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# Australian Human Rights Commission Accepts Complaints Against News Corp

## MEDIA RELEASE

**13 November 2025**

Four group legal actions accusing multiple News Corp media outlets, journalists and commentators of discrimination and racial hatred have been accepted by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).

Represented by Sydney-based law firm Birchgrove Legal, a group of 11 complainants – including University of NSW Associate Professor Peter Slezak, Australia Palestine Advocacy Network President Nasser Mashni and Actor/Producer Claudia Karvan OAM – made **four complaints** to the AHRC alleging discrimination on the grounds of race, descent, national and ethnic origin, and racial hatred under the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) (RDA). These accepted complaints included a total of **81 impugned publications or broadcasts**.

| Complaint                                             | Number of Impugned publications and broadcasts |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Andrew Bolt and their employer                        | 18                                             |
| Sky News and 12 named individuals                     | 21                                             |
| Sharri Markson and their employer                     | 20                                             |
| News Corps, its subsidiaries and 15 named individuals | 22                                             |
| <b>Total</b>                                          | 81                                             |

Some of the complaints' allegations impacting Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims include:

1. **Reporting Israeli atrocity propaganda as fact without corroborating evidence**, including exhaustively debunked claims about Palestinians "beheading" 40 Israeli babies, mutilating a pregnant woman and stabbing her unborn baby, and putting a baby in the oven on October 7;
2. **Dehumanising Palestinians** as having a "sick culture", and saying they are collectively culpable for atrocities and crimes on 7 October 2023, including the kidnapping of Israeli children, saying Palestinians teach their children "savagery"; using language like "black-hearted Arabs", "the gorillas of Gaza."
3. **Trivialising and ridiculing atrocities experienced by Palestinians**: Multiple News Corp journalists have conveyed that Palestinians are to blame for their own deaths in Gaza and have brought this upon themselves; and
4. **Dehumanising Muslims of Arab background** as "petri dishes of hostility" who have a culture "steeped in anti-semitic hatred" and who have caused Australia's "multicultural experiment" to "fail".

The respondents captured in the accepted complaints include:

1. Australian News Channel PTY LTD (Sky News Australia)
2. Nationwide News PTY LTD (including The Australian, Daily Telegraph)
3. News Corp Australia PTY LTD
4. The Herald and Weekly Times PTY LTD (Herald Sun)
5. Dr Tanveer Ahmed
6. Angira Bharadwaj
7. Tim Blair
8. Andrew Bolt
9. Caleb Bond
10. Clarrisa Bye
11. Nick Cater
12. Dr Zaina Cheema
13. Rowan Dean
14. Sophie Elsworth
15. Professor Henry Ergas AO
16. Alan Howe
17. Merryn Johns
18. Alex McDermott
19. Chris Kenny
20. Erin Molan
21. James Macpherson

22. Jacquelin Magnay
23. Sharri Markson
24. James Morrow
25. Rita Panahi
26. Jeanine Pirro
27. Steve Price
28. Evelyn Raye
29. Liz Storer
30. Emeritus Professor Ramesh Thakur
31. Gemma Tognini

The *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* gives the Commission the power to investigate and attempt to conciliate complaints alleging unlawful discrimination. The complainants seek accountability for the harm caused by News Corp's coverage.

Nasser Mashni, President of APAN, said: "News Corp has relentlessly argued that Palestinians do not deserve protection from violence."

"They never apologised for spreading Israeli atrocity propaganda about beheaded babies, even after it was proven false."

"Flouting international law and basic decency, they have justified and promoted public support for the collective punishment of Palestinian men, women, and children. This goes far beyond poor journalism."

### **Supporters demonised as traitors and an existential threat**

Associate Professor Peter Slezak stated, "Attention is diverted from Israel's atrocities by uncritical reporting of propaganda lies, dehumanising Palestinians, and blaming them while dismissing justified criticism as antisemitism."

Associate Professor Slezak said, "Jewish people are facing a profound moral challenge as these actions are carried out in our name. Those of us who speak out against them were positioned as traitors and dangers to our own people."

NewsCorp commentary labelled white protestors as a threat to Western civilisation, accusing people like Karvan of "hating" and waging "a war" on their own culture's values, calling them "dangerous" and morally equivalent to terrorists.

This rhetoric has been used to justify atrocities committed by white nationalists against "white" people like Jo Cox and the victims of the Oslo terrorist attack.

Actor and Producer Claudia Karvan OAM said, “This commentary silences me and makes me fearful. This misinformation and propaganda do not serve us well as a society.”

Birchgrove Legal Principal Moustafa Kheir explained, “The subject matter of this complaint shows that NewsCorp has systematically portrayed Palestinians, Muslims, and Arabs as subhuman who don’t deserve protection.”

“Throughout history, white people have been labelled “race traitors” for opposing slavery, supporting civil rights, or being in interracial relationships. Today, white and Jewish people are accused of the same for advocating for human rights and empathising with Palestinians. This is acutely dehumanising not only for Palestinians, but for their supporters, suggesting they can’t independently reason, they are morally defective, and that they are polluting and despoiling their own group.”

“The complainants rightfully feel aggrieved by the publications and broadcasts – these narratives have been exploited to justify genocide against Palestinians as well as [acts of terrorism](#) and other atrocities over the years.”

## ENDS

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