



## **Australian Government**

Australian Government response to the  
Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee  
report:

COVID-19 Royal Commission

JULY 2024

On 19 October 2023, the Senate referred the terms of reference for a COVID-19 Royal Commission to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee for inquiry and report by 31 March 2024. On 26 March 2024, the Committee extended its reporting date from 31 March 2024 and tabled a Report on 19 April 2024. The Government thanks witnesses and submitters for their contributions to the inquiry.

As is noted in the Dissenting Report of Senators Green and Ghosh, on 21 September 2023 the Prime Minister the Hon Anthony Albanese MP announced an independent inquiry into Australia’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

That inquiry is being conducted by an independent panel who have extensive experience across public health, social care, government and economics. The inquiry has noted that its terms of reference are very broad, permitting it to consider all key aspects of the national response to the pandemic, including the interface of that response with other levels of government and its impact on Australian citizens. More than 2,000 people and organisations have made submissions to the inquiry. The inquiry is due to provide a final report to Government by the end of September 2024.

The Government’s response to the Committee’s recommendations is as follows:

<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Government Response</b>
<b>Committee Report</b>		
1	<b>Recommendation 1</b> The committee recommends that the federal government establishes a royal commission to examine the Australian response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequential impacts on the Australian community.	The Government does not support this recommendation.
2	<b>Recommendation 2</b> The committee recommends that the federal government encourages the states and territories to pass complementary legislation that would enable them to participate in the royal commission. State and territory governments that do not initially join the royal commission should be able to join the royal commission at a later date if they agree to do so.	The Government does not support this recommendation.
	<b>Recommendation 3</b> The committee recommends that the federal government adopt the terms of reference outlined in paragraphs 3.99 and 3.100 as the draft terms of reference.	The Government does not support this recommendation.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Government Response</b>
<p data-bbox="172 174 443 208"><b>Recommendation 4</b></p> <p data-bbox="172 212 670 492">The committee recommends that the draft terms of reference for a COVID-19 Royal Commission are made available for public comment to allow the people of Australia an opportunity to provide input on the terms of reference prior to adoption.</p>	<p data-bbox="708 174 1437 208">The Government does not support this recommendation.</p>