by his own safety experts not to misuse taxpayer dollars in this way, that the grants he handpicked were not up to scratch and he would likely be criticised by the Audit office for these decisions.

"Peter Dutton - Captain Safe Seats - was so determined to use taxpayer dollars to help the Liberal party win a by-election in Tasmania that he not only made a political decision to award these grants, but then hopped on a luxury VIP plane to go stand next to the Liberal candidate to announce them, charging the taxpayers over \$36,000 for the quick trip.

"Australian families are struggling to pay the bills, but Peter Dutton thinks nothing of spending tens of thousands of Australians taxpayer dollars on luxury plane trips to support a Liberal Party election campaign.

"Sports Rorts was just the tip of the iceberg with this eight year old Liberal Government.

"The Liberals treat taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money. How can they be looking after Australian families when they are so busy looking after themselves?

"Now, more than ever, Australians want and deserve transparency and integrity in their government. Instead with this 8 year old Liberal Government they get dodgy land deals, Sports Rorts and now Safer Seats Rorts.

"Bridget McKenzie resigned over Sports Rorts. On the face of it, Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts - complete with luxury VIP plane trips - looks worse.

"Scott Morrison promised a National Integrity Commission more than two years ago but he has not delivered it. Labor is on the side of transparency and accountability in government. An Albanese Labor Government will deliver a strong and independent National Integrity Commission to stamp out waste, mismanagement and corruption and restore trust in government."

**Monday, 15 February 2021**

**CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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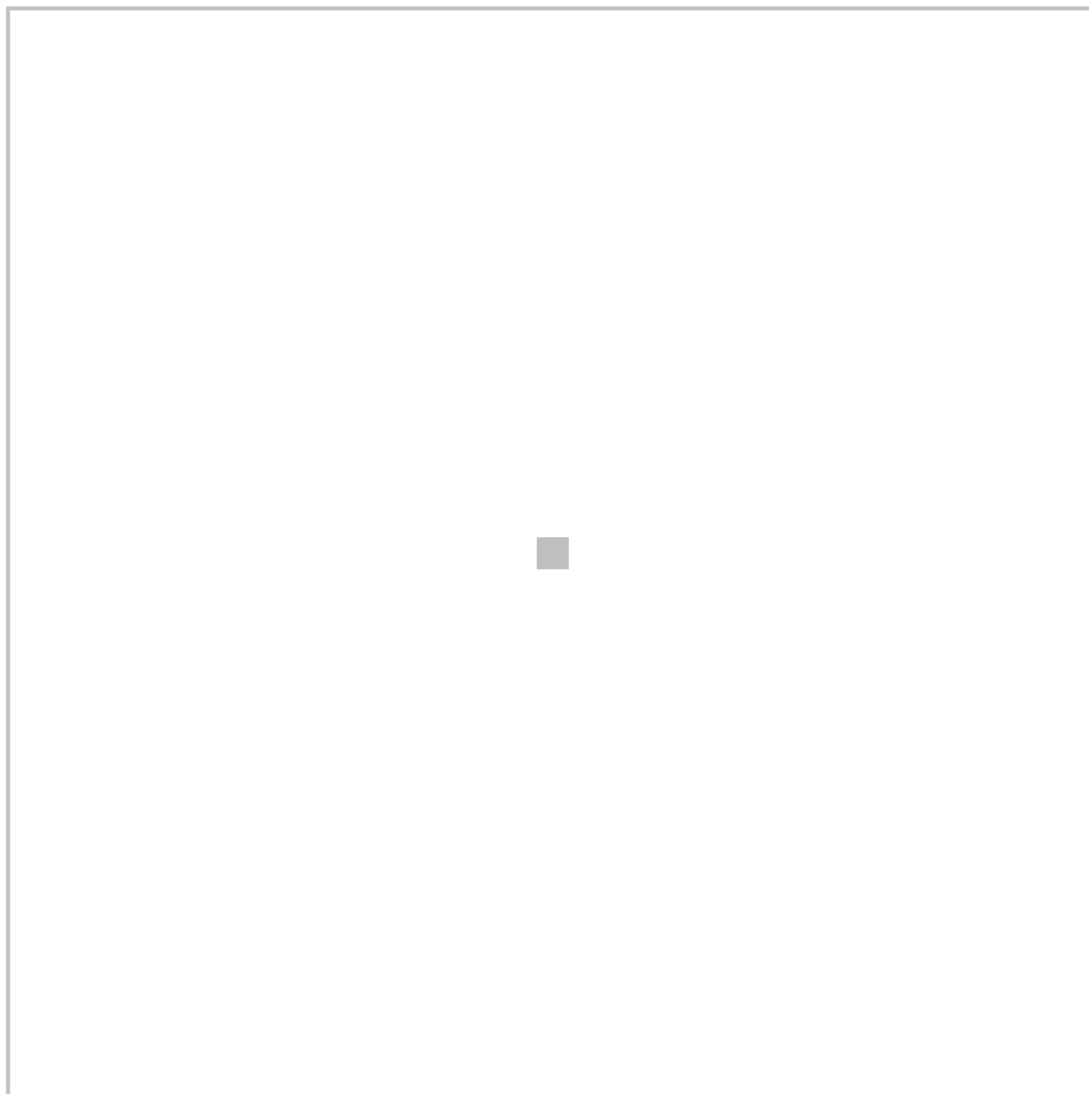
Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: MEDIA RELEASE - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DUTTON CHARGES TAXPAYER \$36,000 FOR FLIGHTS - MON 15 FEB, 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 6:39:05 AM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Monday, 15 February 2021 6:38:49 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** MEDIA RELEASE - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DUTTON CHARGES TAXPAYER \$36,000 FOR FLIGHTS - MON 15 FEB, 2021



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY**  
**DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**  
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**SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

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**Monday, 15 February 2021**

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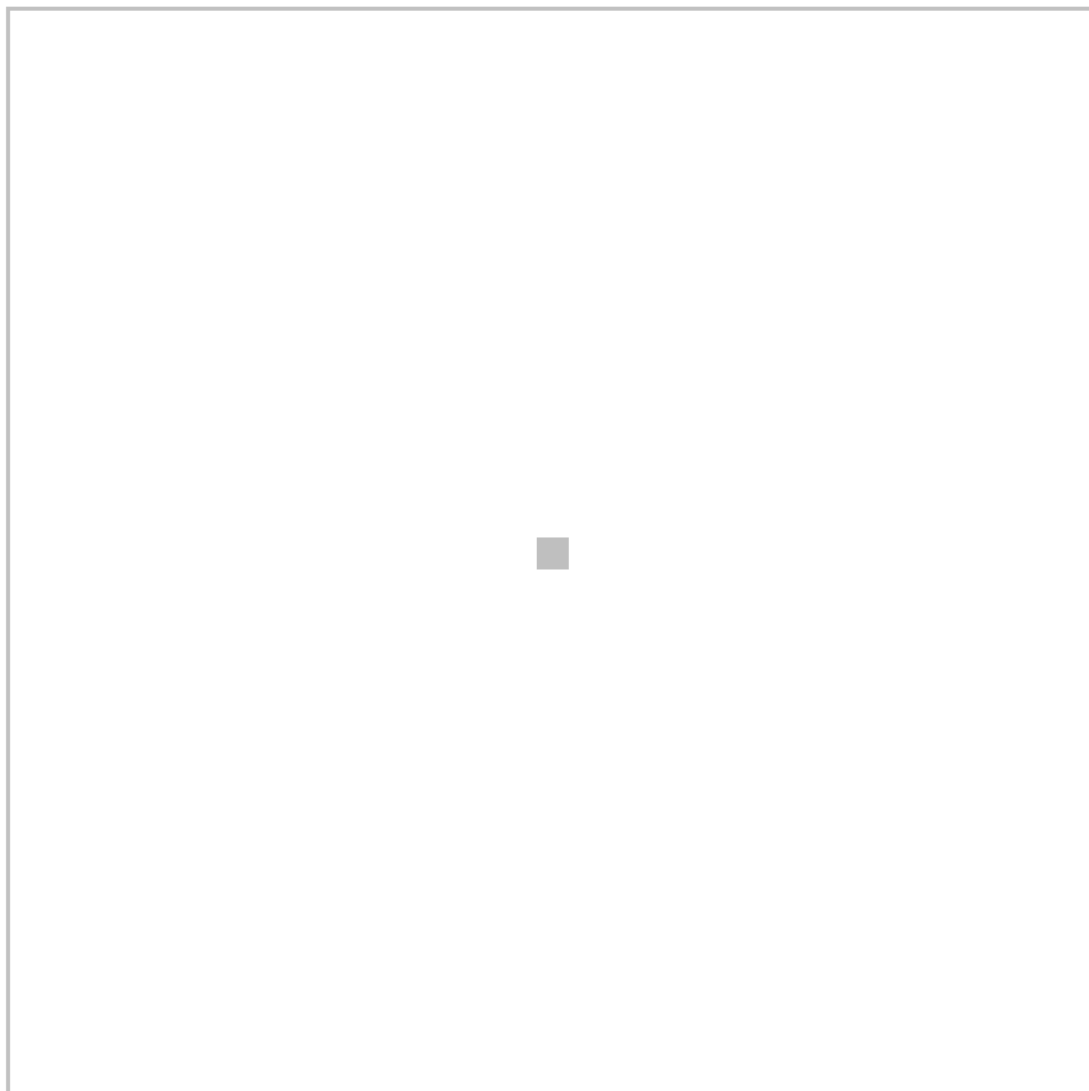
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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** [PMC Media](#)  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 1:09:06 PM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY SENATOR  
FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
DOORSTOP INTERVIEW  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA  
MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**



**SUBJECTS:** *Peter Dutton's misuse of taxpayer funds; Safer Seats Rorts; assault allegations.*

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Well, disturbing revelations today that Peter Dutton has spent \$36,000 of taxpayer money to make a quick 24 hour trip to Tasmania during the Braddon by-election to announce two grants, two Safer Communities grants, really they are not Safer Communities grants, this is the Safe Seats rorts that Peter Dutton is running.

This Safer Communities grants revealed on the ABC 730 program, where Peter Dutton gave some 90% of the grants to government held in marginal seats. Two of those grants he gave in the Braddon by-election and now been revealed that he spent \$36,000 flying a luxury VIP plane down to Braddon to make that announcement, stand next to the Liberal candidate and make that announcement.

I mean, the Liberal Party just keeps treating taxpayer money like it is Liberal Party money. This is a Safer Communities Fund. Now, I don't deny that the communities in Braddon would be really grateful to get this but they weren't recommended for this funding. There are other communities that were ranked higher, that needed the funding.

What kind of government takes money away from communities at risk? And uses it for those seats that they find more electorally important to them? I mean, Peter Dutton wasn't making communities safer with his Safer Communities Funds, he was making marginal seats safer for the political party.

Now how can this government be looking after the needs of ordinary Australians when they are so busy looking after themselves?

Happy to take any questions.

**JOURNALIST:** Want to ask you about this very disturbing case and allegations of an assault in this very building. What do you see as the issue there? Is this an issue for the government or is it a broader issue [INAUDIBLE]?

**KENEALLY:** The first thing I want to say is that my thoughts go to the complainant in this case. The young woman who has raised the serious attack. She has shown courage. And, quite sadly, right across Australia, quite unfortunately, there would have been women who would have heard her story to that, and recognised tragically in their own lives that something similar might have occurred to them.

So, that is my first acknowledgement to this particular young woman and to women right

across Australia who have been the victim of unwanted sexual assault in life. It's terrible. It's tragic.

When it comes to this circumstance, we need to hear from the Minister Linda Reynolds. This is an assault that occurred in her office. This is an alleged assault that occurred in her office. There are security issues around the Defence Minister's office, there are issues as to whether or not this has been properly referred and investigated, not just by officials in this building, but also by the police. There are questions about whether or not this young woman was pressured to choose between her job and reporting the matter to police.

So I think it's time that we hear today, from the Minister, Linda Reynolds, because all allegations of sexual assault and rape, wherever they are, but particularly when they occur in the workplace, and particularly when they occur in the parliament. I don't care what side of politics you are on. There is no place for that kind of assault in a workplace or in this Parliament.

**JOURNALIST:** Has the government or Linda Reynolds mishandled this particularly in that story also says that a meeting was conducted where the alleged assault took place as she mishandled this?

**KENEALLY:** I was sick to my stomach when I read that this young woman was taken into the very office where she was assaulted, to discuss the assault and to discuss whether or not she was going to go to the police.

I think we need to hear from Minister Reynolds and I think we need to hear from the government as to the extent to which this case has been handled appropriately.

Were the complainant's wishes and desires respected? Was she supported to take the complaint forward to police and to the authorities? Was she asked to choose between her job and reporting the assault?

I cannot imagine what it would have been like for her to keep coming to work every day to be taken into that very room where she was assaulted and questioned by her boss about it. Surely we can do better than that?

**JOURNALIST:** Ms Keneally, does this suggest to you a broader problem about the treatment of women in this place? Have you ever been aware of allegations of women on your side of politics being assaulted since you've been in this place?

**KENEALLY:** I have not been aware directly of any allegations, no. But what I can say, and I spoke about this on Four Corners, is that when I came to the Parliament several years ago, back then as a member of the press gallery, I was taken aback by the culture here.

And it made me wonder what it must be like, for younger women and women who are not in positions of power and influence here in this building. What kind of culture is this?

You know, I think we still have a long way to go to ensure that women feel safe to bring forward allegations and report assault when it happens to them. And you know, I say that with sorrow. But it's hard to avoid that conclusion you look at the story that has broken today.

**JOURNALIST:** [INAUDIBLE] a party specific thing? This is the third time serious allegations have been levelled against men in the Liberal Party?

**KENEALLY:** Look, all I can speak to is the Labor Party and I will say that we are in the final stages of putting together a new code of practice to enable to ensure that if there are reports on our side, that people are supported that there is a clear complaints process, that there is a clear process to ensure that those are investigated.

I can't speak to the other side of politics, only they can speak for themselves. And given the disturbing, shocking story that has broken this morning, I think we need to hear from Minister Reynolds today.

**JOURNALIST:** When did work on Labor's code of practice start? I mean, we sort of first wrote about this in May 2019.

**KENEALLY:** Yeah, so we have had a code of practice for some time. The updating of that started last year.

**JOURNALIST:** There was involvement from the Prime Minister's office in handling this. Do you have any questions for that office?

**KENEALLY:** There are many details here and many more things to come when the interview airs late tonight. But the Prime Minister I would hope will do the right thing and assure the public about the steps that were taken in his government to support an individual, this young woman, and to clarify the role that his office played.

**JOURNALIST:** Ms Keneally, you mentioned the code of conduct, what is the what's the most integral part of that code of conduct that's not existing in the Labor Party at the moment?

**KENEALLY:** I'm not sure that I would say that there is something that's not existing. What I would say is that is important is that we ensure that there are clear pathways for people to identify who they should bring a complaint to, to bring it with confidence, and have confidence that it will be investigated.

I think what we saw last year, following the Four Corners revelations about men in the Liberal Party is that internally in this building, it's not always clear that the way that parliamentary services is set up that given the relationship between advisors and Ministers or Shadow Ministers, that there was a clear process for bringing those claims forward, and the confidence that they would be handled by an independent or non-interested manager or supervisor. So it's about ensuring that all of those processes and pathways are identified.

Any other questions? Thank you all.

***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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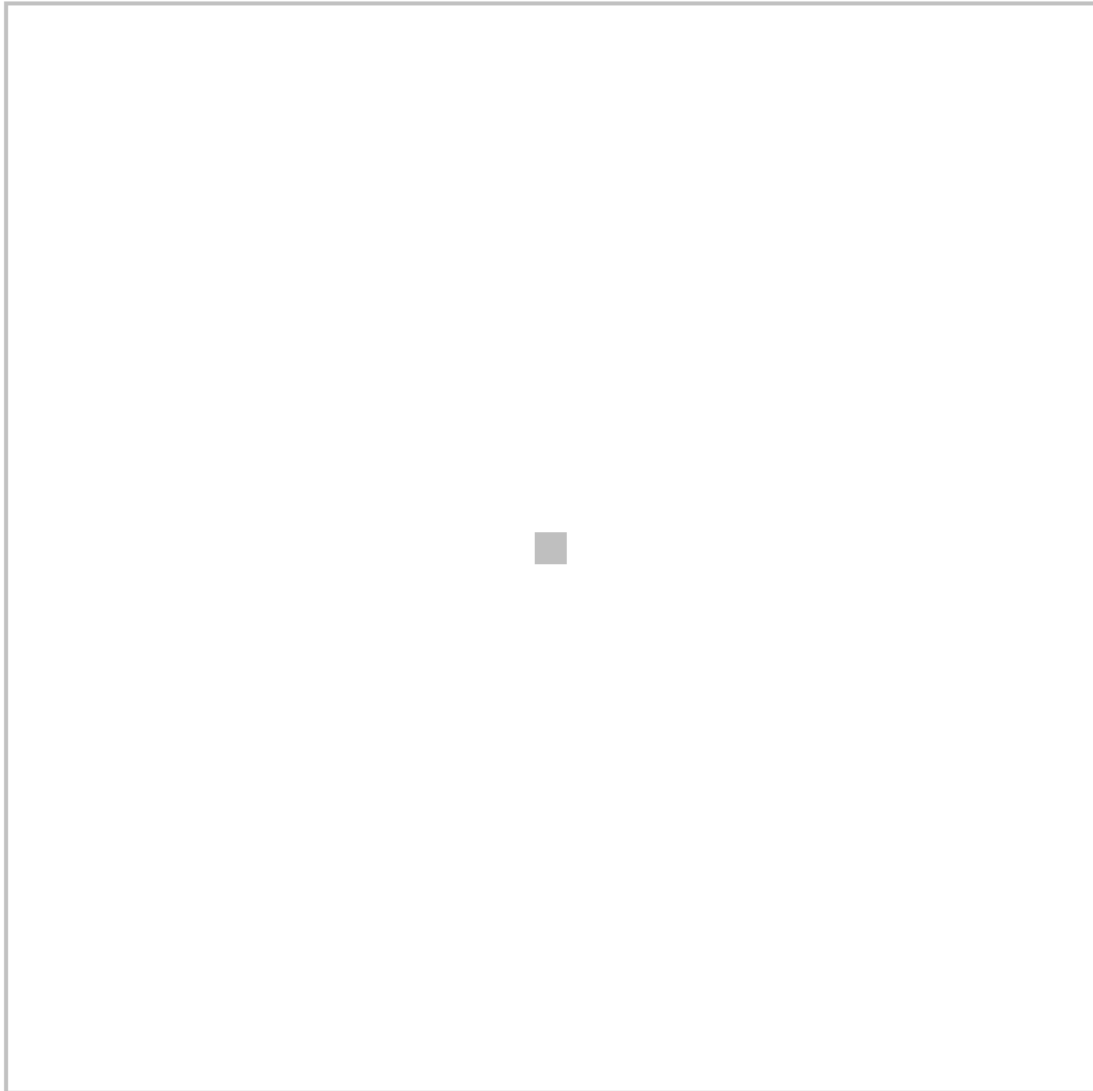
Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 1:09:07 PM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Monday, 15 February 2021 1:08:33 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY SENATOR  
FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**



**DOORSTOP INTERVIEW**  
**PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA**  
**MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SUBJECTS:** *Peter Dutton's misuse of taxpayer funds; Safer Seats Rorts; assault allegations.*

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Well, disturbing revelations today that Peter Dutton has spent \$36,000 of taxpayer money to make a quick 24 hour trip to Tasmania during the Braddon by-election to announce two grants, two Safer Communities grants, really they are not Safer Communities grants, this is the Safe Seats rorts that Peter Dutton is running.

