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Form 59
Rule 29.02(1)

Affidavit

No. VID404 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Victoria
Division: General

ALON CASSUTO

Applicant

MARY KOSTAKIDIS

Respondent

Affidavit of: Jack Douglas Vaughan
Address: 1/299 Elizabeth Street, Sydney NSW 2000
Occupation: Solicitor
Date: 30 April 2026


Document number	Details	Paragraph	Page
1	Affidavit of Jack Douglas Vaughan in relation to interlocutory application for non-standard discovery	1-10	1-6
2	Annexure "A" being an Academic article titled " <i>Middle East Critique</i> titled ' <i>Palestine Solidarity and Zionist Backlash in Australian Universities</i> '" by Jumana Bayeh and Nic Riemer	9 (a)	7

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party) Mary Kostakidis, the Respondent
 Prepared by (name of person/lawyer) Jack Douglas Vaughan
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Document number	Details	Paragraph	page
3	Annexure "B" being a Crikey News article titled ' <i>In the quest to appease Israel, the media undermine our basic rights</i> ' by Bernard Keane	9 (b)	23
4	Annexure "C" being a statement from Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance titled " <i>Statement from the National Media Section of MEAA</i> "	9 (c)	31
5	Annexure "D" being a statement from International Federation of Journalists titled " <i>Australia Journalists censored for reporting on Gaza</i> "	9 (c)	35


I, Jack Douglas Vaughan, of 1/299 Elizabeth Street, Sydney NSW 2000, solicitor, affirm:

1. I am the solicitor with day-to-day carriage of the proceedings on behalf of the respondent, under the supervision of the solicitor on record for the respondent, Mark Davis. I am authorised to make this affidavit on the respondent's behalf.
2. I make this affidavit from my own knowledge except where otherwise indicated. By making this affidavit, I do not waive any privilege in the work undertaken by myself or my colleagues in acting for the respondent, or instructions given by the respondent in respect of these proceedings.
3. I make this affidavit in relation to an interlocutory application for non-standard discovery pursuant to rule 20.15 of the *Federal Court Rules 2011* (Cth) (the **Rules**), or in the alternative, an order pursuant to Rule 20.14 of the Rules for standard discovery filed by the applicant on 10 March 2026 (**Mr Cassuto's discovery application**).
4. Mr Cassuto's discovery application is supported by an affidavit of his solicitor, Mr Raphael Yehudah Leibler affirmed on 14 April 2026 and filed on 15 April 2026 (the **Leibler Affidavit**).
5. As deposed to at paragraphs 12 to 15 of the Leibler Affidavit, the extent of any remaining disagreement between the parties regarding Mr Cassuto's discovery application is in relation to the end date in the definition of "Relevant Period". The applicant presses for the Relevant Period to include 20 March 2025 to 16 March 2026 (**extended relevant period**), whereas the respondent resists that inclusion.



Effect of the extended relevant period

6. If the Court were to make discovery orders incorporating the extended relevant period, compliance with that order by the respondent would involve the expenditure of considerably more resources in conducting the reasonable searches required for compliance. The compliance burden imposed would be increased because:
- (a) In relation to category 1 sought by Mr Cassuto's discovery application, a reasonable search will require the respondent to extract data from her X account. While X does offer a feature to do so, known as 'Your X data', I understand that that feature does not permit the extraction of only a selection of the data associated with a particular X account. Instead, it exclusively provides for a complete extraction of associated data. Accordingly, to comply with category 1, the respondent will be required to either manually compile responsive data in the relevant period, or manipulate the data extracted using the 'Your X data' feature. Either way, the extended relevant period will increase the volume of captured data and will increase the time spent by the respondent conducting those searches.
 - (b) In relation to the remaining categories of Mr Cassuto's discovery application where the relevant period assumes relevance (categories 3 to 7), the respondent will be required to search through her private communication channels (including postal correspondence, email accounts, text messages, instant messaging platforms and direct messages on social media platforms) as well as her private notes and documents. Increasing the scope of those searches to include the extended relevant period (of approximately twelve months) will increase the time which will be spent by the respondent conducting those searches.
7. The elevated burden of complying with discovery orders risks significantly negatively impacting the respondent. That is particularly so in the following circumstances:
- (a) the respondent is an individual, and is 71 years of age;
 - (b) the respondent is currently preparing her case for trial, including preparing evidence she may give in the course of these proceedings;
 - (c) the respondent maintains a professional practice as a prominent Australian journalist, commentator and advocate;
 - (d) the respondent has commitments to her friends and family including to her young grandchildren; and,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive script. The signature is located in the bottom right corner of the page, overlapping the end of the list item (d).

