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March 23, 2005

Mr Jonathan Curtis  
Secretary  
Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Crime Commission  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT

Dear Mr Curtis,

**Examination of the Annual Report of the Australian Crime Commission**

Please treat this letter as a submission to your inquiry.

The committee will appreciate that all Australian governments are experiencing an enduring period of fiscal restraint. It is therefore appropriate that the various agencies in the Justice and Customs portfolio remain focused on their core business, and work cooperatively to safeguard Australia. I have no reason to doubt that the ACC is proceeding accordingly.

The core business of the ACC is, of course, criminal intelligence and investigation. The intelligence function, especially those elements relating to strategic intelligence, may entail a degree of overlap with the kinds of research conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology and some university centres. I recognise that intelligence and research products have different standards, data sources, methods and purposes, but they can and should inform each other.

The Australian Institute of Criminology, in particular, is highly regarded as an independent source of research expertise and of authoritative, objective information. It has invested in a long-term evidence base that is grounded in the highest research standards, including external peer review. Moreover, it has a track record of fruitful collaboration with other agencies such as the Australian High Tech Crime Centre and, indeed, the ACC itself.

By engaging in partnerships with institutions such as these, the ACC may be able to achieve more than it can on its own. Moreover, such partnerships could free internal resources to focus on those unique aspects of the ACC's work that cannot be delivered by outside bodies.

In conclusion, the ACC should be encouraged to harness some of the very substantial expertise elsewhere in government, as well as in the higher education sector. This can result in the more efficient production of knowledge in furtherance of crime control.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Peter Grabosky