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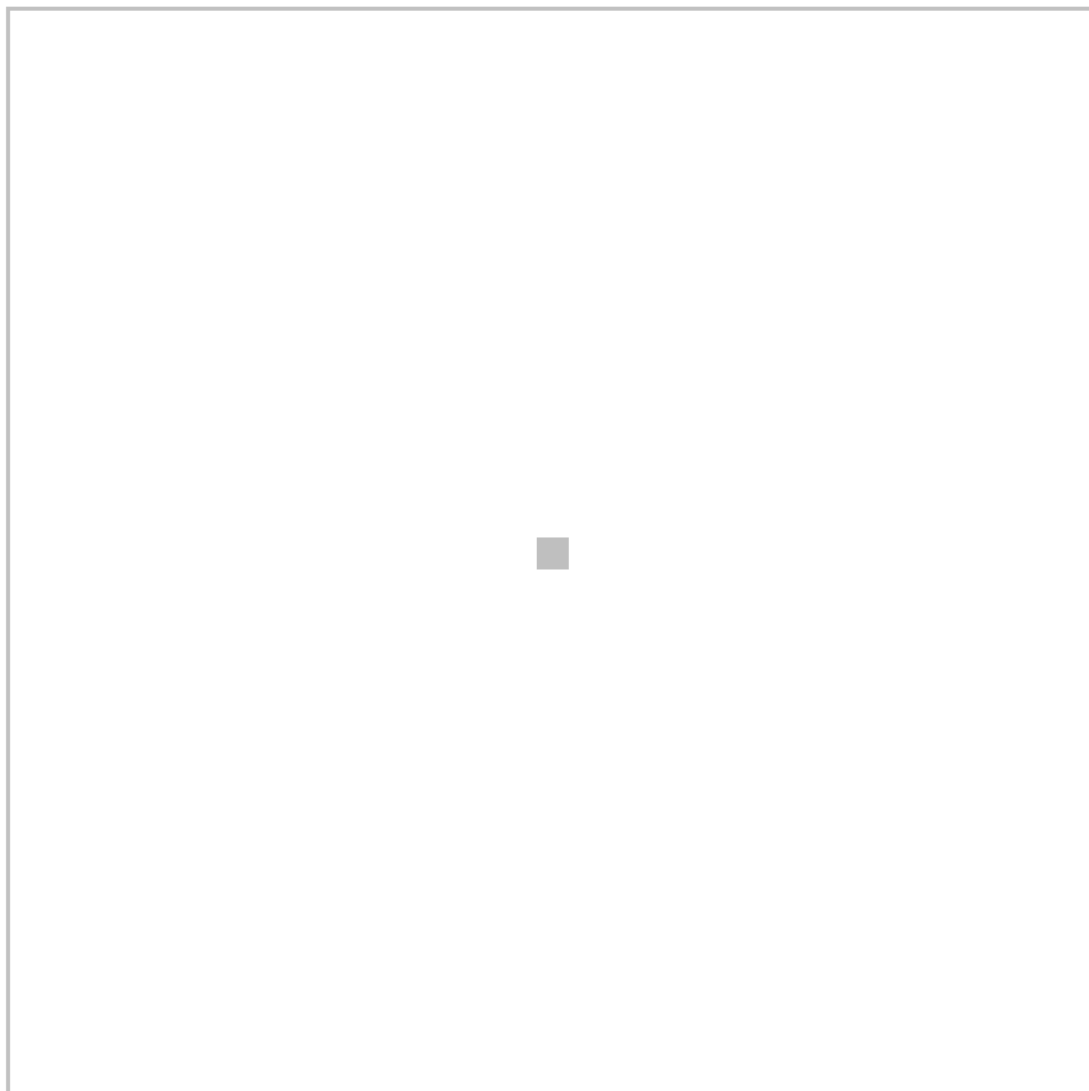
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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [noreply@stroom.com.au](mailto:noreply@stroom.com.au) on behalf of [Stroom](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - RADIO INTERVIEW - 2SM MARCUS PAUL IN THE MORNING - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 1:13:06 PM

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**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
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**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
RADIO INTERVIEW  
2SM MARCUS PAUL IN THE MORNING  
MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SUBJECTS:** *Peter Dutton's misuse of taxpayer funds; Safer Seats Rorts; Scott Morrison is not on your side.*

**MARCUS PAUL, HOST:** But the dramas keep coming for Scott Morrison, or as Albo calls him, Promo and his team. The latest being that the Home Affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, charged you and I, simple taxpayers more than \$36,000 to charter a Royal Australian Air Force jet to Tasmania to make a grants announcement for CCTV systems for two Councils during the 2018 Braddon by-election campaign. Is that an appropriate use of taxpayer money? Remember, Julie Bishop, Bronwyn Bishop, I'm sorry, Julie, Bronwyn Bishop found herself into trouble in trouble for hiring helicopters.

To join us to talk about this and other issues, Senator Kristina Keneally. Good morning, Kristina and thank you for your time.

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Good morning, Marcus, good morning to your listeners too.

**PAUL:** Alright. At the time, Mr Dutton announced the grants for Burnie and Waratah-Wynyard Councils worth a combined \$195,000 back in July 2018, a month before the rules for the third round of the Safer Communities Fund were published and applications opened. Again, this thing stinks. It really does. And it's just, I think it's the tip of the iceberg for this lot.

**KENEALLY:** Marcus, you couldn't have put it better. I mean, here we've got this grant program that is supposed to be about giving communities at risk the safety equipment that they need: CCTV cameras, fencing, bollards, that kind of thing. And before they'd even opened the applications, before they'd even published the rules for the grant. Minister Dutton decided in the middle of a by-election, he was going to just give away two grants. Now, no doubt those communities welcome the money, I don't begrudge the communities.

**PAUL:** No.

**KENEALLY:** No, not at all. What I what I am just ropeable about, though, is the way in which the Liberal Party is treating taxpayer money like it is Liberal Party money. And I think it's important that your viewers, your listeners understand this, that this isn't some one-off, I mean, you remember the Sports Rorts, which is much the same thing.

**PAUL:** Yep.

**KENEALLY:** Scott Morrison when he was Treasurer, and he's continued it as Prime Minister, set up all the grant programs in the Budget. They have very few rules. Some of

them don't even have applications, you have to be invited by the Morrison Liberal Government to apply. And the money is given away at the complete discretion of Ministers, usually at the most electorally appropriate time, right in the middle of election campaigns. This is your money, this is my money, it's taxpayer money. How can the Liberals be looking after the taxpayers, when they're so busy looking after themselves?

**PAUL:** Well, you talking about the same party that seems to think it's appropriate to whack Liberal paraphernalia on official documentation in relation to COVID-19 vaccines? I mean, well...

**KENEALLY:** I mean, and what a, what a, extraordinary partisan effort there to, you know, make the vaccine a political tool for the Liberal Party. And let's not forget when the bushfires were still raging last summer, Scott Morrison rolled out an Australian Defence Force Liberal Party ad with a move that actually made the Chief of the Defence Force, Angus Campbell, quite discomforted, were his words. This politicisation, and this treating taxpayer resources, like the vaccine, which we're paying for, the taxpayer, like the Defence Force, in the middle of a crisis, in a bushfire crisis or the health crisis, Scott Morrison thinks nothing of creating Liberal Party advertising to back in himself and his mates.

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**KENEALLY:** No, we're not and that's why in my role as Shadow Minister for Government Accountability, it's my job and that of all my colleagues, while we are in Opposition to hold this Government to account because this is taxpayer money. If I can put this in context, because I imagine there'll be some of your listeners that get the age pension. And let's just say this, Peter Dutton spent \$36,000 for a 24-hour trip to Tasmania to announce these grants in the middle of a by-election. The age pension is about \$24,000 a year, he spent one and a half times what some people in our community have to live on in a whole year he spent in 24 hours now. I mean, that is just arrogant, it is out of touch. It is inappropriate. It's waste and mismanagement. And quite frankly this is why I, last week, wrote to the Auditor-General and asked him to investigate this in the same way that he investigated

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**PAUL:** And, as we know, it always comes with the obligatory photo opportunity--- I know the way it works, Kristina. I've been around a long bloody time. For me, personally, I know it's different circumstances for you. But for me personally it's not about which party does it or who does it. It's about the mismanagement of public funds. We work damn hard in this country for what we get. We're overtaxed. We pay a whole range of taxes, and that's because we expect the standard of living that we have. And, yes, I mean ultimately, despite some issues, we do very well here in Australia. But what I don't like seeing, and it's something that's happened from old, tired Liberal Governments, whether it's at NSW or a Federal level, the kind of rorting and pork-barrelling that's going on to keep people in power, when they damn-well know that the money should be diverted to all Australians. Just because you didn't vote for the LNP in a certain electorate does not mean that your electorate, your area, you and your fellow community, don't deserve the same use of taxpayer money that others do.

**KENEALLY:** Absolutely, and you know, right now, when we're in the middle of an economic crisis where so many people are struggling, Australians deserve accountability and transparency and integrity in their government.

**PAUL:** More now than ever!

**KENEALLY:** More now than ever. You're so right. And more than 2 years ago Scott Morrison promised a National Integrity Commission. He has not delivered it. This eight-year-old Liberal Government has failed to deliver a National Integrity Commission and, quite frankly they're not on the side of the Australian people.

**PAUL:** Well it's all about the photo opportunity, Kristina.

**KENEALLY:** Always there for the photo opp, never there for the follow-up.

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**PAUL:** Kristina, do you believe that Scott Morrison will call an early ballot this year?

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**PAUL:** It's coming next week. And then, who knows, it'll probably come the week after that.

**KENEALLY:** Well he promised 4 million of us would be vaccinated by mid-March. I mean, honestly, we aren't even going to have 4 million doses in the country by mid-March. So it's, you know, this Government, you know, it is the triumph of announcement over delivery. And unfortunately, it's the Australians that are getting left behind and you know, really Australians now more than ever and need a government that's on their side and that's what Anthony Albanese and Labor are laying out.

**PAUL:** Alright. Kristina it's good to have you on the program, let's talk again very soon.

**KENEALLY:** Thanks Marcus, you too. Cheers.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

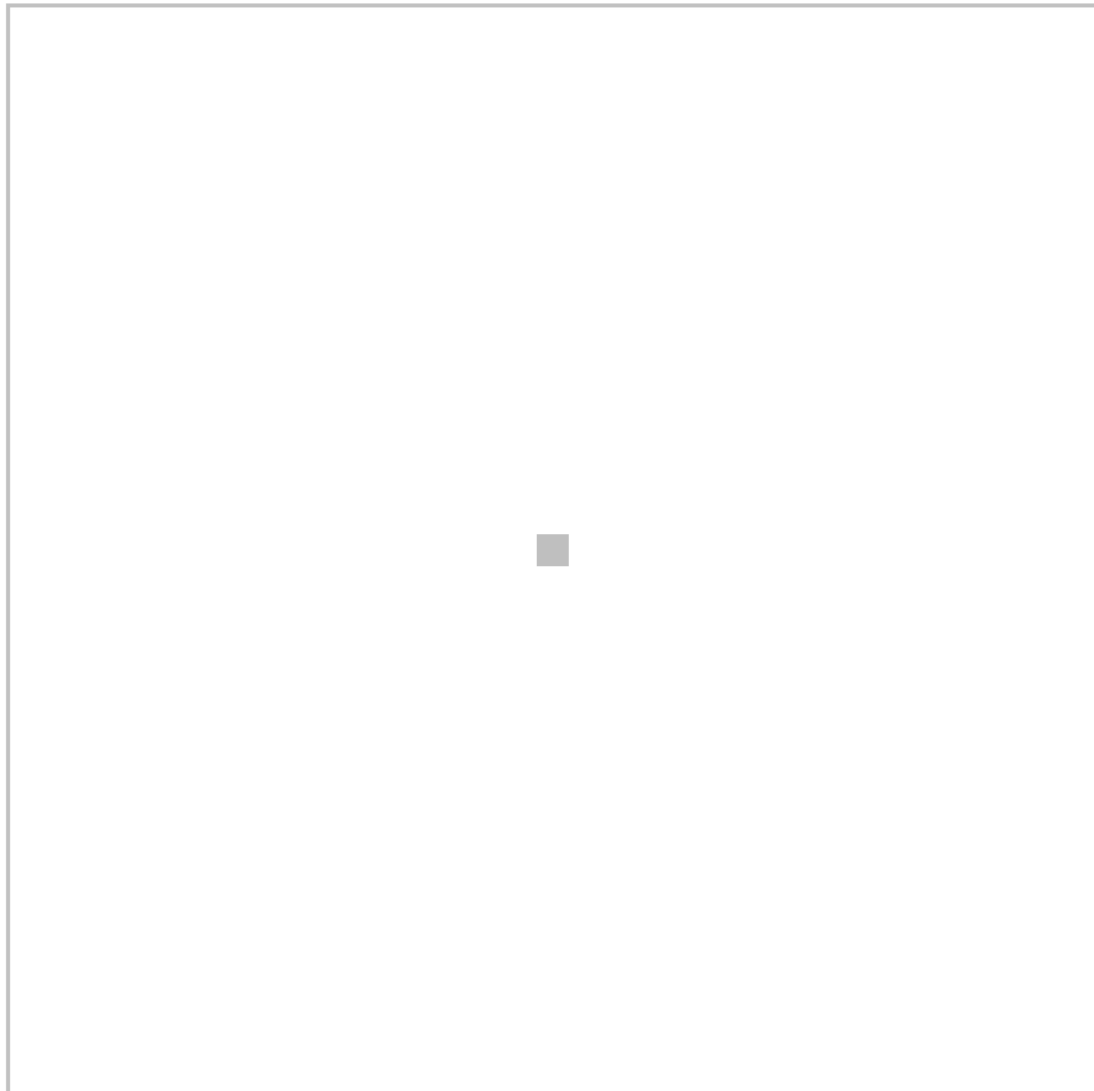
Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - RADIO INTERVIEW - 2SM MARCUS PAUL IN THE MORNING - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 1:13:07 PM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Monday, 15 February 2021 1:12:21 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** KRISTINA KENEALLY - TRANSCRIPT - RADIO INTERVIEW - 2SM MARCUS PAUL IN THE MORNING - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**



## **RADIO INTERVIEW**

**2SM MARCUS PAUL IN THE MORNING**

**MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SUBJECTS:** *Peter Dutton's misuse of taxpayer funds; Safer Seats Rorts; Scott Morrison is not on your side.*

**MARCUS PAUL, HOST:** But the dramas keep coming for Scott Morrison, or as Albo calls him, Promo and his team. The latest being that the Home Affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, charged you and I, simple taxpayers more than \$36,000 to charter a Royal Australian Air Force jet to Tasmania to make a grants announcement for CCTV systems for two Councils during the 2018 Braddon by-election campaign. Is that an appropriate use of taxpayer money? Remember, Julie Bishop, Bronwyn Bishop, I'm sorry, Julie, Bronwyn Bishop found herself into trouble in trouble for hiring helicopters.

To join us to talk about this and other issues, Senator Kristina Keneally. Good morning, Kristina and thank you for your time.

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Good morning, Marcus, good morning to your listeners too.

**PAUL:** Alright. At the time, Mr Dutton announced the grants for Burnie and Waratah-Wynyard Councils worth a combined \$195,000 back in July 2018, a month before the rules for the third round of the Safer Communities Fund were published and applications opened. Again, this thing stinks. It really does. And it's just, I think it's the tip of the iceberg for this lot.

**KENEALLY:** Marcus, you couldn't have put it better. I mean, here we've got this grant program that is supposed to be about giving communities at risk the safety equipment that they need: CCTV cameras, fencing, bollards, that kind of thing. And before they'd even opened the applications, before they'd even published the rules for the grant. Minister Dutton decided in the middle of a by-election, he was going to just give away two grants. Now, no doubt those communities welcome the money, I don't begrudge the communities.

**PAUL:** No.

**KENEALLY:** No, not at all. What I what I am just ropeable about, though, is the way in which the Liberal Party is treating taxpayer money like it is Liberal Party money. And I think it's important that your viewers, your listeners understand this, that this isn't some one-off, I mean, you remember the Sports Rorts, which is much the same thing.

**PAUL:** Yep.

**KENEALLY:** Scott Morrison when he was Treasurer, and he's continued it as Prime Minister, set up all the grant programs in the Budget. They have very few rules. Some of them don't even have applications, you have to be invited by the Morrison Liberal Government to apply. And the money is given away at the complete discretion of Ministers, usually at the most electorally appropriate time, right in the middle of election campaigns. This is your money, this is my money, it's taxpayer money. How can the Liberals be looking after the taxpayers, when they're so busy looking after themselves?

**PAUL:** Well, you talking about the same party that seems to think it's appropriate to whack Liberal paraphernalia on official documentation in relation to COVID-19 vaccines? I mean, well...

**KENEALLY:** I mean, and what a, what a, extraordinary partisan effort there to, you know, make the vaccine a political tool for the Liberal Party. And let's not forget when the bushfires were still raging last summer, Scott Morrison rolled out an Australian Defence Force Liberal Party ad with a move that actually made the Chief of the Defence Force, Angus Campbell, quite discomforted, were his words. This politicisation, and this treating taxpayer resources, like the vaccine, which we're paying for, the taxpayer, like the Defence Force, in the middle of a crisis, in a bushfire crisis or the health crisis, Scott Morrison thinks nothing of creating Liberal Party advertising to back in himself and his mates.

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**PAUL:** Alright. Kristina it's good to have you on the program, let's talk again very soon.