(e) the respondent is committed to maintaining her physical and mental health throughout the difficult process of this litigation which was not of her bringing.

8. The extended relevant period will also capture an increased volume of the respondent's private correspondence and materials. This is a cause for concern for her, because of the greater intrusion into her private affairs, but also because it is disproportionate to the nature of the claim which concerns two posts made by her in January 2024.
9. The respondent is also concerned that the extended relevant period will capture an increased volume of personal information of third parties with whom she may have corresponded or has been otherwise involved. The respondent is concerned about the exposure to the applicant (and thus to the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA) and potentially to other Zionist organisations) of the personal information of persons who have corresponded or been involved with her. She is also concerned that such persons may be at risk from the ZFA or other Zionists or Zionist organisations of "lawfare" (such as she perceives the present claim against her to be) or other harassing behaviour. That concern takes account of the fact that the respondent's private correspondence is often with academics and other journalists and that Zionists and/or Zionist organisations have targeted academics and journalists in Australia who are critical of Israel. Some of the relevant reporting is as follows:

- (a) On 1 April 2024, Jumana Bayeh and Nic Riemer published an academic article in *Middle East Critique* titled '*Palestine Solidarity and Zionist Backlash in Australian Universities*'. The authors of that article relevantly describe the effect of the article as follows:

"Overall, what we demonstrate is the growing Palestine solidarity among Australian-based academics and, at the same time, the increasing efforts by Zionist lobby groups to apply pressure on management across universities to suppress pro-Palestinian advocacy"

A copy of that article is annexed hereto and marked 'A'.

- (b) On 10 February 2025, Bernard Keane of *Crikey* published a news article titled '*In the quest to appease Israel, the media undermine our basic rights*'. That article relevantly states that:

"The individual cases add up to a pattern: Australian institutions, and especially its major media institutions, will punish you for criticising Israel. Pro-Israel groups will demand you be sacked, they will call for your career to be destroyed. Those groups

Handwritten signature and initials, likely belonging to the respondent or a legal representative, located at the bottom right of the page.

will be protected. Media companies will ride roughshod over basic rights and due process to comply with their demands. You will be smeared and publicly vilified on completely spurious bases."

A copy of that article is annexed hereto and marked 'B'.

- (c) On 24 and 29 September 2025, the Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA) and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) jointly published press releases titled "Statement from the National Media Section of MEAA" (on the MEAA website at the following URL: <https://www.meaa.org/news/statement-from-the-national-media-section-of-meaa/>) and "Australia Journalists censored for reporting on Gaza" (on the IFJ website at the following URL: <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/press-releases/article/australia-journalists-censored-for-reporting-on-gaza>). The press release that appears on the MEAA website relevantly states:

"Since October 7, MEAA has seen a rise in threats, harassment, and intimidation of journalists who report and comment on Gaza."

The press release that appears on the IFJ website relevantly states:

"A number of Australian journalists have been targeted, harassed, and censored by lobby groups for reporting critical of Israel's war on Gaza."

A copy of those press releases are annexed hereto and marked 'C' and 'D' respectively.

10. For the above reasons, the respondent is of the view that the extended relevant period, if ordered by the Court, would impose an unjustifiably onerous discovery burden on her and it should not be so ordered.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive name that appears to be 'M. F.' followed by a large, circular flourish.

Affirmed by the deponent
at Sydney
in New South Wales
on 30 April 2026
Before me:

)
)
)
)
)



Signature of deponent



Signature of witness

Anthony Bonaccorso
Solicitor, XD Law & Advocacy
Level 1, 299 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Form 1
Rule 2.13(2)

Annexure Certificate "A"

No. VID404 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Victoria
Division: General

In the matter of

ALAN CASSUTO

Applicant

MARY KOSTAKIDIS

Respondent

This is the Annexure "A" produced and shown to Jack Douglas Vaughan at the time of affirming his affidavit on 30 April 2026.

