

GETTING ON BOARD ABOVEBOARD

In May 2007 a small team of undergraduate and postgraduate students at the Australian National University in Canberra facilitated the inaugural AboveBoard Public Accountability Forum. The event featured an expert panel of Government officials, Parliamentarians, journalists and academics discussing the ambit of accountability within these broad topics:

- Law enforcement;
- Administrative review;
- Defence and security;
- Ministerial and parliamentary; and
- International affairs.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman and then Acting Commissioner of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI), Professor John McMillan, delivered the keynote address entitled 'Accountability of Government', the full text of which may be viewed at: http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/commonwealth/publish.nsf/Content/speeches_20_07_02.

Following the Ombudsman's address, the attendees, being approximately 60 students, broke out into small groups of 10-12 to concentrate on one of the abovementioned topics, guided by two of the most relevant experts. We are planning to host the event again in May this year and other participants are invited.

Law undergraduates or recent graduates are invited to attend the event which will take place between on Saturday 12 May at the John Curtin School of Medical Research at ANU, comprising of several guest speakers, followed by the panel discussions and small group analysis. National security and Ministerial responsibility will remain prominently on the agenda, with an added focus area of environmental accountability and climate change, and the organisers are open to other suggestions.

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