**KENEALLY:** Thanks Marcus, you too. Cheers.

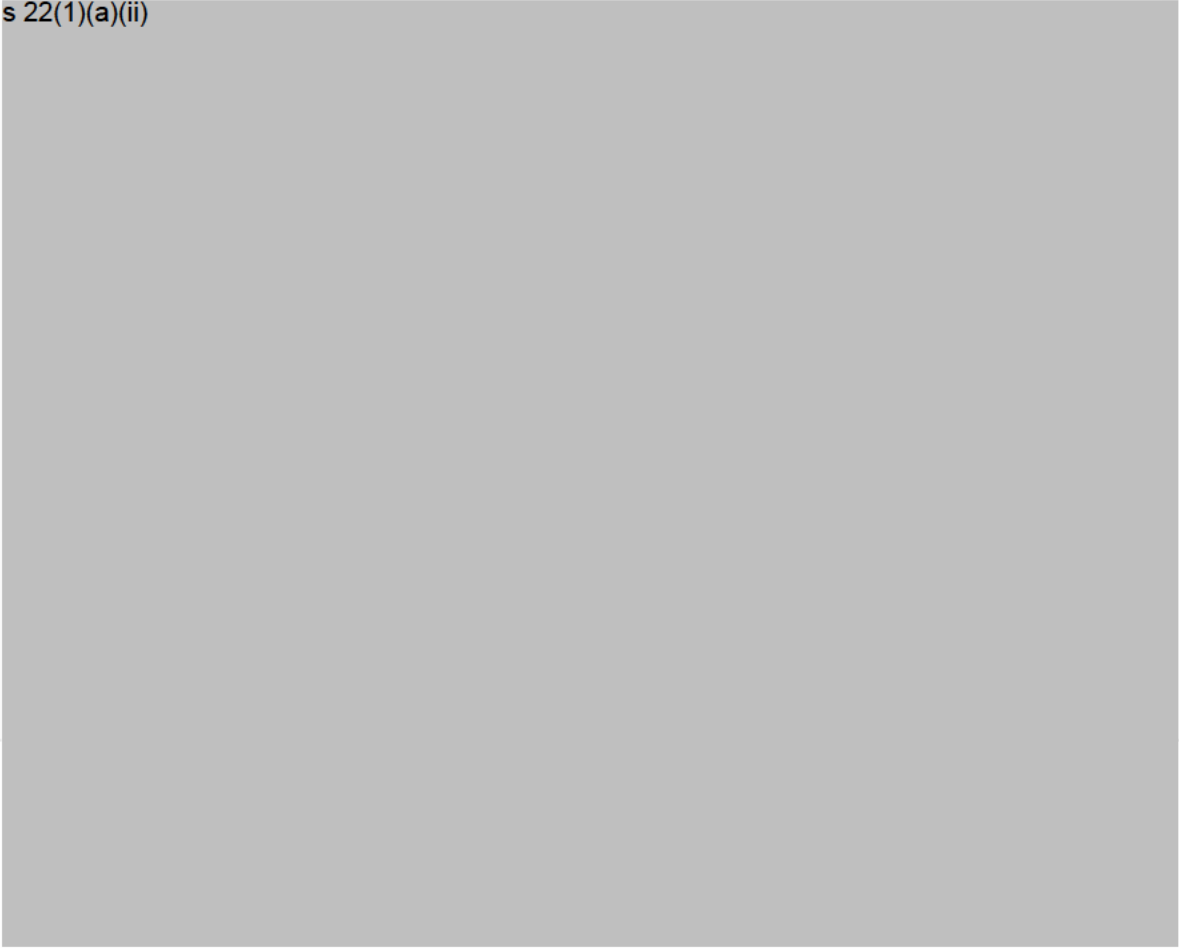
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**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

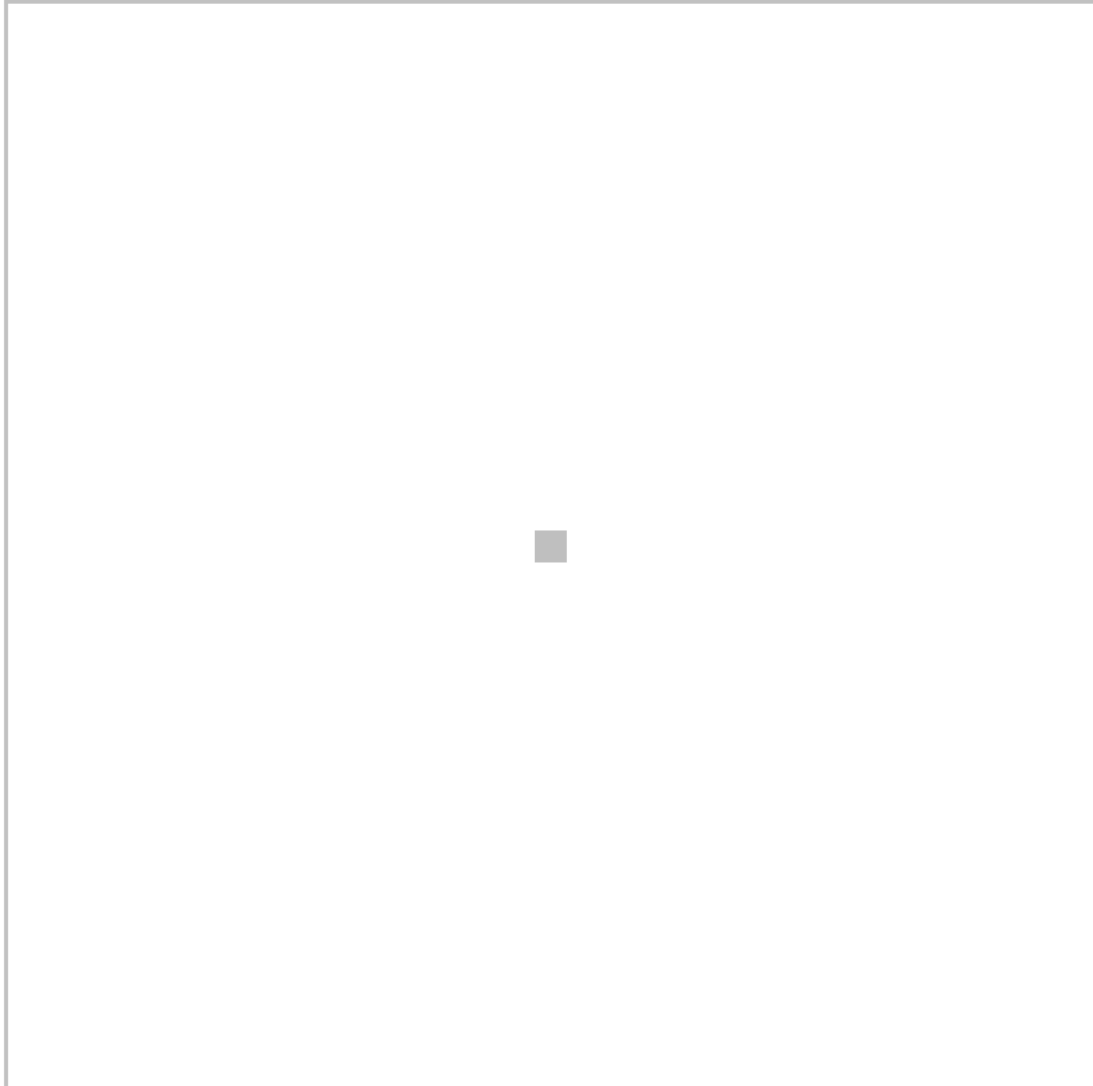
s 22(1)(a)(ii)





**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** [DLO Wyatt](#)  
**Subject:** PAT CONROY - MEDIA RELEASE - DUTTON REFUSES TO DEFEND SAFER COMMUNITIES FUND RORTS - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 2:21:58 PM

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**PAT CONROY MP**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**AND THE PACIFIC**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR DEFENCE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**MEMBER FOR SHORTLAND**

**DUTTON REFUSES TO DEFEND SAFER COMMUNITIES FUND RORTS**

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As **reported** last week, the Home Affairs Minister is the latest Coalition Minister to have been caught ignoring the advice of the Government's own experts and directing taxpayers' money into projects in marginal and Government-held electorates prior to the 2019 election.

Today Labor attempted to suspend standing orders to discuss this important matter but the Government quickly gagged the debate.

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- Reject the advice from his own community safety experts and reduce funding for 19 safety projects;
- Direct taxpayers' money into 53 cherry-picked projects ahead of other safety projects his experts said would do more to protect community safety;
- Make sure two projects in his own electorate were funded even though his own experts did not recommend them;
- Announce funding for two projects in the marginal Tasmanian electorate of Braddon in the lead-up to a by-election in the seat with the then Liberal candidate, despite the grant guidelines not being written and without expert advice from his own Department;
- Go ahead and fund the two Braddon projects even after his own community safety experts advised him the projects were "unsuitable and ineligible" and did not represent value for money;
- And use over \$36,000 of taxpayer money to fly to Braddon in a RAAF jet to stand next to the Liberal candidate when he announced the grants. That's almost 20 per cent of the value of the grants for the two Braddon projects.

This is a Government that has form spending taxpayers' money as Liberal Party money and it has form doing everything it can to avoid being held accountable for its actions.

Scott Morrison hates scrutiny, he hates accountability and he hates taking responsibility.

Australians deserve a Prime Minister and a Government with integrity who are willing to front up and answer questions about their wrongdoings.

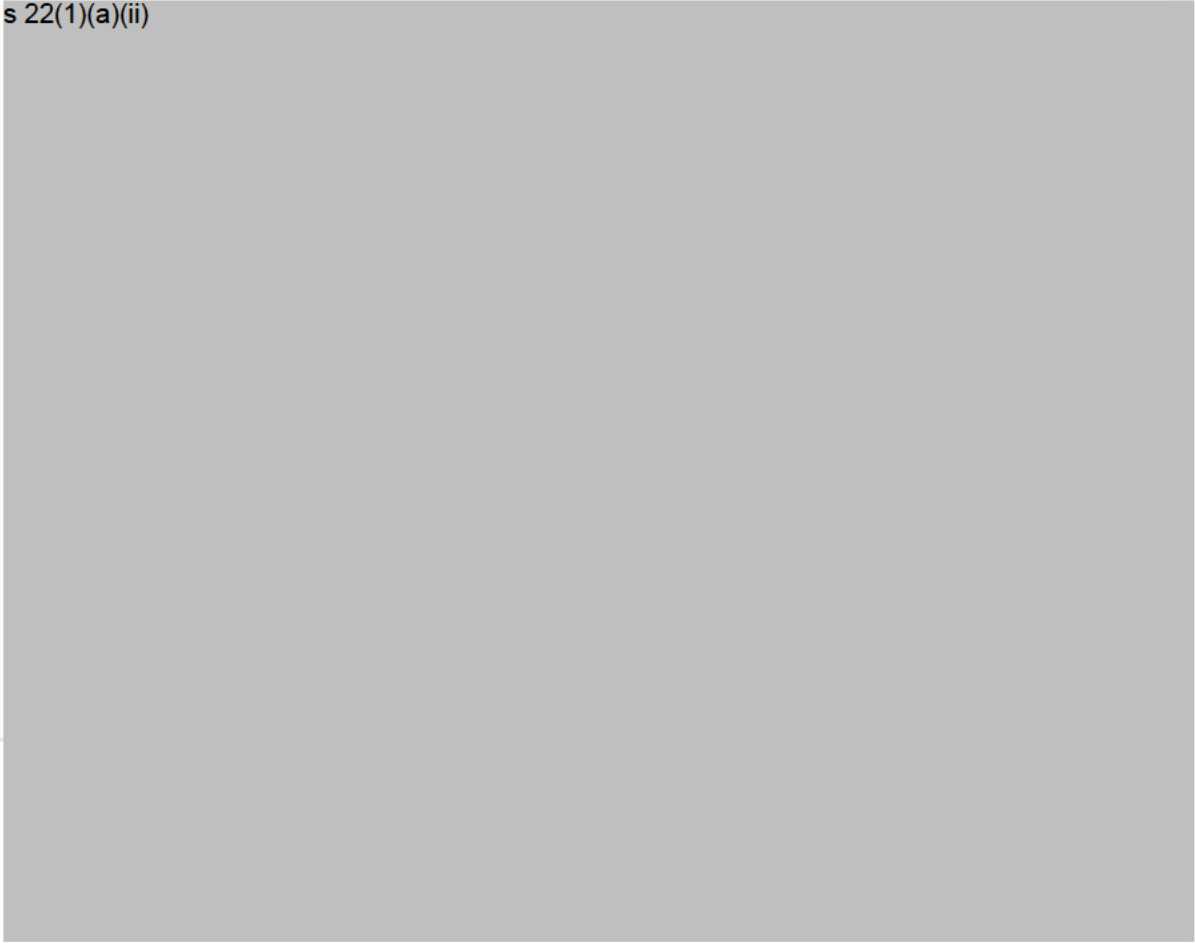
**MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

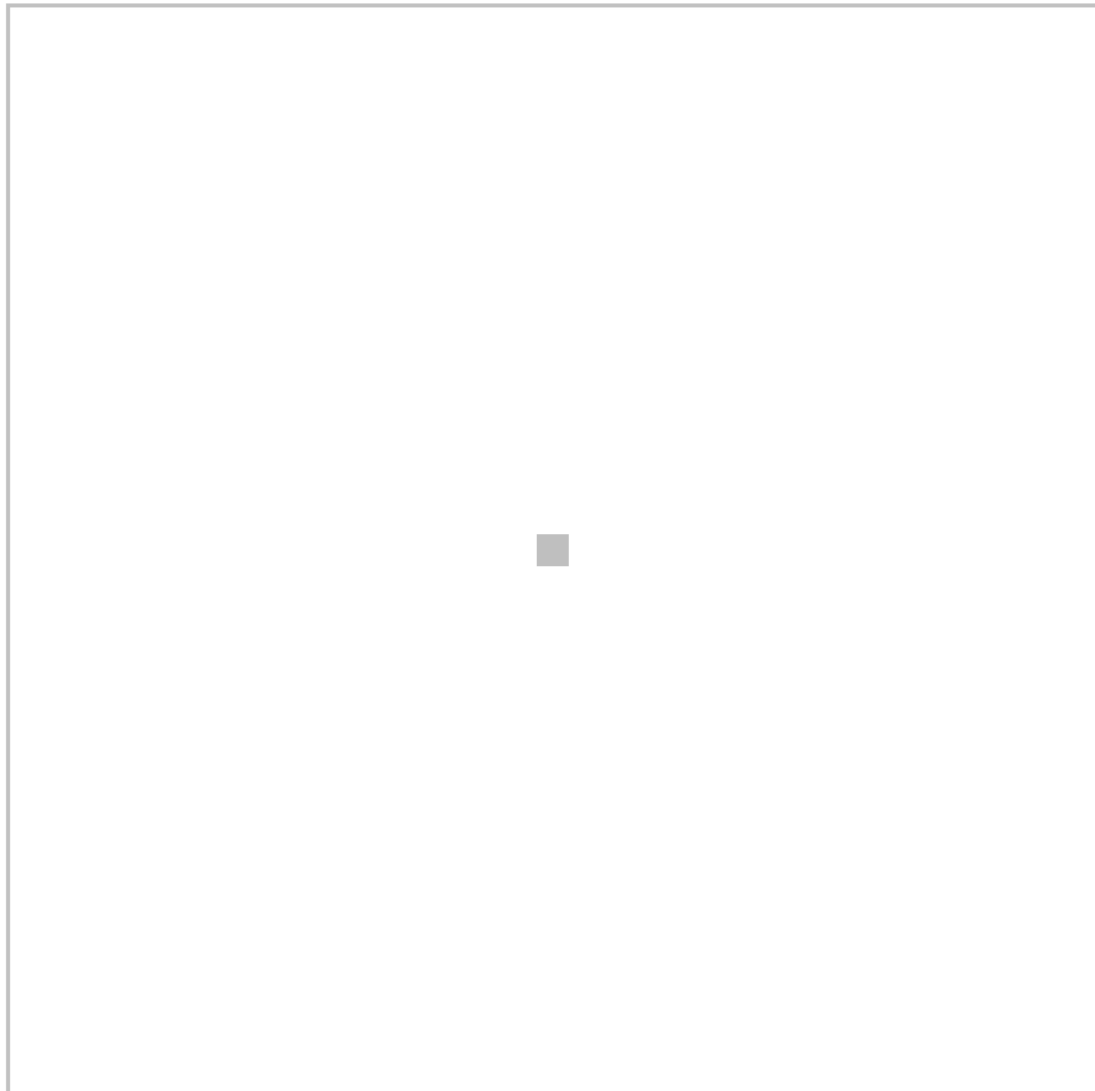




**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: PAT CONROY - MEDIA RELEASE - DUTTON REFUSES TO DEFEND SAFER COMMUNITIES FUND RORTS - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 2:22:00 PM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Monday, 15 February 2021 2:20:51 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** PAT CONROY - MEDIA RELEASE - DUTTON REFUSES TO DEFEND SAFER COMMUNITIES FUND RORTS - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021



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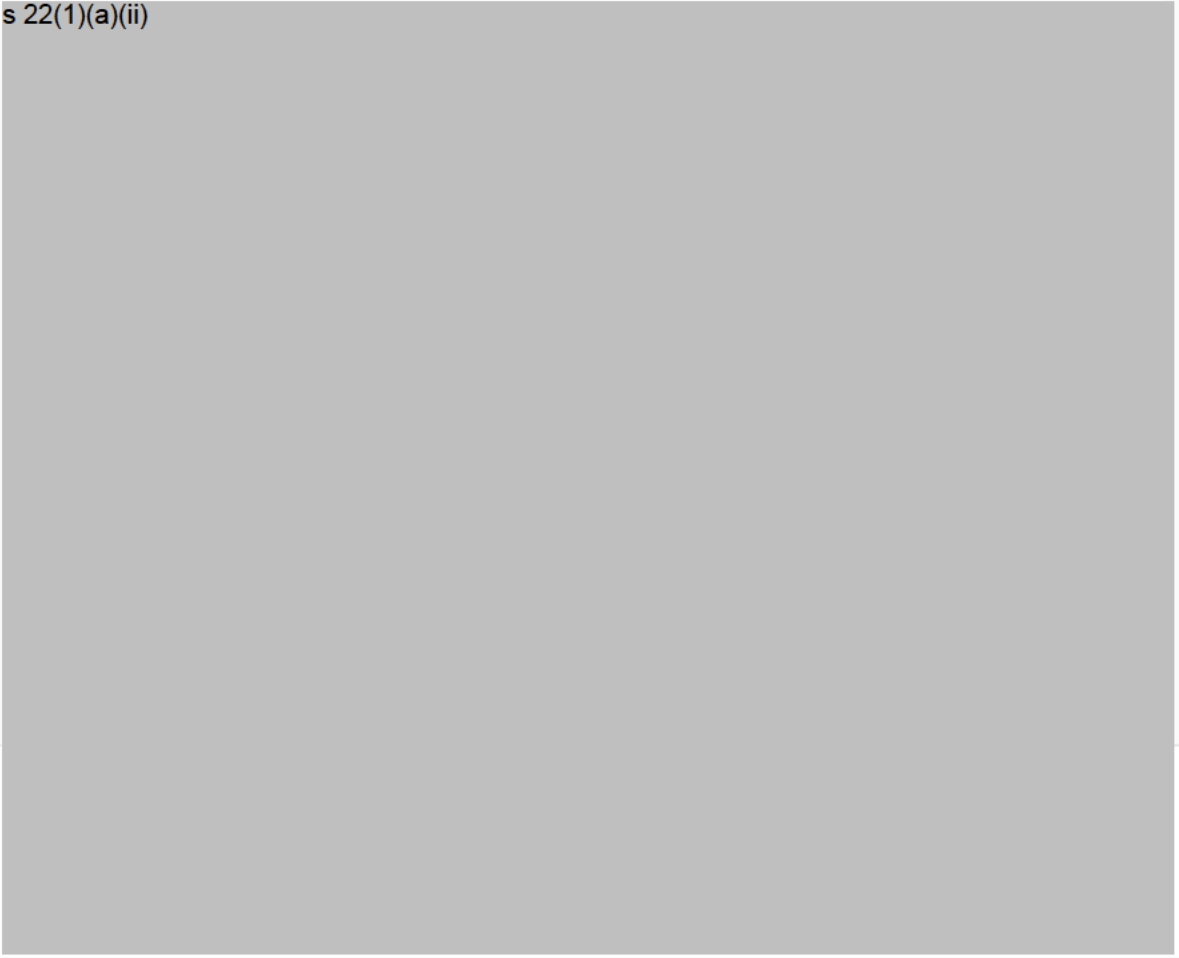
**MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** FW: Safer Community Fund [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 2:42:58 PM

**SEC=OFFICIAL**

**SEC=OFFICIAL**

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Monday, 15 February 2021 2:29 PM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** RE: Safer Community Fund [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**SEC=OFFICIAL**

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/dutton-spent-36-000-on-vip-chartered-flights-for-grants-announcement-20210214-p572cj.html>

**Key points:**

- 1) Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton charged taxpayers more than \$36,000 to charter a Royal Australian Air Force jet to Tasmania to make a grants announcement for CCTV systems for two councils during the 2018 Braddon byelection campaign.
- 2) At the time Mr Dutton announced the grants for Burnie and Waratah-Wynyard councils, worth a combined \$194,000 in July 2018, a month before the rules for the third round of Safer Communities Fund were published and applications opened.
- 3) A Home Affairs department briefing, [first released under freedom of information to the ABC](#), shows Mr Dutton was ultimately advised in January 2019 against approving the two grants on the grounds they did “not represent value for money in accordance with the program guidelines”. He over-ruled the advice.