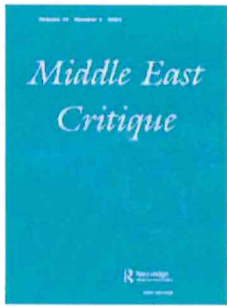
Before me:



Signed by Anthony Bonaccorso, Solicitor

Date: 30 April 2026

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	Mary Kostakidis, the Respondent	
Prepared by (name of person/lawyer)	Jack Douglas Vaughan	
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Palestine Solidarity and Zionist Backlash in Australian Universities

Jumana Bayeh & Nick Riemer

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Palestine Solidarity and Zionist Backlash in Australian Universities

Jumana Bayeh^a  and Nick Riemer^b

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ABSTRACT

Academic solidarity with Palestine in Australia is strongly influenced by multiple factors, in particular the strength of the powerful local Zionist lobby and growing public awareness of Israeli crimes. Repression of the Palestine justice movement has run along internationally familiar lines, involving both the targeting of individuals and a broader ideological 'war of position.' In response, the boycott is gaining momentum in Australian universities, as manifested in the formation of new BDS and Palestine solidarity organizations, in efforts within the National Tertiary Education Union, in conferences on the topic of Palestine and BDS and similar academic activities.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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In 2009, the first call to join the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement was issued in Australia, when a small number of academics urged the academic community to boycott Israeli universities and cultural institutions (Electronic Intifada 2009). Since 2009, support for BDS has grown. The unprecedented success of the campaign to boycott the Sydney Festival in January 2022, after it named Israel as a 'star partner' following a modest donation from the Israeli embassy, was a watershed moment where many pro-Palestinian academics participated. The success of this campaign was due in large part to solidarity from First Nations people, and stemmed from recognition that the dispossession of Palestinians and Indigenous Australians is the result of a common experience of settler-colonialism. Black-Palestinian solidarity in Australia dates back at least to the 1970s with the joint political activism of the Indigenous activist and academic, Gary Foley, and the Palestinian diplomat and former PLO representative in the Oceania region, Ali Kazak. In 2022, First Nations journalists like Amy McGuire, and performing artists and their organizations like the rapper Baarka and the dance troupe Marrugeku, were among the first to respond to

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the Sydney Festival Boycott call. One of Australia's key cultural events, the festival was deeply affected by the boycott call, with approximately 40 per cent of performances withdrawing their association. As a result of successes like this, efforts by Israel's supporters to repress support for BDS have increased and in some cases become audaciously repressive, with notable attempts to censor criticism of Israel even during peak moments of Israeli aggression.

We begin by sketching the national context of academic support for Palestine in Australia, detailing the history of BDS efforts in wider society, and noting some demographic considerations that influence how the issue plays out in the Australian context. We then discuss a representative selection of instances of Zionist interference in higher education dating from shortly before the first national BDS call to the present day, describing attacks on both academics and students.¹ As a complement of this 'war of movement' (Gramsci 1971), we turn our attention in conclusion to the 'war of position' waged by Zionist organizations—that is, the structural and ideological campaign undertaken by Israel supporters to naturalize boycott-violating collaboration with Israeli universities, boost the prominence of Israel generally, and consolidate their own political influence on campus.

We write as academics who participate in and observe the struggle for Palestinian rights on Australian campuses, in which both of us have been involved for many years. In what follows, we will be particularly sensitive to the danger of over-intellectualizing or over-theorizing the struggle for Palestine in Australian higher education. For this reason, we confine ourselves here to a largely factual account of incidents over the last fifteen years, described and contextualized in the way that reflects how Palestine advocates understood them both at the time and in hindsight. The facts, we believe, speak for themselves: they do not stand in need of theoretical or other illumination to be grasped and acted on. As such, this paper begins by outlining the Australian context of the BDS movement in academia, and then describes multiple Zionist attempts to derail pro-Palestinian efforts in Australian higher education. In its final section, it discusses how attacks on Palestinian solidarity are structurally and ideologically framed within the academy. Overall, what we demonstrate is the growing Palestine solidarity among Australian-based academics and, at the same time, the increasing efforts by Zionist lobby groups to apply pressure on management across universities to suppress pro-Palestinian advocacy.