**SEC=OFFICIAL**

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 10 February 2021 8:53 AM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[Redacted]

**Subject:** Safer Community Fund [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**SEC=OFFICIAL**

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-02-10/peter-dutton-cut-funding-safety-projects-selected-his-own-list/13126834>

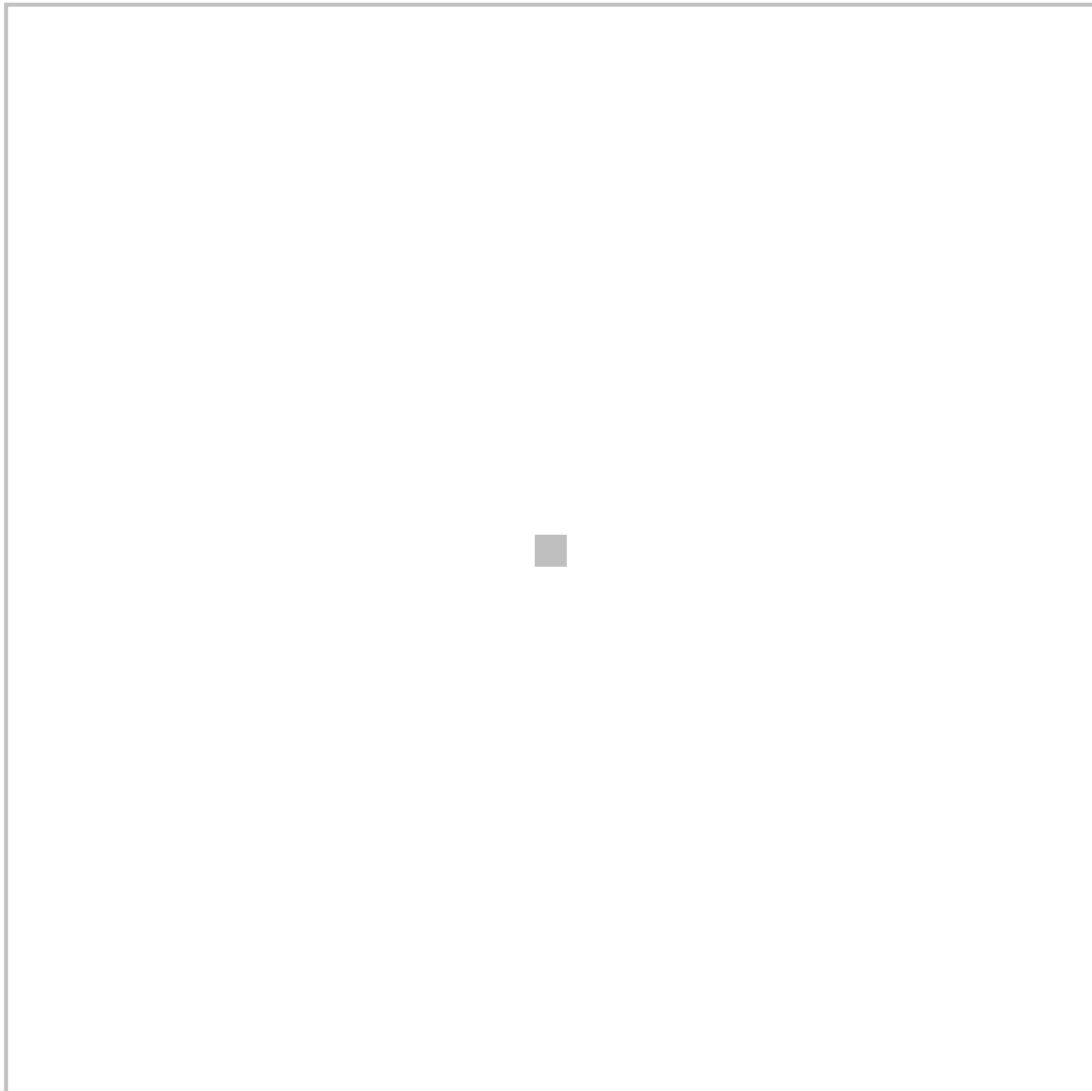
**SEC=OFFICIAL**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[Redacted]

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** TIM AYRES - TRANSCRIPT - RADIO INTERVIEW - 2NZ INVERELL - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 3:18:58 PM

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**SENATOR TIM AYRES**  
**LABOR SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**  
**RADIO INTERVIEW**  
**2NZ INVERELL**  
**MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Industrial relations; Safer seats port; Upcoming election.***

**MONTE IRVINE, HOST:** I hope you're having a great morning this morning. And I've been joined on the phone now by New South Wales Labor Senator Tim Ayres. Good morning, Senator Ayres. How are you this morning?

**SENATOR TIM AYRES:** Good morning. Good morning to listeners.

**IRVINE:** Now, Senator, you had a good weekend?

**AYRES:** I really did. I really did, very relaxing, thank you. I was getting myself down to Canberra. I'm sitting here in Canberra office waiting for Parliament to begin.

**IRVINE:** Fantastic. All right. Well, there's a few things for us to get through to this morning. The first one was opposition leader Anthony Albanese came out last week and announced Labor's industrial relations policy. And some of the highlights from that is basically looking to put some structure in place for what's called the gig economy so people who might be working for Uber, those delivery apps and things like that. They're being they're currently working basically per job rather than getting a minimum wage as such, but also looking at those people who are in insecure work such as people in casuals. Can you flesh this out a little bit more for us what the plan is with this?

**AYRES:** Sure thing Monty. It's been very clear for the last decade that the expansion of casual and precarious work is really hurting the labour market and it's making it very difficult, in particular for young Australians, to get a decent job. So the categories that are growing, casual employment, labour hire and the gig economy, many of these workers are people who are doing regular work, regular shifts – they're not genuine casuals. And they're being forced into this insecure employment, which means no annual leave, no sick leave and we've seen over the course of the pandemic, just how damaging that is not just for the individuals.

Individuals on casual long-term casual work, long term labour hire work, can't get a mortgage, can't get a loan for a home – so difficulty entering the housing market and securing a home for them and their families. But secondly, we saw over the pandemic, just how bad it was for public health. Much of the Aged Care workforce on casual work, working multiple jobs across multiple aged care centres, it really was a significant contributory factor to the crisis that we had in Victoria in the Aged Care sector.

So the whole economy is moving, the structure of the labour markets changing and the law hasn't caught up. The gig economy is thought of as being about those people in the big cities who are working for Uber or Deliveroo, delivering food. And it is true that many of those people are exploited and are doing regular work but the gig economy is expanding into the regions as well. Workers in home care, aged care and disability care are now finding that their work is being directed by an app and have been employed through that process, and it's an absolutely dislocates their experience of work.

So wages have been driven down. Scott Morrison wants to take the economy in one

direction that is lower pay, worse jobs, less rights. And last week, Anthony Albanese scoped out a plan to deliver good jobs, better jobs, more permanent jobs into the Australian economy.

**IRVINE:** Something that is interesting, it's mentioned in the ABCs reporting in this, that there are 3.5 million casual workers in the Australian workforce. Now, if you look at the current unemployment rate, it's 6.6%. as of December 2020. As a government surely you'd be concerned with that amount of casual workers in the economy. Those jobs are the first to disappear if need be, when businesses start losing money or need to tighten their purse strings.

**AYRES:** Well, those jobs disappeared at a rate eight times faster than permanent jobs in the coronavirus pandemic last year, they are absolutely vulnerable. In your listening area there are 19,600 casual workers - one in four workers in your listening area are casual. Now of course, there are many people who want casual work. There are many businesses who have peaks and troughs, and it's absolutely appropriate for them to use casual labour properly, to pay it properly, they pay a loading and Labor's got no argument with that. What we say is that the expansion of casual works gone way too far. It's been used by some employers under enormous competitive pressures, some employers are using it to drive wages down, into denying people access to sick leave, and annual leave and long service leave and all of the things that come with a good permanent job.

I'll tell you, for example, the Commonwealth public sector is increasingly using labour hire. The Department of Veterans Affairs, the department that is tasked with looking after returned servicemen and women. Some of these men and women returning from recent conflicts are very vulnerable, they deserve all of our support. They deserve top shelf support from government. Well, over 40% of the workforce in the Department of Veterans Affairs is labour hire. It's completely unacceptable from an employment perspective but it's absolutely unacceptable when there is a critical public purpose in looking after these men and women, and we've outsourced those jobs to labour hire.

Now, Albo's scoped out a plan - it's a plan to properly define casual work, under the Act, so more workers are brought into the scope of the Act, including the gig economy, that kept workers who are working casual, have more rights, and that more workers get access to permanent employment.

He scoped out a plan that says "same job, same pay", very basic principle where labour hire has been used, particularly in the mining industry, to pay workers less and Albanese Labor government will deliver the same job, same pay, which means people will get the same rights, the same pay, and that we can start to restore good decent jobs, particularly in the regions.



**IRVINE:** Now, the government the Liberal National government has come out and said, "Well, the Labor Party's starting a scare campaign on industrial relations already." But it does sound like they've got a counter scare campaign happening for business. Attorney General Christian Porter has come out and said that this industrial relations outline is looking at a \$20 billion economic tax against business. How's Mr. Albanese, how's the Labor opposition going to counteract that or fight against that?

**AYRES:** Well, you wouldn't get Christian Porter to do your maths homework. It's just made up. I mean, that was one of the sort of loopy press conferences I've seen. What Albo said was that Labor in government will work with the states and territories and stakeholders in particular sectors to develop portable leave entitlements. Those sorts of schemes exist in areas like the building industry, and in some parts of the care economy in some of the states and territories where employers make a contribution equivalent to the amount of annual leave or sick leave into a fund and that means that workers who are working 100% of the time in one industry, but moving from employer to employer because of the nature of that work, get access to long service leave and annual leave and sick leave. Now, some of those funds, now, the building industry scheme in New South Wales, but for many of the years of its operation requires no contribution from employers because the principal in the fund funds the outgoings and it means that workers in the building industry have access to long service leave, which is of enormous benefit to them and enormous benefit to the industry.

Now, Christian Porter is just making it up. He's come up with a round figure, he's trying to scare people and scare business, I'll tell you that most Australian businesses will welcome reform in this area. Most businesses will see that delivering secure employment is good for them and their workplace and many businesses are under pressure from the business down the road that's using unscrupulous practices to lower their labour costs and they want to do the right thing. So Christian Porter is out there trying to frighten people.

We said last year during the pandemic, Albo said, we're going to be a constructive opposition and we supported all of the public health measures. We did the right thing during the pandemic. We made criticisms where it was absolutely necessary and some of those have made very constructive changes. So our criticism that there needed to be a wage subsidy program in the economy eventually became the JobKeeper and JobSeeker programs. This year we've identified as a core issue that the growth of casual employment and reduction in good jobs in the economy and Albo's come out with a series of positive suggestions. That's the way we're going to approach this year, focusing on the issues that are absolutely critical for Australian workers and their families, particularly in the regions and coming up with sensible practical solutions. And that's why Albo's speech last week in Queensland was so well received.

**IRVINE:** Absolutely. Now moving on to something else. Yesterday it was reported that

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton charged the Australian taxpayers \$36,000 to charter a Royal Australian Air Force jet to Tasmania to make a grants announcement for a CCTV system for two councils in the Braddon by-election in 2018. Now that announcement was worth \$194,000 combined, and interestingly enough, it was made under the Safer Communities Fund. And he did that before the guidelines were actually given out. Once the guidelines came out, it actually said, this scheme, what they wanted to do with the CCTVs, didn't represent value for money in accordance to the program guidelines, and that he shouldn't approve it. He then went along and overruled that advice. Now, there's a couple of things to unpack with this. The first one is, of course, the \$36,000. Now I did a quick estimate on today's prices. Now these would have been cheaper, back in 2018. But you can get a flight, let's just say it was Virgin if you want to do it cheaply, \$287 one way so \$600 say return to Canberra, or if he wanted to go via Qantas, it could have been \$980, they would have flown him into Launceston. Now, Burnie, from Launceston, is about an hour and a half. You could charter a car, but I'm sure that would have been a staffer happy to pick him up. I reckon that he could have done it, if they really needed to for about \$2,000. That's with an overnight stay and a flight back and things like that. The fact that he has charged the Australian taxpayer \$36,000 to campaign, surely this has got to be up there with the sports rorts.

**AYRES:** Well, Peter Dutton and Scott Morrison just have no shame. Scott Morrison thinks this behaviour is okay. When asked questions about it, he said that Minister Dutton hasn't broken any rules. Well, I don't think that's what most of your listeners will think. I mean, we've reached a position after eight years of this government where they treat public money as if it's Liberal Party money. This scheme, this new scheme that they've rorted that's called 'safer communities', it should have been called 'safer seats', because that's what its purpose has been. Its money that has been redirected from within the scheme to the Liberal Party's political priorities. We saw Armidale Council got refused the money that had been approved by the bureaucrats and had to reduce the scale of their very important scheme that went to community safety and CCTV capacity in parts of Armidale that needed to make locals safer and to keep students at university safe.

This approach, whether its sports rorts or this scheme, means public money is being used for the narrow political purposes of the Liberal Party. And then you see on top of it, the sort of behaviour that you've described where Ministers are flying by jet around the country to make announcements of grants that haven't been approved, where the terms and conditions and the processes of the grant haven't been approved, because he thinks the taxpayers money is his money, and the Liberal Party's money to use for their purposes as they see fit. And it's got to stop. That's one of the reasons why Albo's promised a proper integrity commission with teeth, with the capacity to investigate these kinds of rorts. That's what happens at the state level. You've got some processes at the New South Wales level with the ICAC that means at least there is some scrutiny and accountability over these kinds of rorts.

**IRVINE:** It is interesting. I mean, what benefit realistically is chartering a Royal Australian Air Force jet, over flying Qantas or Virgin? I don't understand that part. How is it better to fly via that, then just take a normal flight there that's going to cost well, a fraction of the money?

**AYRES:** Yeah, it's absolutely unjustifiable. And the reason for the travel, being the public interest is very hard to make that case particularly when what's really been delivered is another announcement, another press conference, to announce more pork- barrelling grant money that is public money that ought to be being used for a proper public purpose rather than propping up the Liberal Party interest in marginal seats.

**IRVINE:** Absolutely. We're seeing it in New South Wales. We're seeing the pork-barrelling and the blowback that's coming from that. Now we're starting to see it in a federal situation. Is the Labor Party now on an election standing? Are we seeing the Labor Party getting ready for an election later this year?

**AYRES:** Well, the Morrison government should run full term and should go through into the first half of 2022. But if Scott Morrison decides that it's in his narrow political interest to have an early election, he could have one as early as the last half of this year. We are ready to fight an election. We're going to spend the next few months scoping out positive, practical policies that go to the core interests of Australian people. We're going to set out propositions for good jobs, just like Albo set out, where we're going to make clear that we're on your side when it comes to getting good decent jobs into the economy. You will see more of that, a drumbeat of important practical policy announcements over the coming months. We will be ready to fight an election whenever Scott Morrison calls it - even if he does call it early in the last half of 2021.

**IRVINE:** Okay. Look, Senator, thank you so much for your time this morning. Thank you so much for your comments. Very interesting discussion. You have a great week and I'll talk to you next Monday.

**AYRES:** Good on you mate, catch you next week.

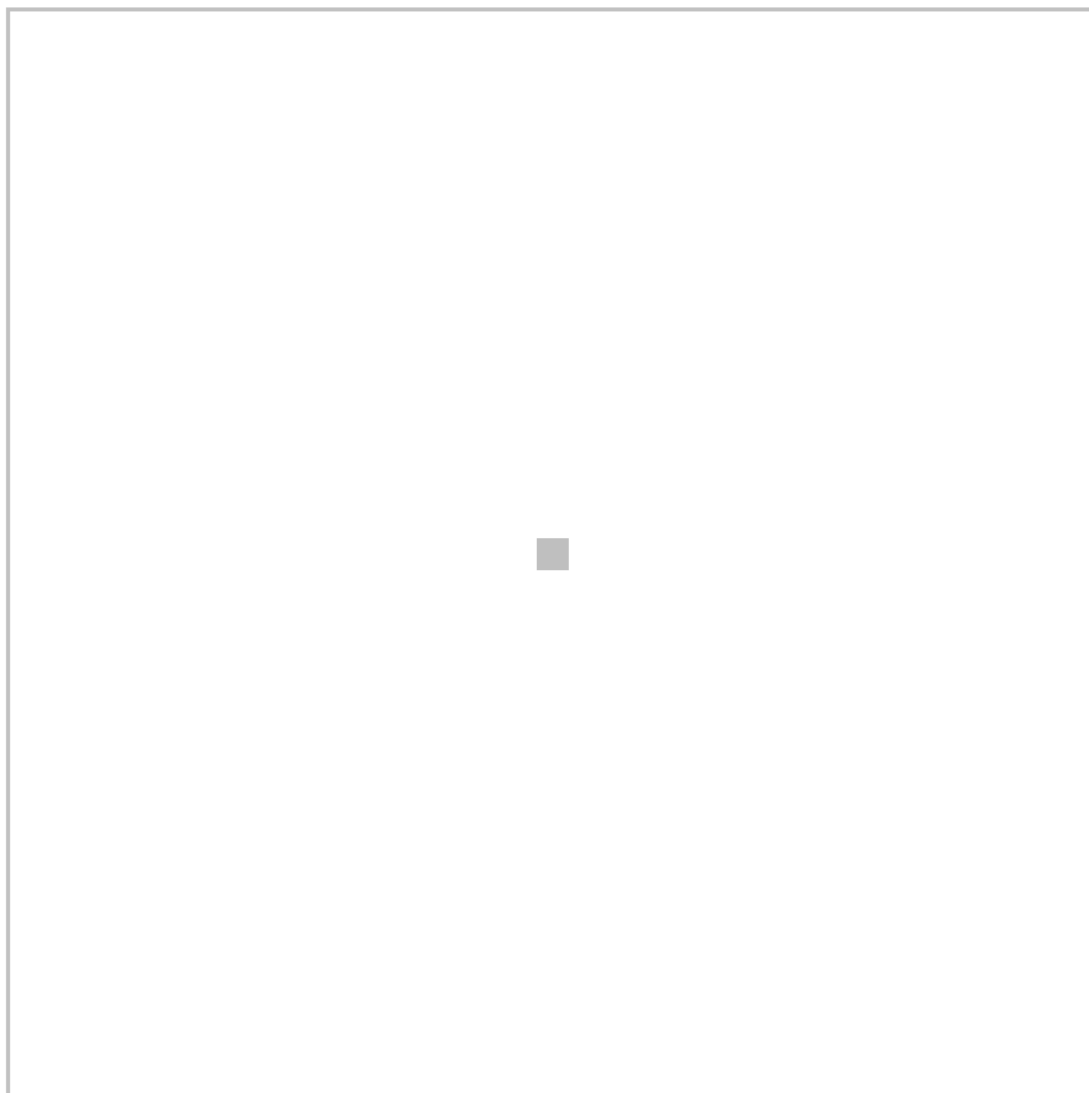
**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: TIM AYRES - TRANSCRIPT - RADIO INTERVIEW - 2NZ INVERELL - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 3:19:58 PM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Monday, 15 February 2021 3:18:31 PM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** TIM AYRES - TRANSCRIPT - RADIO INTERVIEW - 2NZ INVERELL - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021



**SENATOR TIM AYRES**  
**LABOR SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**  
**RADIO INTERVIEW**  
**2NZ INVERELL**  
**MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Industrial relations; Safer seats rort; Upcoming election.***



**MONTE IRVINE, HOST:** I hope you're having a great morning this morning. And I've been joined on the phone now by New South Wales Labor Senator Tim Ayres. Good morning, Senator Ayres. How are you this morning?

**SENATOR TIM AYRES:** Good morning. Good morning to listeners.

**IRVINE:** Now, Senator, you had a good weekend?

**AYRES:** I really did. I really did, very relaxing, thank you. I was getting myself down to Canberra. I'm sitting here in Canberra office waiting for Parliament to begin.

**IRVINE:** Fantastic. All right. Well, there's a few things for us to get through to this morning. The first one was opposition leader Anthony Albanese came out last week and announced Labor's industrial relations policy. And some of the highlights from that is basically looking to put some structure in place for what's called the gig economy so people who might be working for Uber, those delivery apps and things like that. They're being they're currently working basically per job rather than getting a minimum wage as such, but also looking at those people who are in insecure work such as people in casuals. Can you flesh this out a little bit more for us what the plan is with this?

**AYRES:** Sure thing Monty. It's been very clear for the last decade that the expansion of casual and precarious work is really hurting the labour market and it's making it very difficult, in particular for young Australians, to get a decent job. So the categories that are growing, casual employment, labour hire and the gig economy, many of these workers are people who are doing regular work, regular shifts – they're not genuine casuals. And they're being forced into this insecure employment, which means no annual leave, no sick leave and we've seen over the course of the pandemic, just how damaging that is not just for the individuals.

Individuals on casual long-term casual work, long term labour hire work, can't get a mortgage, can't get a loan for a home – so difficulty entering the housing market and securing a home for them and their families. But secondly, we saw over the pandemic, just how bad it was for public health. Much of the Aged Care workforce on casual work, working multiple jobs across multiple aged care centres, it really was a significant contributory factor to the crisis that we had in Victoria in the Aged Care sector.

So the whole economy is moving, the structure of the labour markets changing and the law hasn't caught up. The gig economy is thought of as being about those people in the big cities who are working for Uber or Deliveroo, delivering food. And it is true that many of those people are exploited and are doing regular work but the gig economy is expanding into the regions as well. Workers in home care, aged care and disability care are now

finding that their work is being directed by an app and have been employed through that process, and it's an absolutely dislocates their experience of work.

So wages have been driven down. Scott Morrison wants to take the economy in one direction that is lower pay, worse jobs, less rights. And last week, Anthony Albanese scoped out a plan to deliver good jobs, better jobs, more permanent jobs into the Australian economy.

**IRVINE:** Something that is interesting, it's mentioned in the ABCs reporting in this, that there are 3.5 million casual workers in the Australian workforce. Now, if you look at the current unemployment rate, it's 6.6%. as of December 2020. As a government surely you'd be concerned with that amount of casual workers in the economy. Those jobs are the first to disappear if need be, when businesses start losing money or need to tighten their purse strings.

**AYRES:** Well, those jobs disappeared at a rate eight times faster than permanent jobs in the coronavirus pandemic last year, they are absolutely vulnerable. In your listening area there are 19,600 casual workers - one in four workers in your listening area are casual. Now of course, there are many people who want casual work. There are many businesses who have peaks and troughs, and it's absolutely appropriate for them to use casual labour properly, to pay it properly, they pay a loading and Labor's got no argument with that. What we say is that the expansion of casual works gone way too far. It's been used by some employers under enormous competitive pressures, some employers are using it to drive wages down, into denying people access to sick leave, and annual leave and long service leave and all of the things that come with a good permanent job.

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and coming up with sensible practical solutions. And that's why Albo's speech last week in Queensland was so well received.

**IRVINE:** Absolutely. Now moving on to something else. Yesterday it was reported that Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton charged the Australian taxpayers \$36,000 to charter a Royal Australian Air Force jet to Tasmania to make a grants announcement for a CCTV system for two councils in the Braddon by-election in 2018. Now that announcement was worth \$194,000 combined, and interestingly enough, it was made under the Safer Communities Fund. And he did that before the guidelines were actually given out. Once the guidelines came out, it actually said, this scheme, what they wanted to do with the CCTVs, didn't represent value for money in accordance to the program guidelines, and that he shouldn't approve it. He then went along and overruled that advice. Now, there's a couple of things to unpack with this. The first one is, of course, the \$36,000. Now I did a quick estimate on today's prices. Now these would have been cheaper, back in 2018. But you can get a flight, let's just say it was Virgin if you want to do it cheaply, \$287 one way so \$600 say return to Canberra, or if he wanted to go via Qantas, it could have been \$980, they would have flown him into Launceston. Now, Burnie, from Launceston, is about an hour and a half. You could charter a car, but I'm sure that would have been a staffer happy to pick him up. I reckon that he could have done it, if they really needed to for about \$2,000. That's with an overnight stay and a flight back and things like that. The fact that he has charged the Australian taxpayer \$36,000 to campaign, surely this has got to be up there with the sports rorts.

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**IRVINE:** Absolutely. We're seeing it in New South Wales. We're seeing the pork-barrelling and the blowback that's coming from that. Now we're starting to see it in a federal situation. Is the Labor Party now on an election standing? Are we seeing the Labor Party getting ready for an election later this year?

**AYRES:** Well, the Morrison government should run full term and should go through into the first half of 2022. But if Scott Morrison decides that it's in his narrow political interest to have an early election, he could have one as early as the last half of this year. We are ready to fight an election. We're going to spend the next few months scoping out positive, practical policies that go to the core interests of Australian people. We're going to set out propositions for good jobs, just like Albo set out, where we're going to make clear that we're on your side when it comes to getting good decent jobs into the economy. You will see more of that, a drumbeat of important practical policy announcements over the coming months. We will be ready to fight an election whenever Scott Morrison calls it - even if he does call it early in the last half of 2021.

**IRVINE:** Okay. Look, Senator, thank you so much for your time this morning. Thank you so much for your comments. Very interesting discussion. You have a great week and I'll talk to you next Monday.

**AYRES:** Good on you mate, catch you next week.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Prime Minister and Cabinet via Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** political alert  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 4:01:00 PM

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[View this email online](#)

## DAILY MEDIA BRIEFING



**political alert**

**Monday 15th February 2021**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)





## **PAT CONROY - MEDIA RELEASE - DUTTON REFUSES TO DEFEND SAFER COMMUNITIES FUND RORTS - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

**Federal Labor Media**

Monday 15 February 2021, 2:20pm

PAT CONROY - MEDIA RELEASE - DUTTON REFUSES TO DEFEND SAFER COMMUNITIES FUND RORTS - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021 PAT CONROY MP SHADOW MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE PACIFIC SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING...

**[VIEW ONLINE](#)**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**MEDIA RELEASE - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DUTTON  
CHARGES TAXPAYER \$36,000 FOR FLIGHTS - MON 15  
FEB, 2021**

**Federal Labor Media**

Monday 15 February 2021, 6:38am

MEDIA RELEASE - KRISTINA KENEALLY - DUTTON CHARGES TAXPAYER  
\$36,000 FOR FLIGHTS - MON 15 FEB, 2021 SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME  
AFFAIRS SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER...

**[VIEW ONLINE](#)**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [Media Operations](#)  
**To:** [Media Operations](#)  
**Subject:** Media Pulse: Monday 15 February 2021 [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Monday, 15 February 2021 6:26:01 PM  
**Attachments:** s 22(1)(a)(ii) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[Conroy - Dutton refuses to defend Safer Communities Fund reports.pdf](#)  
s 22(1)(a)(ii) [REDACTED]

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**OFFICIAL**

Good evening,

Please see below for today's Media Operations summary.

To contact the on-call media officer out of hours, please call s 22(1)(a)(ii) .


s 22(1)(a)(ii)

[REDACTED]

- **HA – s 47F**, **Central Western Daily:** Asked about a Labor media release in relation to a Safer Communities Fund project in Orange. **Media Ops responded saying** the Safer Communities Fund (SCF) aims to improve security, reduce street crime and violence and improve perceptions of community safety, leading to greater community resilience and wellbeing. All \$180.1 million (including administration) of five funding rounds of the SCF have been allocated. More than 600 Safer Communities Fund grants projects have been, or are currently being, successfully delivered by local community organisations since the program began in 2016. Applicant electorate information does not form part of the eligibility or merit criteria and is not considered when making recommendations for grant funding. It is open to the Minister to make decisions on grant funding, and this is consistent with the program guidelines and the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines, which is the framework under which Commonwealth grants are made. Orange City Council requested \$1 million for LED Lighting and CCTV under round three and was awarded \$200,000. In addition, Orange City Council received \$471,681 in round two of the SCF, and \$385,262 in round four of the SCF, bringing the total amount received across three rounds to more than \$1 million.




s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**Media releases / transcripts**


**CONROY:** *Dutton refuses to defend Safer Communities Fund reports (attached)*

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



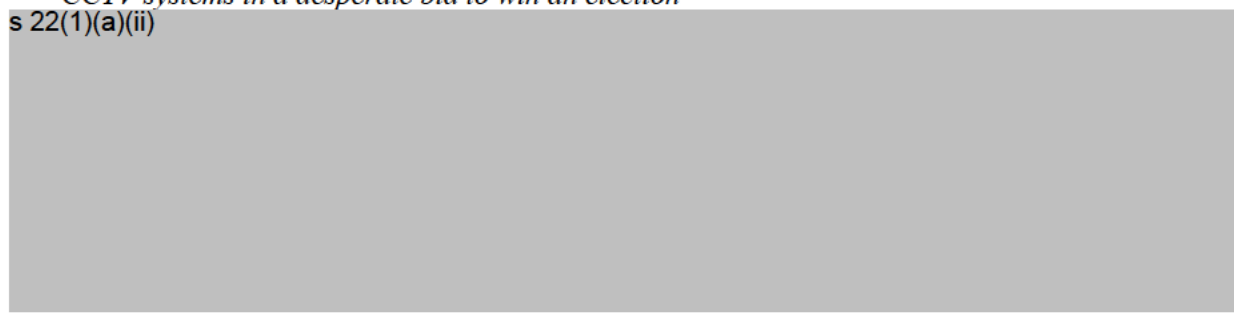
**Media Monitoring**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)




**Daily Mail:** *Peter Dutton spends \$36,000 on a VIP chartered flight just to announce grants for CCTV systems in a desperate bid to win an election*

s 22(1)(a)(ii)




**DIGITAL MEDIA ANALYSIS**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



- Safer Communities fund

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**CAPTAIN SAFE SEATS - PETER DUTTON CHARGED TAXPAYERS OVER  
\$36,000 FOR LUXURY PRIVATE JET FLIGHT TO TASMANIA**

Just days after it was revealed that Peter Dutton directed 91% of funds from the Safer Communities Fund to Coalition and marginal seats, Minister Dutton has been exposed charging taxpayers more than \$36,000 to use a luxury VIP RAAF plane to fly to Tasmania to announce the grants next to the Liberal candidate in the Braddon upcoming by-election.

Freedom-of-information documents have revealed that Minister Dutton announced the grants for two councils in the Braddon electorate, worth a combined \$194,000 in July 2018, a month before the rules for the third round of Safer Communities Fund were published and applications opened, and against the express advice of community safety experts in the Minister's own department.

The documents revealed that Minister Dutton's community safety experts found that the two proposals were not suitable when compared to other communities in need. These experts specifically warned the Minister, "should you decide to make funding decisions that do not reflect the order of merit, you may be criticised either in the media, or by the Australian National Audit Office".

Labor's Shadow Minister for Government Accountability, Senator Kristina Keneally, said that Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Minister Dutton must immediately respond to the growing Safer Seats Rorts scandal.

"Peter Dutton wasn't making communities safer, he was making Liberal and marginal seats safer for the Liberal Party," Senator Keneally said.

"Nowhere is this clearer than in the Braddon by-election campaign, where Peter Dutton flew a luxury VIP plane to Tasmania at taxpayer expense to stand next to the Liberal candidate to announce two grants from the Safer Communities Fund, even though the guidelines for the fund hadn't been established and the application process hadn't even opened yet!

"Peter Dutton was warned by his own safety experts not to misuse taxpayer dollars in this way, that the grants he handpicked were not up to scratch and he would likely be criticised by the Audit office for these decisions.

"Peter Dutton - Captain Safe Seats - was so determined to use taxpayer dollars to help the Liberal party win a by-election in Tasmania that he not only made a political decision to award these grants, but then hopped on a luxury VIP plane to go stand next to the Liberal candidate to announce them, charging the taxpayers over \$36,000 for the quick trip.

"Australian families are struggling to pay the bills, but Peter Dutton thinks nothing of spending tens of thousands of Australians taxpayer dollars on luxury plane trips to support a Liberal Party election campaign.

"Sports Rorts was just the tip of the iceberg with this eight year old Liberal Government.

"The Liberals treat taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money. How can they be looking after Australian families when they are so busy looking after themselves?

"Now, more than ever, Australians want and deserve transparency and integrity in their government. Instead with this 8 year old Liberal Government they get dodgy land deals, Sports Rorts and now Safer Seats Rorts.

"Bridget McKenzie resigned over Sports Rorts. On the face of it, Peter Dutton's Safer Seats Rorts - complete with luxury VIP plane trips - looks worse.

"Scott Morrison promised a National Integrity Commission more than two years ago but he has not delivered it. Labor is on the side of transparency and accountability in government. An Albanese Labor Government will deliver a strong and independent National Integrity Commission to stamp out waste, mismanagement and corruption and restore trust in government."

**Monday, 15 February 2021**

**CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**TRANSCRIPT**



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY SENATOR FOR  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
TELEVISION INTERVIEW  
SKY NEWS AM AGENDA  
MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Stranded Australians; Hotel Quarantine and National Cabinet; Halton Review; Safer Seats Rorts.***

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE, SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Laura, good morning and let's begin by remembering that Scott Morrison promised that the stranded Australians would be home by Christmas. That's a broken promise. They were not brought home by Christmas and many of them are still of course stranded overseas facing the northern hemisphere winter. Now, Jane Halton six months ago first briefed the Prime Minister about her review of the hotel quarantine system in that she made clear: the system is unsustainable. It's not fit for purpose and that the Commonwealth should set up a national quarantine facility with surge capacity to bring the stranded Australians home ahead of the northern hemisphere winter.

So, when I look at Dan Andrews' comments, I see that he's only reinforcing what Jane Holton has said in her review. And, the fact that Scott Morrison, who bought himself a trophy to celebrate his own border management has now abandoned the international borders and

shoved that responsibility on to the states. It's no wonder that Dan Andrews and the other premiers are growing frustrated with the lack of national leadership and a national plan to quarantine and the borders.

**LAURA JAYES, HOST:** But what Dan Andrews says isn't anything about state or federal quarantine in this particular segment, he's worried about the more contagious UK variant. This forces the numbers of overseas coming home, overseas Australians coming home, needs to be reduced and those that come home need to be only accepted on compassionate grounds.

**KENEALLY:** And Laura, if the Prime Minister had done his job, manage the international borders, follow Jane Halton's recommendation six months ago to set up a national quarantine facility with surge capacity, those stranded Australians would be home.

**JAYES:** We have to deal with it now so with the system that we have, do you agree with Daniel Andrews that only Australians come home, that have a compassionate argument?

**KENEALLY:** Well, I understand why Daniel Andrews is making this argument. And, what I say quite clearly Laura, is that if the Commonwealth Government did its job, if they stood up today and say 'we're going to do our job, we're going to follow the Halton review, we're going to set up a national quarantine facility that can be appropriately managed to ensure that people can come home safely and the community here in Australia is kept safe from risk'. Well, I would welcome that, but the fact is that will take some time to set up, and that delay sits on Scott Morrison.

**JAYES:** We've got hotel quarantine being run by the states, is your position that the numbers, need to be reduced in Victoria, as Daniel Andrews argues, only compassionate grounds?

**KENEALLY:** My position is two-fold. One: there should be a national facility, there should be national leadership, and we should have months ago set up, as Jane Halton recommended, safe quarantine facilities to bring stranded Australians home ahead of the northern hemisphere winter. Secondly: that we should be following medical advice, and all of the outbreaks in the current lockdowns that we are seeing have been as a result of hotel quarantine.

Jane Halton made the point Laura, that hotel quarantine is not fit for purpose, and it's not

sustainable. Scott Morrison knew that six months ago and he has ignored it. The problems that exist in hotel quarantine today are because we have not had national leadership to take responsibility here.

Let me say this to your viewers Laura, if you want to bring a horse into Australia, it will go into a national quarantine facility. But, if you are an Australian who wants to come home to Australia, Scott Morrison does not want to know you. He has not taken the national leadership required now back in November..

**JAYES :** So in the system as it stands, do you...

**KENEALLY:** I have said several times the system as it stands is not fit for purpose.

**JAYES:** Do you think the numbers coming home in hotel quarantine, should they be reduced? As Dan Andrews says before any federal facility is put in place?

**KENEALLY:** Laura, this is a decision that should be taken by the National Cabinet and what I was just about to say is I asked in the COVID Committee last November, I asked the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, if states and territories could unilaterally reduce their quarantine numbers. This is back when Gladys Berejiklian was flagging her intention to do so. And at that point, Prime Minister and Cabinet officials told me 'no no it's National Cabinet - it's all National Cabinet.'

**JAYES:** Who's that on? Is that on the premiers or the Prime Minister?

**KENEALLY:** That is on the Prime Minister. This is on the Prime Minister, Laura. Quarantine, under the Constitution is a federal responsibility. As a Prime Minister that bought himself a trophy to celebrate his own border management, he has vacated this space. When we look back at this health crisis, the thing that we will notice is the absence of the Federal Government. Scott Morrison's the Prime Minister to the stature of the Commonwealth Government during a crisis.

**JAYES:** You bring up biosecurity, it was interesting because as you know I spoke to the Secretary Mike Pezzullo on this program a couple of weeks ago. It's my understanding that the

advice from the Department was in a pandemic, in a pandemic response, that the argument was that the program is to be run by the states. For these reasons. One; the states are controlling the borders and we've seen them shut down those borders unilaterally without much notice. And the second reason is because states run

**KENEALLY:** The state borders, Laura? Or the international borders? So we're talking about international borders, and suddenly the Department's talking about state borders?

**JAYES:** The point is that borders shut down, the state borders, and that states run public hospitals. So, if the Government at the federal level was to run hotel quarantine, wouldn't it need some oversight and control over those first two things I mentioned.

**KENEALLY:** What a joke, Laura. That is a joke of an argument, coming from a Government. Scott Morrison's Government that would rather shove all the political risk on to someone else. I mean Scott Morrison, his whole focus whether it is Ruby Princess, whether it's international borders, whether there's quarantine - all matters that are federal responsibilities. His whole thing is 'can't somebody else do it?' Because Scott Morrison doesn't want the risk. He is too busy looking out for himself to look after ordinary Australians.

If we had a Prime Minister that was showing national leadership. It's hard to imagine that John Howard would have abandoned borders and quarantine to state governments, but that's what Scott Morrison has done. It has been the lack of national leadership that has put Australians, both those stranded overseas and back here in Australia at greater risk. And if I can say, Laura, the fact that we don't also have a vaccine being rolled out in Australia compounds this problem.

**JAYES:** Can I just ask you about hotel quarantine?

**KENEALLY:** Laura, the Prime Minister promised 4 million Australians would be vaccinated by March. That is not possible. We're not even going to have enough vaccine in the country by mid-March. This is a triumph, again: Scott Morrison announcement over delivering.