The Australian Context

Palestine solidarity is well-established in Australia and characterized by significant interaction between the academic and non-academic spheres. Following the 2009 call, BDS initiatives rapidly emerged in broader civil society. In 2010, the first national BDS conference was held in Melbourne, attracting over one hundred participants. The same year, the council of Marrickville, a Sydney suburb, overwhelmingly voted

¹For the purposes of this article, Zionism refers to the ideology and political view that at least part of historic Palestine, and perhaps all of it, is the homeland of the Jews, and that this justifies ongoing colonial practices towards, and dispossession of, Palestinians. Adherents to this ideology, Zionists, include individuals and lobby groups who pressure organisations, governments and, as this article outlines, universities to police criticisms of Israel and support for BDS.

to endorse BDS on the initiative of local councillors from the Australian Greens. This decision drew widespread public attention, and significant resistance and was withdrawn because of Zionist pressure the following year. Meanwhile, a national campaign against the Max Brenner chain of chocolate restaurants, initiated because of its explicit support for the Israeli military, created widespread controversy over BDS. Other noteworthy landmarks in BDS activism include a campaign to boycott the Sydney Israeli Film Festival in 2014 (New Matilda 2014); the 'BDS: Driving Global Justice for Palestine' conference held at the University of Sydney in 2017, which involved around 250 participants; a successful campaign against Elbit Systems in 2017 (Abunimah 2019); the campaign to boycott the Eurovision Song Contest and the Black Palestinian solidarity conference held at the University of Melbourne in 2019; the boycott of the Melbourne Queer Film Festival in 2021 (Fenwick 2021), and the extensive and widely supported boycott of the 2022 Sydney Festival.

Expressions of Palestine solidarity in civil society are important for two reasons. First, many activists are involved in on- and off-campus activities, whether via student politics, Palestinian and anti-Zionist Jewish community organizations, Indigenous justice struggles, or wider left-wing and grassroots politics. Links between the academic and wider cultural boycott are fostered: the 2017 conference at the University of Sydney, for instance, explicitly set out to strengthen connections between boycott initiatives in academia and outside it; representatives from the Sydney University Staff for BDS group, and academics from other universities, were among the early participants in the 2022 Sydney Festival boycott campaign, initiated by Arab Theatre Studio, an arts organization based in Western Sydney heavily associated with progressive and antiracist cultural politics. Secondly, the prominence of the wider BDS campaign influences the uptake of BDS in universities, as well as the ferocity of Zionist responses to it: pro-Palestine academics constitute easy targets for Israel lobby organizations. The norms of academic professionalism and the expectation of intellectual freedom associated with it mean that the line is often blurred between statements that academics make in their personal and professional capacities. For this reason, academics' political declarations are easily presented as holding reputational consequences for universities, which have not hesitated to claim the right to hold their staff accountable for all positions they take publicly (for instance, on social media), even if the academic is arguably speaking in a private capacity. While a similar blurring of the private and professional spheres is also characteristic of other professions, such as journalism, the appropriation of employees' private life by their employers has gone particularly far in universities. Presumably, this is related to academics' educational responsibilities and their function as role models for the students, and universities' frequent status as at least partly publicly-funded institutions.

One of the most active centres of BDS activism in Australian higher education has been the Sydney Staff for BDS group, established in 2014 by academic and administrative staff members at Sydney University, initially to provide support to Professor Jake Lynch, whose persecution at the hands of the Israel lobby is detailed below. This group has undertaken diverse campaign activities, including lobbying of University of Sydney academics violating the boycott call, dissemination of a boycott pledge, campaigns against student exchange schemes, protests outside Zionist fund-raising events, and regular seminars on boycott-related topics.