**JAYES:** What's the comparison between New South Wales and Victoria when it comes to hotel quarantine? New South Wales doesn't seem to have had any of the problems of the



magnitude that we've seen in Victoria. Is Daniel Andrews above criticism here? Is something going on?

**KENEALLY:** Look, I think all our premiers, whether they are Liberal or Labor have taken their decisions and acted in the best interest of their citizens and the fact that we have gotten through this virus...

**JAYES:** But Victoria keeps on [INAUDIBLE], that's the problem

**KENEALLY:** Well you know I reflect upon a comment that Patricia Karvelas made on Insiders yesterday, where she made the observation, in some ways it's also about luck. I mean I sat and lived through...

**JAYES:** So is Daniel Andrews is just very unlucky? Is that it?

**KENEALLY:** No. The point being that this is a highly unpredictable virus, which is highly contagious and in some cases, there has been a bit of luck or bad luck in both ways. Let me make this observation as I was about to before you interrupted me that you know I and my husband lives through the red zone Northern Beaches locked down through Christmas. Had no family with us over Christmas and New Year's, lived in that lockdown for about four weeks, and you know that was brought on by Gladys Berejiklian and I don't complain about the fact that she did that. It was the right decision to take and it's a similar decision to what Dan Andrews is taking here.

Now there's a bit of luck there, that the Northern Beaches outbreak did not become worse, did not spread more widely. But, you know, I'll come back to the fact if we had a COVIDsafe app that worked, if we had a vaccine being rolled out in Australia - the Prime Minister said we'd be at the head of the queue - there now some 70 countries ahead of us. America, since the inauguration of Joe Biden, has vaccinated over 26 million people, that is more than the population of Australia. So, we don't have a vaccine, we don't have a COVIDsafe app that works, and we don't have a Commonwealth Government that is doing its job to manage the international borders.

**JAYES:** Gladys Berejiklian is taken four times more international travellers than Victoria. Her

risk is heightened. Daniel Andrews has had bigger problems. I just don't see how that works out, that can't just be bad luck?

**KENEALLY:** Well, you know there are a lot of other aspects to the hotel quarantine system and I have publicly congratulated and acknowledged that early on, the NSW Government took a decision to have the police directly involved rather than security guards and I think that has been part of the success in New South Wales.

I also think though Laura, we need to reflect upon the fact that right across Australia where we have seen outbreaks, whether it be in aged care or hotel quarantine, a lot of it has come down to insecure work. The fact that people are in casual jobs they have to work at more than one venue, that there wasn't pandemic leave. You know, when we look back on this crisis and as we sit here now facing an industrial relations bill, I think you have recognition that casual insecure work has been part of one of the risks that we have had to manage

**JAYES:** Very quickly because we're running out of time. Peter Dutton use a private jet to fly to Tasmania during the Braddon by-election. Has he actually broken any rules?

**KENEALLY:** Well first let's talk about this safer communities grants program - there are no rules. I mean the Prime Minister set up all these grant programs as Treasurer: community development grants, Sports Rorts, this Safer Seats Rorts - safer communities, absolute Ministerial discretion. Absolute Ministerial discretion to give away money, often without oversight, guidelines, applications and at a electorally convenient time.

What Peter Dutton has done here: \$36,000 for 24 hour trip to make a highly political grant, in a by-election, grant announcements standing next to a Liberal Party candidate, grant announcements that his own Department didn't support. And you know, last time I checked back in 2019, you could get a commercial flight from Brisbane to Tasmania.

But, he chose to spend \$36,000 and to put that in context Laura, the aged pension is about \$24,000 - \$25,000. He spent one and a half times what some people have to live on for a whole year for one 24 hour trip to make a highly political announcement in the middle of a by-election campaign. The Liberal Party continues to treat taxpayer money like it is Liberal Party money, and now more than ever, Australians need a government that's on their side.

***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**TRANSCRIPT**



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
RADIO INTERVIEW  
2SM MARCUS PAUL IN THE MORNING  
MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Peter Dutton's misuse of taxpayer funds; Safer Seats Rorts; Scott Morrison is not on your side.***

**MARCUS PAUL, HOST:** But the dramas keep coming for Scott Morrison, or as Albo calls him, Promo and his team. The latest being that the Home Affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, charged you and I, simple taxpayers more than \$36,000 to charter a Royal Australian Air Force jet to Tasmania to make a grants announcement for CCTV systems for two Councils during the 2018 Braddon by-election campaign. Is that an appropriate use of taxpayer money? Remember, Julie Bishop, Bronwyn Bishop, I'm sorry, Julie, Bronwyn Bishop found herself into trouble in trouble for hiring helicopters.

To join us to talk about this and other issues, Senator Kristina Keneally. Good morning, Kristina and thank you for your time.

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Good morning, Marcus,

good morning to your listeners too.

**PAUL:** Alright. At the time, Mr Dutton announced the grants for Burnie and Waratah-Wynyard Councils worth a combined \$195,000 back in July 2018, a month before the rules for the third round of the Safer Communities Fund were published and applications opened. Again, this thing stinks. It really does. And it's just, I think it's the tip of the iceberg for this lot.

**KENEALLY:** Marcus, you couldn't have put it better. I mean, here we've got this grant program that is supposed to be about giving communities at risk the safety equipment that they need: CCTV cameras, fencing, bollards, that kind of thing. And before they'd even opened the applications, before they'd even published the rules for the grant. Minister Dutton decided in the middle of a by-election, he was going to just give away two grants. Now, no doubt those communities welcome the money, I don't begrudge the communities.

**PAUL:** No.

**KENEALLY:** No, not at all. What I what I am just ropeable about, though, is the way in which the Liberal Party is treating taxpayer money like it is Liberal Party money. And I think it's important that your viewers, your listeners understand this, that this isn't some one-off, I mean, you remember the Sports Rorts, which is much the same thing.

**PAUL:** Yep.

**KENEALLY:** Scott Morrison when he was Treasurer, and he's continued it as Prime Minister, set up all the grant programs in the Budget. They have very few rules. Some of them don't even have applications, you have to be invited by the Morrison Liberal Government to apply. And the money is given away at the complete discretion of Ministers, usually at the most electorally appropriate time, right in the middle of election campaigns. This is your money, this is my money, it's taxpayer money. How can the Liberals be looking after the taxpayers, when they're so busy looking after themselves?

**PAUL:** Well, you talking about the same party that seems to think it's appropriate to whack Liberal paraphernalia on official documentation in relation to COVID-19 vaccines? I mean, well...

**KENEALLY:** I mean, and what a, what a, extraordinary partisan effort there to, you know, make the vaccine a political tool for the Liberal Party. And let's not forget when the bushfires were still raging last summer, Scott Morrison rolled out an Australian Defence Force Liberal Party ad with a move that actually made the Chief of the Defence Force, Angus Campbell, quite discomforted, were his words. This politicisation, and this treating taxpayer resources, like the vaccine, which we're paying for, the taxpayer, like the Defence Force, in the middle of a crisis, in a bushfire crisis or the health crisis, Scott Morrison thinks nothing of creating Liberal Party advertising to back in himself and his mates.

**PAUL:** Is this? I mean, look, I'm going to just say it here. I don't think this is just at a Federal level. NSW, the State Government here in NSW are up to the same thing. They call it good old fashioned pork-barrelling. And the Premier and the Deputy Premier of the state of NSW seem to consider it's all a part of the status quo of operations and there's nothing to see here. Let's move on. I've dealt with that issue. Now it's time to divert attention away from something else. I mean it's very clear here that ahead of the 2019 Election, Departmental documents show that Peter Dutton diverted nearly half of the funding in the grants program to hand-picked projects ahead of the 2019 Election. Where have we heard this before? It's, it's pork-barrelling. It's buying votes. The State Government in New South Wales and the Gladys Berejiklian. The Liberals did exactly the same thing here in this state. And we're supposed to cop it and move on, as you know, we dealt with this last week?

**KENEALLY:** No, we're not and that's why in my role as Shadow Minister for Government Accountability, it's my job and that of all my colleagues, while we are in Opposition to hold this Government to account because this is taxpayer money. If I can put this in context, because I imagine there'll be some of your listeners that get the age pension. And let's just say this, Peter Dutton spent \$36,000 for a 24-hour trip to Tasmania to announce these grants in the middle of a by-election. The age pension is about \$24,000 a year, he spent one and a half times what some people in our community have to live on in a whole year he spent in 24 hours now. I mean, that is just arrogant, it is out of touch. It is inappropriate. It's waste and mismanagement. And quite frankly this is why I, last week, wrote to the Auditor-General and asked him to investigate this in the same way that he investigated Sports Rorts. Because it is one thing in a sports funding scheme to say 'oh, you don't get a pool, but this community does', 'you don't get a playing field, but this community does,' but to say to communities that are at risk of crime or

other types of danger, to say 'sorry, you're not getting a CCTV system, I'm going to give that money to this community over here that is lower-ranked in the priority list for safety but higher-ranked for my Liberal Party interest.' I mean, that's just grotesque. I mean, this is taxpayer money that is meant to help communities be safer, not meant to help the Liberal Party make seats safer for themselves.

**PAUL:** And, as we know, it always comes with the obligatory photo opportunity--- I know the way it works, Kristina. I've been around a long bloody time. For me, personally, I know it's different circumstances for you. But for me personally it's not about which party does it or who does it. It's about the mismanagement of public funds. We work damn hard in this country for what we get. We're overtaxed. We pay a whole range of taxes, and that's because we expect the standard of living that we have. And, yes, I mean ultimately, despite some issues, we do very well here in Australia. But what I don't like seeing, and it's something that's happened from old, tired Liberal Governments, whether it's at NSW or a Federal level, the kind of roting and pork-barrelling that's going on to keep people in power, when they damn-well know that the money should be diverted to all Australians. Just because you didn't vote for the LNP in a certain electorate does not mean that your electorate, your area, you and your fellow community, don't deserve the same use of taxpayer money that others do.

**KENEALLY:** Absolutely, and you know, right now, when we're in the middle of an economic crisis where so many people are struggling, Australians deserve accountability and transparency and integrity in their government.

**PAUL:** More now than ever!

**KENEALLY:** More now than ever. You're so right. And more than 2 years ago Scott Morrison promised a National Integrity Commission. He has not delivered it. This eight-year-old Liberal Government has failed to deliver a National Integrity Commission and, quite frankly they're not on the side of the Australian people.

**PAUL:** Well it's all about the photo opportunity, Kristina.

**KENEALLY:** Always there for the photo opp, never there for the follow-up.



**PAUL:** It's all about getting your backside sitting in a fighter jet and having your personal photographer at a number of events just to get it out there on social media and to keep feeding people the same misinformation. Look again. We appreciate and we applaud the money that is being spent in many areas in Australia. What we don't appreciate is the fact that it seems to be to favourites. Favouritism has no place when it comes to doling out public funds. It's meant to be for all of us, evenly, as much as possible.

**KENEALLY:** Absolutely. And right now, we need to get to the bottom of what communities miss out. What communities are less safe today because the Liberal Party and Peter Dutton are treating this taxpayer money like it's Liberal Party money.

**PAUL:** Kristina, do you believe that Scott Morrison will call an early ballot this year?

**KENEALLY:** Well, there's a suspicious hole in the parliamentary sitting calendar later this year, which is perfectly timed for an election campaign, but you know, that'll be up to Scott Morrison. We know that he always acts in his best interests. We know that he does what he thinks is the best for him, not best for the Australian people. So yeah, he will--- he'll make a political call, as he always does. But you know, there's a lot of pain coming down the pipeline for Australians. Right now. We've got this Industrial Relations Bill that Scott Morrison's put for the Parliament that allows employers to cut wages. We have the JobKeeper, which is ending next month, we've got 1.6 million people on JobKeeper in this country. It's been an absolute lifeline. And the Liberals and Scott Morrison are reverting to type. They're cutting that off next month. They are allowing employers to cut wages with their Industrial Relations Bill. This is classic Liberal Party playbook. They are reverting to type. And you know, when we think about what are the same people need right now? Yes, they need transparency and accountability in government. They also need secure jobs with their pay and their conditions protected. They need to have a plan for economic recovery. They need, frankly, national leadership as well, on the vaccine and on international borders. I mean, where is this vaccine? Scott Morrison said we'd be at the front of the queue.

**PAUL:** It's coming next week. And then, who knows, it'll probably come the week after that.

**KENEALLY:** Well he promised 4 million of us would be vaccinated by mid-March. I mean, honestly, we aren't even going to have 4 million doses in the country by mid-March. So it's, you

know, this Government, you know, it is the triumph of announcement over delivery. And unfortunately, it's the Australians that are getting left behind and you know, really Australians now more than ever and need a government that's on their side and that's what Anthony Albanese and Labor are laying out.

**PAUL:** Alright. Kristina it's good to have you on the program, let's talk again very soon.

**KENEALLY:** Thanks Marcus, you too. Cheers.

***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**TRANSCRIPT**



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
DOORSTOP INTERVIEW  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA  
WEDNESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Sexual assault allegations at Parliament House; Federal Court decision on Biloela Family; Jodi McKay and Gladys Berejiklian.***

**JOURNALIST:** Are you aware of any other incidents such as what happened to Brittany Higgins happening within Parliament?

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** No.

**JOURNALIST:** In terms of changing the culture within Parliament House to try to ensure that these events don't happen, what do you think needs to change?

**KENEALLY:** I hope that Prime Minister Scott Morrison was genuine yesterday in Parliament when he said he was willing to take up Anthony Albanese's offer for a bipartisan approach to changing the workplace culture in Parliament.

**JOURNALIST:** What the Prime Minister announced yesterday is a political fix. And I take nothing away from Celia Hammond but we cannot have a Liberal MP alone, running a process to change the culture in this place.

**KENEALLY:** We need a robust process. We need an independent person, eminently qualified, that is to be oversighted by a bipartisan group of MPs, and we need to ensure whatever comes out of that delivers a system that gives women, indeed gives all staff in this building, the confidence that if they are the subject of bullying, harassment and, God help us, sexual assault and rape, they are able to bring those complaints forward. That they'll be assessed, they'll be supported and that it will be appropriately investigated.

**JOURNALIST:** Do you have any idea of who that should be? Should it be someone like Liz Broderick?

**KENEALLY:** Yeah, look, we have many people in the Australian community who could fill this role, who have the qualifications. Liz Broderick is one such person. You know, that the Prime Minister at this moment where it is become evident that this young woman is distressed, she is in trauma, she has suffered rape. She has suffered, of course, because of the alleged rape that occurred on the Minister's couch in the Minister's office. But she has also suffered now for two years, because she felt pressure from the Government, from the Minister's office and she says from the Prime Minister's office, to choose between her job and between bringing these allegations over to be investigated. She felt like she was a political problem that needed to go away. And indeed, they did send her away to be alone and isolated following that trauma. So that the Prime Minister, when all of this has become evident, and we can get to the point as to whether or not the Prime Minister and his office knew about these allegations of rape in a moment, but at the point at which it becomes evident that the Prime Minister doesn't think to bring in an independent person, that concerns me. But I'm hopeful that he was genuine in what he said in Parliament yesterday in that he would take up Anthony Albanese's offer to work in a bipartisan way.

**JOURNALIST:** What do you make of the revelations this morning that it was Parliament House security guards who unlocked the door to the office that night?

**KENEALLY:** Well, first, I just observed that when our security guards often go around to

offices to make sure that, particularly late at night, that people who are there should be there and there hasn't been some breach of security. But some of the revelations are highly disturbing this morning that Parliament House security, have concerns and, or had concerns, about the way that this has been handled. That they raised concerns about language being softened. That they have raised concerns about how descriptions have been changed. That apparently according to reports this morning, one member of the Parliament security has resigned over his concerns. The culture of cover up here is highly concerning. We have Brittany Higgins' own evidence that she felt like she was a problem to be managed rather than a crime, where she was the victim, and it should be reported. Now we have an ongoing circumstance where both Minister Reynolds and the Prime Minister Scott Morrison have serious questions to answer about contradictions in their timeline, contradictions in their statements to the Parliament. They are continuing to compound Brittany's trauma and grief unless they have clear, transparent and accountable answers. Not just for Brittany, but for every staff member who works in this building and for the Australian people to have confidence, that at the highest level their Government will not tolerate harassment, bullying and sexual assault in our Nation's capital.

**JOURNALIST:** Senator in today's Australian, the suggestion is that Labor Senators were aware of the allegations that Brittany Higgins brought up. Do you know, were you aware or do you know if any of your colleagues were aware for months that this had occurred?

**KENEALLY:** I was not aware of, I found out about this highly disturbing incident when it became public through the media. Yesterday, in Parliament Minister Reynolds made reference to a Parliamentary Inquiry. And I only say that to say that she's the one has put it on the record. That there is a Parliamentary Inquiry under way and of course, there would be Labor Senators who are part of that. I'm not privy to that Inquiry. I'm not privy to its submissions. And my understanding is that, as is within the case in any Parliamentary Committee process that the Labor Senators have observed the confidentiality requirements of that Inquiry. But I make the observation that it was Minister Reynolds who put the Inquiry in the public realm yesterday.

**JOURNALIST:** Miss Higgins put out a statement yesterday, which to paraphrase said that it was wrong, but it's taken her to come out in the media and share her story publicly in order for this type of action to be taken. Would you agree with that sentiment?

**KENEALLY:** Absolutely. I look at Brittany Higgins and I see a woman who is a victim and a survivor. And like many other women in Australia who are survivors, she now has a courage and a determination to ensure that what happened to her doesn't happen anyone else. But, she is correct. It shouldn't be up to the victim and the survivor to ensure that other women are safe. There should have been a process in place. Her employer, the Minister for Defence, Linda Reynolds, should have ensured that. The Prime Minister's office, who by their own statement was involved back in March should have ensured that. There should be a robust process. The Prime Minister said when he took over from Malcolm Turnbull, he announced in response to allegations of bullying of women in the Liberal Party, that he would ensure that there was a robust process for such complaints to come forward. That was an announcement. But there has been nothing that has happened. And, it shouldn't take Brittany Higgins going on national television to ensure that women are safe in Parliament House.

**JOURNALIST:** On the Biloela family, what do you think should happen now, given the Federal Court's decision yesterday? Minister Dutton isn't going to change his mind on the situation. Have they exhausted all of their court and legal avenues?

**KENEALLY:** First of all, Labor acknowledges and welcomes the Federal Court decision which has upheld that the youngest daughter Tharunicaa has not been afforded due process by the Government to have her claim for protection assessed. What happens now is not clear but what could happen, right now, today, is the Minister could use his powers to bring this sorry saga to an end. Not only has the taxpayer spent \$50 million - \$50 million - to keep this family of four with their two Australian-born children in immigration detention on Christmas Island. But there has been an incalculable cost to their wellbeing, their mental health, for these young children, their development, and a community in Biloela, Queensland that just wants them back. And it's not Labor calling for this alone. This is Alan Jones and Barnaby Joyce, and the Mayor up there in Biloela and the Biloela community, people just want them home. Quite frankly, I say to the Immigration Minister, Alex Hawke, who has this power: come at this with fresh eyes, come at this with the sense of the taxpayer money you're wasting, come at this with a sense of what the Biloela community wants. Understand, there is no need now for a family of four that present no threat to the community to be kept in immigration detention in isolation on Christmas Island, just bring them home. Just bring them home now.

**JOURNALIST:** On another matter, can I ask about Jodi McKay? So she's been accused of

submitting a letter of support for a Tamil refugee who's been convicted of sexual assault. Do you know anything about the situation and do you find it concerning?

**KENEALLY:** I don't know anything about the particulars of the situation other than what I've seen in the media. But Jodi McKay has been clear: her letter was not one letter of support. And I find it a bit rich that people are calling for Jodi McKay to resign because surely Gladys Berejiklian has so lowered the bar for what passes as ethical behaviour in NSW politics, that anything that we see here in terms of this letter - this representation - pales in significance. We have a Premier of New South Wales, who carried on for years a secret affair with an MP who has admitted to selling visas for cash and running other money making enterprises, who is under investigation by the ICAC for corruption, who had to resign because of that investigation. And, Gladys Berejiklian was carrying on a secret affair with him. That has so lowered the bar for what passes as ethical behaviour in NSW Parliament, and that's a big statement by the way, that has so lowered the bar. That this is mischief-making by I suspect, people in the Liberal Party to try and distract from their own scandals, corruption and their own Premier's illicit affair. Thank you.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Prime Minister and Cabinet via Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** International - Liz (103 mentions) - Tuesday 16 February 2021  
**Date:** Tuesday, 16 February 2021 7:05:10 AM

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[View this email online](#)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)





**PAT CONROY - MEDIA RELEASE - DUTTON  
REFUSES TO DEFEND SAFER COMMUNITIES FUND  
RORTS - MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2021**

**Federal Labor Media**

Monday 15 February 2021, 2:20pm

**PAT CONROY - MEDIA RELEASE - DUTTON REFUSES TO  
DEFEND SAFER COMMUNITIES FUND RORTS - MONDAY, 15  
FEBRUARY 2021 PAT CONROY MP SHADOW MINISTER FOR  
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE PACIFIC SHADOW  
MINISTER ASSISTING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE SHADOW  
MINISTER ASSISTING...**

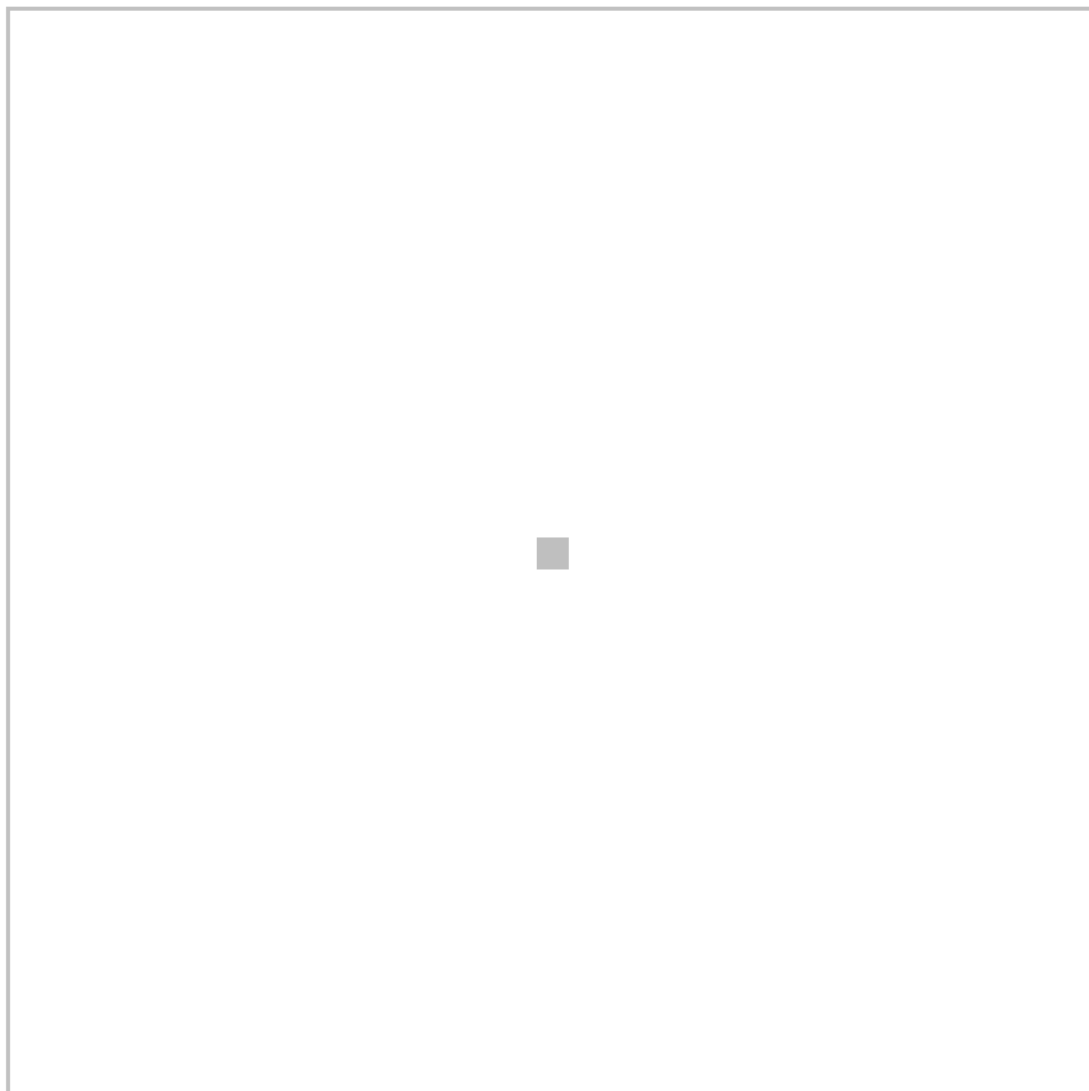
Mentions: CLIMATE CHANGE (1), Scott Morrison (1), Australia (1)

**Keywords:** CLIMATE CHANGE (1), Scott Morrison (1), Australia (1)

**[VIEW ONLINE](#)**

**From:** [noreply@streem.com.au](mailto:noreply@streem.com.au) on behalf of [Streem](#)  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** PAT CONROY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - TUESDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Tuesday, 16 February 2021 9:08:09 AM

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**PAT CONROY MP**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**AND THE PACIFIC**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR DEFENCE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**MEMBER FOR SHORTLAND**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**  
**DOORSTOP INTERVIEW**  
**PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA**  
**TUESDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SUBJECTS:** *Peter Dutton's misuse of taxpayer funds; Safer Seats Rorts.*

**PAT CONROY, SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR GOVERNMENT**

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Morning, I'm Pat Conroy, the Shadow Minister Assisting for Government Accountability. I'd like to talk about the latest rorts from this Government: the rorting of the proceeds of crime funding through the Safer Communities Fund.

It's clear that Minister Dutton who claims to be the Minister for Law and Order, who prides himself on being the Minister for Law and Order, is actually diminishing community safety by taking money from the most deserving projects in an effort to win votes in marginal seats. That's a disgrace and the Minister has real questions to answer.

And unfortunately this is the latest in a series of rorts by this Government. We've had sports rorts, community grants rorts, we had the regional community infrastructure fund that funded the North Sydney pool. This Government thinks taxpayers' money is Liberal Party money. They spend taxpayers' money like it's Liberal Party money, and it's clear that before the 2019 election, they were desperate to be re-elected. It was like the last days of Rome - they were just throwing buckets of money out the door to win votes. That's a disgrace, and Minister Dutton needs to be held to account.

Furthermore, Prime Minister Morrison avoided answering important questions in Question Time yesterday about the Ministerial Code of Conduct. How is it consistent with the Ministerial Code of Conduct that Peter Dutton was instructing his department to design a grants program to deliver one grant? A grants program to deliver one grant of \$880,000 to the National Retail Association in the same year that he received a \$6,500 donation from the National Retail Association. In fact, only a week after receiving a \$1,500 donation to a dinner that the National Retail Association attended, he instructed his department to speed up the design of this grants program. Prime Minister Morrison needs to be accountable, and he needs to say how this is consistent with the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

Happy to answer any questions.

**JOURNALIST:** Well what hold does Dutton have over the Prime Minister? Why won't the Prime Minister act?

**CONROY:** Well I think the Prime Minister has form on just refusing to deal with accountability in this Government. He just thinks he's going to tuck and roll, say 'nothing to see here', and that the caravan will move on. So I think Dutton is clearly a powerful player in the Liberal Party. He doesn't want to rock the boat by saying he has to go, but clearly there are huge questions to answer.


***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

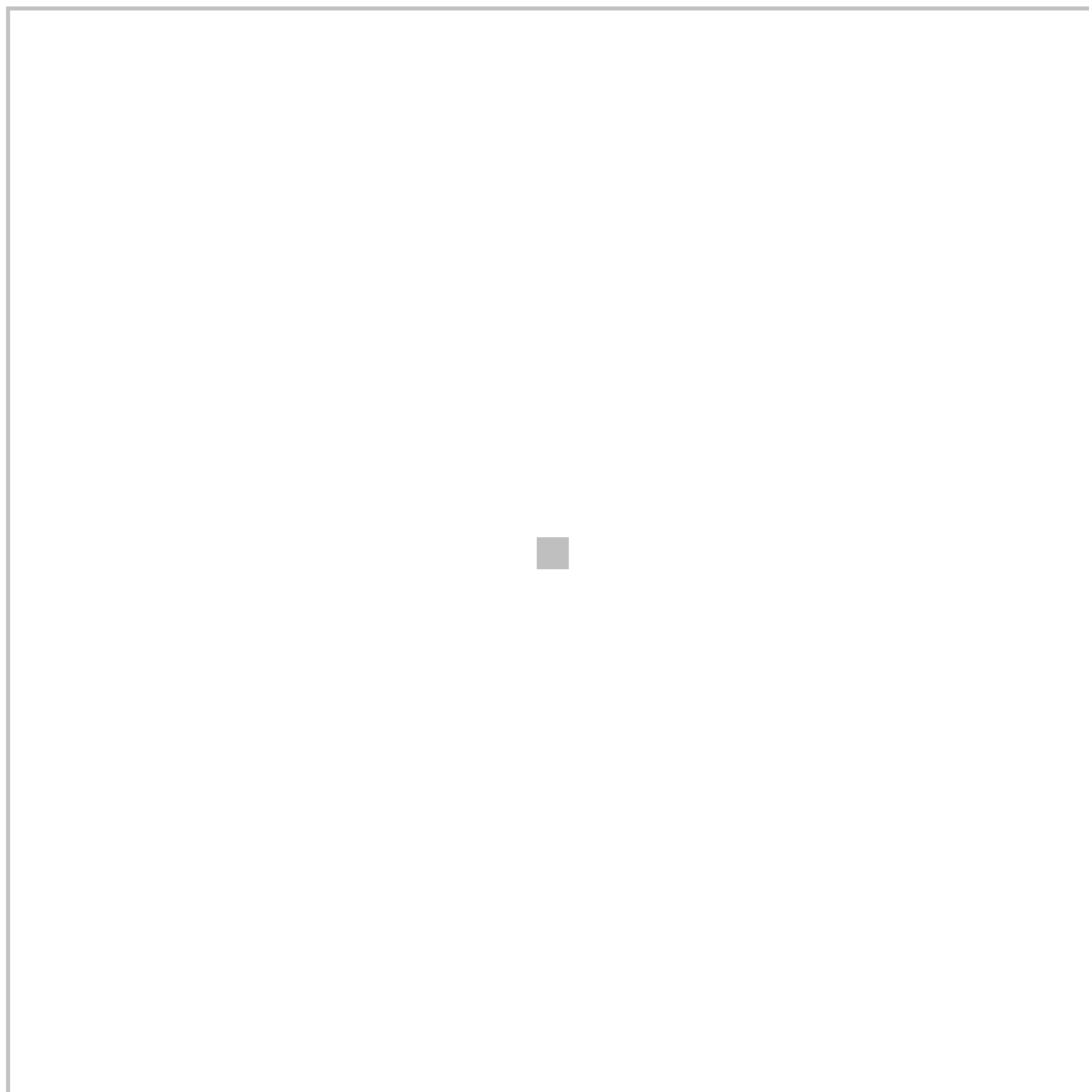
s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**From:** [PMC Media](#)  
**To:** [Martin, Gerard](#)  
**Subject:** FW: PAT CONROY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - TUESDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2021  
**Date:** Tuesday, 16 February 2021 9:08:10 AM

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**From:** noreply@streem.com.au On Behalf Of Streem  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 16 February 2021 9:07:26 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**To:** PMC Media  
**Subject:** PAT CONROY - TRANSCRIPT - DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA - TUESDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2021



**PAT CONROY MP**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**AND THE PACIFIC**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR DEFENCE**  
**SHADOW MINISTER ASSISTING FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**MEMBER FOR SHORTLAND**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT**  
**DOORSTOP INTERVIEW**  
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**TUESDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2021**

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see here', and that the caravan will move on. So I think Dutton is clearly a powerful player in the Liberal Party. He doesn't want to rock the boat by saying he has to go, but clearly there are huge questions to answer.

***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
 To: Huggins, Gemma  
 Subject: RE: FOR ACTION - Work In Progress (WIP) Report [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]  
 Date: Wednesday, 17 February 2021 3:19:24 PM

**PROTECTED//CABINET**

Gemma – for the WIP

Something like this on SCF? I don't know how much we can say in the specific grants at this point. Key point is to highlight we are involved in the guidelines process

Issue Description	Sensitivities	Next Steps	Overall Status
<p>Safer Communities Fund (SCF) – Round 3</p> <p>Media from 10 February onward has reported on Minister Dutton's involvement in reducing and redirecting funding from projects under SCF Round 3 to other hand-selected eligible projects, and the fast-tracking of one-off grants to organisations</p>	<p>PM&amp;C is consulted on all SCF Guidelines, and updates SCF Electorate Data based on information provided by the Department of Home Affairs</p> <p>PM&amp;C was first consulted on the Round 3 SCF Guidelines by the DISER grants hub on 2 July 2018</p> <p>Documentation obtained by the ABC under FOI identified PM&amp;C provided advice on 6 July 2018 that funding for Neighbourhood Watch through the SCF would not be possible. This project ultimately received a one-off grant instead</p>	<p>NSD is undertaking an internal review of PM&amp;C emails and documents from the relevant time period to ensure there is a complete understanding of the Department's involvement in the SCF Round 3 consultation process</p> <p>Michael Burke AS Homeland Security Branch s 22(1)(a)(ii)</p>	On track

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Adviser

Border Security and Law Enforcement Policy | Homeland Security Branch

National Security Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

p: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | m: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

e: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | team contact: s 47E(d)

One National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600

The Department acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Cultures, Country and Elders both past and present.

From: Huggins, Gemma <Gemma.Huggins@pmc.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 15 February 2021 7:26 PM

To: NSD - Border Security & Law Enforcement Policy <s 47E(d)>

Subject: FW: FOR ACTION - Work In Progress (WIP) Report [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]

**PROTECTED//CABINET**

Options:

Safer Communities Fund reporting/referral to ANAO? s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)


s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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**From:** Media Operations <media@homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 17 February 2021 6:29 PM  
**To:** Media Operations  
**Subject:** Media Pulse: Wednesday 17 February 2021 [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)



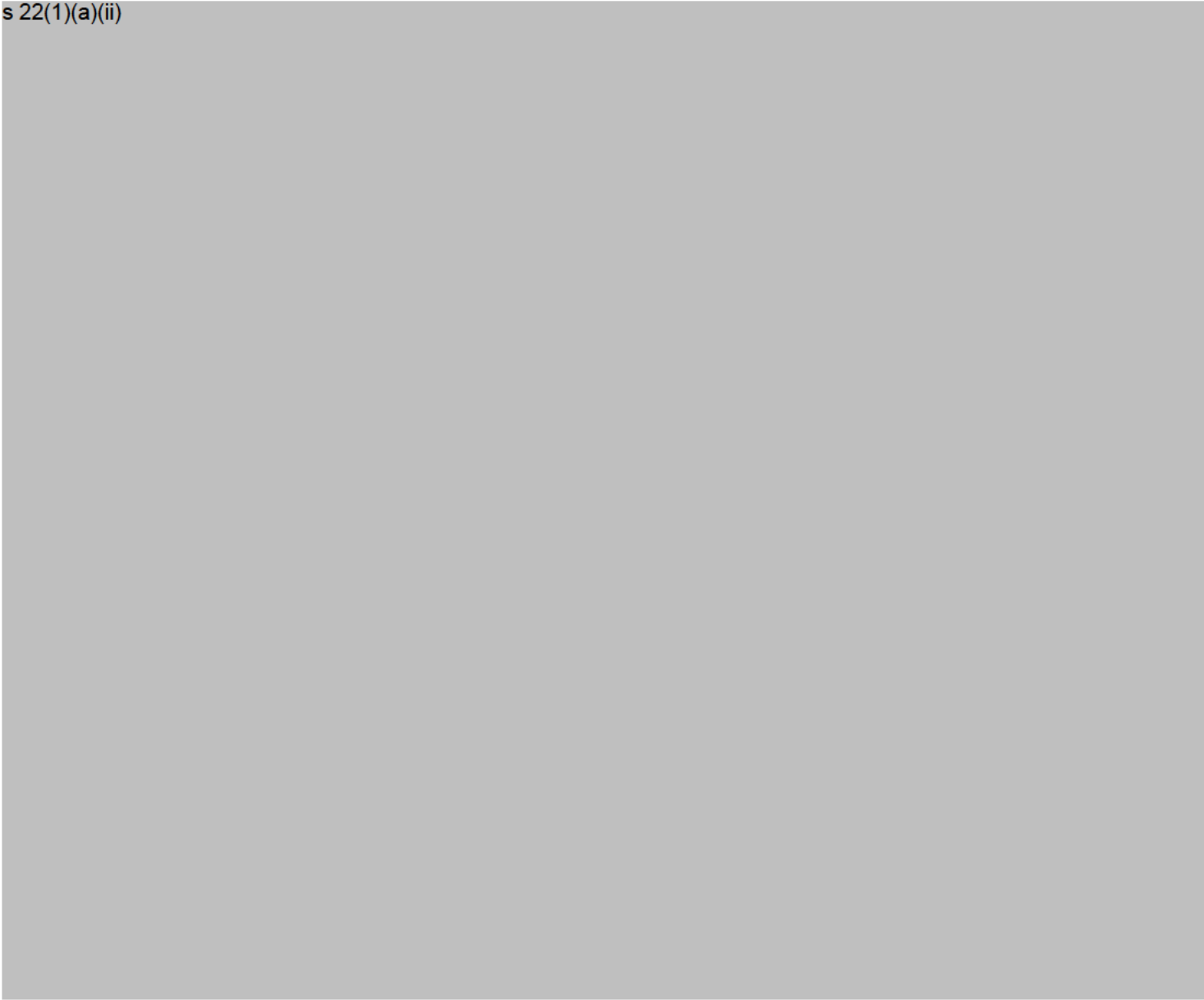
**OFFICIAL**

Good evening,


Please see below for today's Media Operations summary.


To contact the on-call media officer out of hours, please call s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)




s 22(1)(a)(ii)



- **HA – s 47F** , **Sound Telegraph WA**: Asked a series of questions relating to the City of Rockingham and the community safety grants, including why the funding was cut by almost \$500,000. **With MO for noting.**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)





s 22(1)(a)(ii)

DIGITAL MEDIA ANALYSIS

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- Safer Communities fund
- s 22(1)(a)(ii)
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A brief report is attached.