In larger national contexts like the US and UK, scholarly associations have been at the forefront of Palestine solidarity work in academia. In Australia, a far smaller country where scholarly associations have less weight, the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) plays an important role. The NTEU's attitude to Zionism has evolved considerably. In 2014, the University of Sydney branch of the union overwhelmingly passed a motion to begin a process of consultation on whether, and if so how, it should endorse the academic boycott. This motion was soon reversed following a scare-mongering intervention from the union's national General Secretary, Grahame McCulloch (Higgins 2014). In 2021, several branches of the union passed motions supportive of BDS, and in the same year the union's national council passed a motion that recognized union members' right to implement the boycott, prohibited union officials from participating in Zionist tours of Israel, and opposed the IHRA anti-Semitism definition (National Tertiary Education Policy 2022).

In the wider context of Palestine activism, the nature and political influence of Australian Zionism needs to be considered. Australia's Jewish community numbers only about one hundred thousand people—less than half a percent of the overall Australian population—but is known for its conservatism and Zionism. There is no organization in Australia comparable to Jewish Voice for Peace in the US, and the few anti-Zionist or pro-Palestinian groups—Jews Against the Occupation, the Australian Jewish Democratic Society, the Tzedek Collective, and the Australian Jewish Council, to name four—are marginal both numerically and in terms of their influence. Zionists undertake intensive political lobbying through organizations like the Executive Council of Australian Jewry; both major parties in Australian politics—the right-wing Liberal party and the centre/centre-right (notionally left-wing) Australian Labour Party (ALP)—are staunch friends of Israel. A key figure in the history of the ALP, H.V. 'Doc' Evatt, was instrumental, as Australian foreign minister, in promoting the Zionist project at the United Nations in 1947 and 1948—an intervention still referenced by ALP politicians today (Brooks 2024). Internationally, Australia is one of the most reliable supporters of Zionism—a fact attributable on the ideological level to the settler-colonial history it shares with Israel, and, more concretely, to its status as a sub-imperial client-state of the US. In other words, Zionists enjoy a powerful presence in Australian society and politics, thus being in a strong position to exert influence on universities.

Zionist Attacks in Higher Education

In this section, we offer a non-exhaustive exemplification of the power of Zionist organizations within Australian academia, to convey a sense of the specific dynamics of the struggle on campus over time. Our first example unfolded a few years prior to the 2009 BDS call. For several years starting in 2000, staff (principally PhD students) led by the late Dr Andrew Vincent at Macquarie University's Centre for Middle East and North African Studies (CMEANS) ran high school simulations that focused on the New South Wales (NSW) Modern History elective 'The Arab-Israeli Conflict 1948–1996.' The simulations involved final-year high-school students engaging in a

role-playing exercise by assuming the identity of a real-life political figure or organization.

In 2004, the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies (JBoD) became aware of the simulations and intervened forcefully to stop them taking place. The main accusation was that CMEANS, whom the JBoD presented as anti-Semitic, had supplied students with source material sympathetic to Hamas and other 'terror' organizations. The other charge was that Jewish students at a particular high school were being bullied by fellow classmates. Both accusations were unfounded. Yet, through unrelenting pressure on school principals and the NSW Department of Education, with the absurd allegation that merely noting the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza constituted historical distortion by CMEANS staff, the JBoD were ultimately successful. In 2005, the Department of Education capitulated to the Board of Deputies' demands and ruled that no member of CMEANS could brief or speak to high school students, and that further simulations would no longer be allowed.

Emboldened by this success, the JBoD expanded their complaints by scrutinizing the courses taught in Macquarie University's Politics and International Relations department. Unsurprisingly, their conclusion was that the three Middle East courses on offer were critical of Israel and supportive of Arab governments. Questions were raised in the state parliament of Victoria about CMEANS by Minister Michael Danby, a prominent Zionist politician, alleging that CMEANS was promoting pro-Arab and specifically anti-Israeli positions (Danby 2006). Following a television debate between Dr Vincent and Mr Danby on the topic (Negus 2006), which was no success for the Zionists, the JBoD deployed another supporter—the Murdoch-owned *Australian* newspaper, well known for its dedicated support for Israel, which ran a sensationalist and dishonest story on its front page with the headline 'Schools' Terrorist Role Play Banned' the morning after the debate. The fact that the country's only national broadsheet ran a front-page story to report on an issue that had been debated and finalized to the satisfaction of the JBoD *one year* previously speaks volumes about the degree of Zionist power in Australia.