The Media Officer on-call tonight is s 22(1)(a)(ii). To contact the on-call media officer, please call s 22(1)(a)(ii)

The Media Officer for the Crisis Coordination Centre can be contacted on s 22(1)(a)(ii) or via s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

TRANSCRIPT



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
TELEVISION INTERVIEW  
SKY NEWS FIRST EDITION  
WEDNESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Sexual assault allegations at Parliament House; Federal Court decision on Biloela Family.***

**PETER STEFANOVIC, HOST:** There have been more developments that have emerged overnight. Samantha Maiden has been reporting this morning that the former Director of Security Operations at Parliament House had quit his job in the wake of the Higgins assault after raising concerns over how it was handled. Language had been softened when it had been reported as well. Just want to start off with your reaction to that?

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Good morning, Peter. Good morning to your viewers. Yeah, this is an incredibly distressing story, obviously. And may I say that my compassion and my support for Brittany Higgins and my admiration for her courage and her determination. But these revelations point to an ongoing culture of cover up, we heard Ms Higgins herself describe how she felt like she was a political problem, that they just, the Government just wanted her to go away and in fact, sent her away to ensure that she stayed

quiet. She thought she had to choose between her job and taking these allegations of the alleged rape to the Police.

**KENEALLY:** Now, to hear that, that Parliament and security had concerns about the way this was being handled, that there has been a resignation within here, that there has been softening of language. These are highly concerning reports. And it goes to a culture here in the Parliament, where women understandably, no longer feel safe. And that's a huge statement to make. But after allegations of bullying within the Government and the Liberal Party, after allegations of a rape in a Ministerial office, and after, you know promises after promises by Scott Morrison, there would be a robust process for complaints to come forward to hear today that Parliament security felt that this wasn't being addressed appropriately. Well. I think there are more questions to be answered by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Defence,

**STEFANOVIC:** Would you be demanding resignations?

**KENEALLY:** I think the Prime Minister needs to clear up what he said in Parliament yesterday when he said that his office only became aware of the allegations of rape this week, and those were his words that his office only became aware. Now that statement is at odds with Brittany Higgins in her interview. It is also at odds with the very statement the Prime Minister's office put out after that interview went to air and I've got that statement here where the Prime Minister, it says, the Prime Minister's office was providing support to Minister Reynolds in assessing back in March if the statement of standards for ministerial staff had been breached. So it's one or the other, Peter. Either the Prime Minister's, the Government's statement is correct, and the Prime Minister's office was involved back in March and was aware of this alleged rape, or the Prime Minister misled the Parliament yesterday and quite frankly, it again points to this culture of cover up. And when the Minister for Defence and the Prime Minister can't even get their stories straight, they are compounding the trauma and the grief for Brittany Higgins and any other woman in this building who has had an experience of harassment, bullying, or, God help us, sexual assault and has not felt the confidence to bring it forward.

**STEFANOVIC:** Peta Credlin on her show last night said that, you know, the work hard play hard thing was evident during her years in Canberra. She was shocked by what Ms Higgins had to say but she was not entirely that surprised by it. Given all your years in Parliament, Kristina, what have you seen, if anything, that in hindsight, was unacceptable?

**KENEALLY:** Peter, it's a really good question. And it's something I spoke about when I appeared in the Four Corners 'Canberra Bubble' program, that when I first came to Federal Parliament as a member of the Press Gallery, in fact, I was taken aback by the culture here. And Peta Credlin is right, the 'work hard, play hard' culture is here and that's not unusual in other industries. However, it doesn't need to come with women feeling unsafe, women feeling like sexual objects or women feeling that if they are assaulted or harassed that they can't bring those complaints forward and be believed and supported. What I have observed here is that there is a culture, though, unfortunately in Canberra, where, quite frankly, women are often sexualised and sexual objects. And, I have often, as I said on that ABC Four Corners program, I wondered at the time, what is it like for women in this building who are not in positions of power and don't have public platforms and don't have the agency to be able to to manage, address and deal with assault.

**STEFANOVIC:** Yeah, and I know that Britt's not doing well, at the moment struggling actually, under the pressure of kind of going up against the system. She received a call from Malcolm Turnbull last night. No calls, though, from Scott Morrison or Linda Reynolds or even Michaela Cash. Does that surprise you?

**KENEALLY:** It does. And, you know, while I acknowledge that the Minister, Linda Reynolds, gave a very long answer to a question, she used Question Time to apologise publicly, to Brittany. Quite frankly, pick up the phone, be a human being, you know, and stop obfuscating. I mean, we have here the most horrific thing I can imagine, a young staffer with an alleged rape on the Minister's couch. You know, I don't understand Peter, how Minister Reynolds can't be moved by that. What I also don't understand is why the Prime Minister had to point to a conversation with his wife and observe that he was the father of daughters to understand that an alleged rape is wrong, and the victims should be supported. Surely, any human being but particularly the Prime Minister of the country doesn't need to be the father of daughters to understand that.

**STEFANOVIC:** Alright, Kristina Keneally. I did want to talk to you about a few other issues as well. But we're out of time, unfortunately. But we'll talk to you again soon. Appreciate you coming on, though. We'll talk to you again soon.

**KENEALLY:** Thank you.

***ENDS***

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)



TRANSCRIPT



**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY  
DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY  
SENATOR FOR NEW SOUTH WALES**

**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
RADIO INTERVIEW  
ABC RADIO NATIONAL  
WEDNESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2021**

***SUBJECTS: Sexual assault allegations at Parliament House; Federal Court decision on Biloela Family.***

**FRAN KELLY, HOST:** ...but that's at odds with the account given by the former staff and Brittany Higgins, who says that one of the Prime Minister's senior advisors was, quote, "checking in with her some months ago." The Prime Minister has rebuked Defence Minister Linda Reynolds for failing to tell him about the allegation. But he denies the Government has a 'don't ask, don't tell' policy towards sexual assault.

**[CLIP] SCOTT MORRISON, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA:** That is a very valid question, and I can assure you that there is no such policy. And I'm not happy about the fact that it was not brought to my attention. And I can assure you people know that, I can assure you people know that.

**KELLY:** The Prime Minister has established two inquiries, but he's also agreed to Labor's call for an independent review into the workplace culture of Parliament House. Kristina Keneally is

the Shadow Minister for Home Affairs. Kristina Keneally, welcome back to Breakfast.

**SENATOR KRISTINA KENEALLY, DEPUTY LABOR LEADER IN THE SENATE AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Thank you, Fran and good morning to your listeners.

**KELLY:** The Prime Minister has told Parliament that his office was first advised of the rape allegation last week. He himself didn't know about it until the story was published on Monday, that doesn't match up with the recollections of Brittany Higgins. Who do you believe, Scott Morrison or Brittany Higgins?

**KENEALLY:** First, Fran, and let me just again express as I did the other day my absolute compassion for Brittany Higgins and my admiration for her courage and determination that no other woman who works in Parliament, or for the Liberal Party, should have to go through, not just the trauma, the awful trauma, of being attacked, the alleged rape that occurred in the Minister's office, on the Minister's couch, but then, as she describes it, the pressure as a political problem that she just go away and that she didn't feel supported to go to the Police. So I admire her courage and I send her our compassion.

When we come, though, to what the Prime Minister said in Parliament yesterday. It is at odds with Brittany Higgins, it is at odds with her account of the involvement of two staffers from the Prime Minister's office, one who was the acting Chief of Staff to Minister Reynolds at the time. And another person, the Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, that Brittany Higgins describes as the Prime Minister's 'fixer'.

Fran, can I also make this point though, the Prime Minister's statement in Parliament is also at odds with the Government's statement, it was pointed out following the airing of the interview with Brittany Higgins. I know you are on radio, but for your listeners, I'm holding the federal Government statement from earlier in this week, and it makes clear that back in March Ministers Reynolds' office became aware of a breach, a potential breach of the Ministerial statement of standards for staff and the Prime Minister's office was assisting then, was assisting Minister Reynolds and her office to determine what that breach was. Now, the Prime Minister cannot have it both ways, he needs to get his story straight here, either the statement that was put out earlier in the week that his office was involved back in March, assisting

Minister Reynolds' office, is correct, or his statement to the Parliament is correct, that his office only knew this month.

**KELLY:** And why is it so important, why is this so important that if the Prime Minister didn't know or if Prime Minister was told, what's the issue here?

**KENEALLY:** Well, one goes to an issue of a culture of cover up in Government and, you know, Brittany herself spoke quite passionately and I think movingly and made such a significant impression when she described the way in which she felt she was pressured to go away, to not be a political problem that, you know, there was--and these aren't her words--but there was in effect, her description, an attempt to cover this up and to make it disappear. That now that's compounded by an ongoing culture of cover up, at best, it means that there is a culture of, don't tell the Prime Minister things that so that later on he can deny he knew them.

At worst, what we have is a Prime Minister and a Defence Minister Linda Reynolds, who are compounding the trauma for Brittany because they can't get their stories straight. And because they continue to obfuscate and deny, not just Brittany but all women in this Parliament, all women across Australia, confidence that allegations of rape are taken seriously and are responded to with the appropriate steps, compassion and support for the victim and ensuring that the investigations, with Police and other authorities are followed through.

**KELLY:** Cover-up is a crime of intent. The Prime Minister and the now-Defence Minister Linda Reynolds have said, Linda Reynolds particularly, that she was concerned with the privacy of this young woman at the time and I presume the implication is they didn't want to go spreading it around because it was her story to tell, not, not others. Is it necessarily a cover up or is it perhaps a lack of understanding or again goes to the issue of culture, people not knowing and understanding how to support somebody and not knowing that to treat a crime like a crime means that the boss needs to know about it?

**KENEALLY:** Fran, it's extraordinary that any employer wouldn't know to treat a crime like a crime. It's extraordinary that any employer wouldn't understand that if an alleged rape happened in the employer's office on the employer's couch, that that needs to be reported, and the victim needs to be supported. It's even more extraordinary when we are talking about the Defence Minister of Australia, when we are talking about the Prime Minister's office, when we

are talking about the Prime Minister himself.

And can I say, Fran, it shouldn't take the Prime Minister of Australia to be the father of daughters to understand that rape is wrong and victims need to be supported, surely any human being, but particularly a human being that occupies the highest office in the land, should understand instinctively that if a woman alleges a rape, a sexual assault, in a workplace on them, in the employers office, on the employers couch, that needs to be taken seriously.

**KELLY:** You're referring to the comments the Prime Minister made yesterday when he told reporters that, you know, he had a conversation with his wife, Jenny, the other night she said to him, you have to think about this as a father first, what would you want to happen if it were our girls. He said Jenny has a way of clarifying things. Now what the Prime Minister did then was a much more emphatic response and outlined the two reviews and investigations, he was going to put in place, but do you think that comment from the Prime Minister which has attracted some criticism and you were critical of it there. Does it go to the culture in Parliament House where the political paradigm overshadows the personal cost? An answer might satisfy the political requirements - the Prime Minister did stand in Parliament before he'd had that conversation with his wife, he did apologise, he did say things were wrong. But it wasn't human enough, it wasn't emphatic enough, he wasn't treating this like the crime exactly that it is.

**KENEALLY:** Well that's, I think, Fran, hits the nail on the head. I look at that and I think, you know, how can you not be moved as soon as you hear of these allegations. I mean when I heard that they had that Minister Reynolds and her then-Chief of Staff had taken Brittany into the very room where the assault occurred, the alleged assault occurred and interviewed her there, I felt sick to my stomach, and I don't, I don't need to be the mother of a daughter to understand that.

Fran, can I also just observe that this is now the only the latest of allegations and reports of bullying, harassment and now it's almost unbelievable were saying these words, an alleged rape in a Minister's office. And when the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison took over from Malcolm Turnbull, he stood up and said he was going to ensure that they, you know, in response to allegations of bullying of women in the Liberal Party, he was going to ensure that there was going to be a robust process for complaints to come forward. That didn't happen. It was an announcement and it didn't happen and what we saw this week, what we saw this

week is a political fix again from the Prime Minister.

I hope he's genuine, I hope he's genuine in taking up Anthony Albanese's offer to have a bipartisan approach and to result in an independent system for complaints to come forward from staff, because clearly what we have now in Parliament isn't keeping women safe, isn't keeping staff safe and, and the staff here that I talked to, don't have confidence in the system here.

**KELLY:** Part of the problem is the way the power dynamic works in Parliament House, which is each Minister's office is a sort of a feudal realm unto itself it almost seems. Labor's proposing as you mentioned there that bipartisan review of the workplace culture. Within the crossbench they've gone further, they want an independent complaints body to be established outside the remit of the Ministerial offices outside the Finance Department. Do you support that idea?

**KENEALLY:** I think there's merit in that idea and, again, if we had a bipartisan approach in the Parliament, we could, we could come together as parliamentarians, and as human beings and deliver a better system than what we have now.

**KELLY:** And so who is Labor proposing should conduct a review and independent review of workplace culture.

**KENEALLY:** Well, what Anthony and Tanya, our Shadow Minister for Women said yesterday is it should be an eminent Australian, someone who has skills and qualifications in this area and who is independent from the political process.

**KELLY:** Because this process is not unknown, I mean we've seen this go through in the High Court recently and calls for an independent body there. Are other workplaces have these in place, it shouldn't be that hard a job. Kristina Keneally is the Deputy Labor Senate Leader and Shadow Minister of Home Affairs.

Can I just ask you before we hit the news. The Biloela Tamil family being held on Christmas Island, a court ruling yesterday prevented their, or gave them another reprieve, prevented their deportation back to Sri Lanka for now, but their faith is still in the hands of the Minister for

Immigration, who has the right to grant a visa or not. The Government in the meantime says they will stay in detention on Christmas Island, what should happen now?

**KENEALLY:** Fran, this sorry saga should come to an end. Not only is the taxpayer spending \$50 million to keep this family of four in immigration detention on Christmas Island, but there is a measurable cost to their health, their mental health, their wellbeing. And really, let's reflect that the Biloela community wants them home. The Biloela community has always wanted them to come home. Labor has been consistent in making clear that the Minister, with his powers, should intervene. Allow this family to come home and afford due process to their claims for protection.

**KELLY:** But as you say there, the Minister has the power to make a determination one way or another, Peter Dutton says the family's claims have been comprehensively assessed by multiple courts. Do you have any confidence that the Minister will change the direction the Government's taken on this up to now?

**KENEALLY:** Well my appeal here is to the Minister for Immigration, the new Minister for Immigration, Alex Hawke, who comes to this with fresh eyes, who has the power. And who could today, make a decision to ensure that these two children, Australian-born children get out of immigration detention, that this family is returned home to their regional Queensland town, Biloela, that wants them back. And that we don't spend any more taxpayer money keeping a family of four who pose no risk to the community in immigration detention on Christmas Island.

**KELLY:** Kristina Keneally, thank you very much for joining us.

**KENEALLY:** Thank you.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Noting the significant events affecting the public and retailers over the month of November 2018, the Minister for Home Affairs' office asked the Department of Home Affairs to consider this proposal. He also asked the Department of Finance to cost it to ensure it was suitable and it was value for money. The proposal was subsequently assessed and recommended to be funded as it represented value for money and a proper use of Commonwealth resources, consistent with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013.

**The PRESIDENT:** Senator Keneally, a supplementary question?

**Senator KENEALLY** (New South Wales—Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate) (14:13): I thank the minister for that answer. Documents released under freedom of information show that on 28 September 2018, almost two months before the Bourke Street attack, Minister Dutton directed his department to consider a proposal for a grant to the National Retail Association for protecting public spaces. How could the minister request his department to consider a grant in response to a terrorist attack that had not yet occurred?

**Senator REYNOLDS** (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) (14:13): Senator Keneally, I think you have completely misunderstood, so I'll go back over the answer I have just given.

*Opposition senators interjecting—*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Order!

**Senator REYNOLDS:** This is all about the politics of this issue, and this is really not a grant or a grant program to take that out. So, again, this grant was for the type of these activities. The National Retail Association, who represents businesses like those who were impacted by that terrible attack, were seeking crowded place protection. That is exactly at the heart of what this grant was all about.

*Senator Keneally interjecting—*

*Senator Watt interjecting—*

**The PRESIDENT:** Senator Watt and Senator Keneally.

**Senator Scarr:** Senator O'Neill would have got that right!

**The PRESIDENT:** Senator Scarr! Senator Keneally, a final supplementary question?

**Senator KENEALLY** (New South Wales—Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate) (14:14): Public documents reveal the minister received a direct political donation from the National Retail Association a week before he asked his department to fast track a nearly \$1 million grant. The Bourke Street terrorist attack was a national tragedy. It saw one victim lose his life and two stabbing victims seriously injured. Is the minister really using this tragedy the cover up his conflict of interest?

**Senator REYNOLDS** (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) (14:14): There is only one side of politics in this chamber that is playing politics with this issue. It was very clear that this was funding for protecting crowded places, which is exactly what Senator Keneally said.

*Senator Keneally interjecting—*

**The PRESIDENT:** Senator Keneally.

**Senator REYNOLDS:** It was vetted by Finance. It was vetted by Home Affairs. This was to protect retailers from terrorist attacks. It is that simple. There is only one side that is playing politics with that, and that is that side of the chamber.

*Senator Keneally interjecting—*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

*Senator Keneally interjecting—*

**The PRESIDENT:** Senator Keneally, while I'm talking, please. I'm going to ask people to respect my request, when they are called by name, to at least count to 10 slowly before they start breaching standing orders again.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

10/02/2021 09:48:38 PM

s 47F



Peter Dutton

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton's \$880,000 grant to the National Retail Association eight days after it made a \$1,500 political donation to the Queensland Liberal National Party reeks.

A leader holds those he leads accountable. But repeatedly you have let your ministers use taxpayer's money for their own political gain.

I am ashamed of this behaviour; Australians expect much more.



11/02/2021 06:07:46 AM

s 47F



Rorting of public funds

PM

Don't think you understand how angry the public are about pork barreling of tax payer money

Peter Dutton is just the latest in the long list that started when your government fudged sports grants while in care taker mode

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-02-10/peter-dutton-cut-funding-safety-projects-selected-his-own-list/13126834>

Where is the probity and decency that is supposed to come with public office?

Grants, public money, should be allocated based on greatest need

Regards

s 47F



11/02/2021 06:18:31 PM

s 47F

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Scott.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Your party also has a moral and ethics issue. Dutton giving away \$880,000 grants for a \$1500 donation to the Qld LNP? That is sickening. My trust in the Liberals is at an all time low.

regards

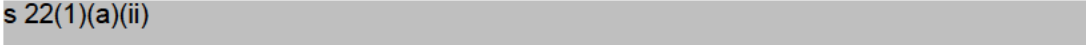
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12/02/2021 03:51:20 PM

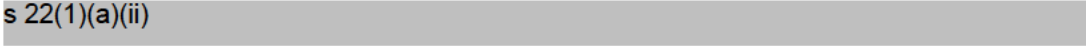
s 47F



s 22(1)(a)(ii)

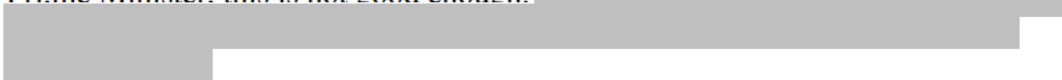


s 22(1)(a)(ii)

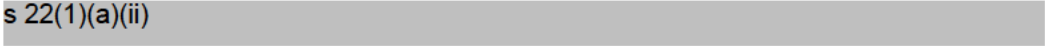


Media: Prime Minister Scott Morrison has defended Home Affairs Peter Dutton against accusations of pork-barrelling, as the cabinet minister says his changes gave the commonwealth more bang for its buck. Mr Dutton handpicked 53 projects to share in \$8.5 million for security cameras and safety lighting in the months before the last federal election, only five of which were in safe Labor seats.


Prime Minister, this is not good enough. s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 47F