A similar attack took place at the University of Sydney in 2013. In October of that year the Israeli 'lawfare' centre Shurat HaDin filed a suit in the Australian Federal Court claiming Professor Jake Lynch had violated Australia's 1975 Racial Discrimination Act. Shurat HaDin, one of whose founders has links to Jewish terrorism against Palestinians (Winstanley 2020), is known for its aggressive prosecution of Palestine solidarity activists globally, especially the BDS movement, and Wikileaks revealed that it was acting on the direction of the Israeli security and intelligence apparatus (Brull 2014). As director of the university's Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and a supporter of BDS, Professor Lynch had refused to sponsor an application for a fellowship from Professor Dan Avnon from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Shurat HaDin pursued the case as a class action, claiming that all Israeli cultural institutions and businesses would be affected. The lawsuit was revised after a judge dismissed those wider claims, leaving Shurat HaDin alone in the case after the other plaintiffs withdrew their participation. In July 2014, the racial discrimination suit against Lynch was abandoned and Shurat HaDin was ordered to pay Lynch's legal costs. Lynch's defence of his right to boycott was a test-case in Australia, and

garnered wide media attention. Lynch received significant public support—except from his employer, the University of Sydney, who left him to self-fund his defence.

Lynch was the object of a further Zionist campaign the following year. The details of the incident are worth recounting since it was a watershed moment for public appreciation of Palestinian rights and its Zionist repression on campus. In March 2015, Zionists at the University of Sydney invited a well-known apologist for the IDF, the retired British colonel Richard Kemp, visiting Australia for the United Israel Appeal, to give a public lecture. Kemp is a regular collaborator with Zionist organizations, and is notorious for his persistent defence of the Israeli military. For instance, in his evidence to the UN Human Rights council in 2009, he contradicted the Goldstone report on Operation Cast Lead by claiming that ‘the Israeli Defense Forces did more to safeguard the rights of civilians in the combat zones than any other army in the history of warfare’ (Alster 2015). Kemp’s address was disrupted by a small group of students protesting against his defence of Israeli state crimes. When university security began to violently manhandle the protesters, Lynch rose from his seat to tell security that they should not be intervening in a political dispute. Lynch was then subjected to a physical attack by an audience member, later revealed to be a postgraduate student at the university, who, among other aggressions, threw water over him and some of the protesters. Lynch invited the attacker to continue dousing him so that he could sue her for damages. To illustrate his intention, he briefly waved a five-dollar bill at her—he was still recovering financially from defending himself in the racial discrimination case and was painfully aware of how much the Zionist lobby had already cost him (New Matilda 2015).

This gesture was seized on by Zionist organizations, and Lynch was widely presented as having behaved in an anti-Semitic manner. As a result, he was subjected to a serious investigation and disciplinary process by the university, which could have led to his dismissal. The case provoked a high degree of discussion on and off campus. A well-attended public meeting at the university in May was addressed by the head of the New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties, a federal Senator for the Australian Greens, the president of the local NTEU branch, as well as by prominent public figures and students and staff (Bagshaw 2015). Ultimately, Lynch was cleared of any accusation of anti-Semitism and retains his position (Chalmers 2015). This event, along with the public campaign to support Lynch in the racial discrimination case the year before, significantly boosted support for Palestine on campus. The University of Sydney’s status as a particular locus of Zionist pressure has unfortunately not been limited to Jake Lynch. In 2019, Dr Tim Anderson, a member of the university’s Political Economy department, highly controversial on account of his support for the repressive policies of the Syrian government, was investigated by university management for allegedly anti-Semitic course material and dismissed. Such a dismissal was later found by the courts to be illegal, following a case brought on Anderson’s behalf by the NTEU.

In addition to these high-profile attacks, there are regular cases of harassment of Palestine-solidarity activists. Zionists frequently level accusations of anti-Semitism against academics who support Palestine. These accusations are regularly found to be

baseless, but the process of investigating them ties up the staff concerned, as well as university managements themselves, in protracted and unwelcome bureaucratic obstruction.² The genocidal assault unleashed by Israel on Gaza following Hamas' attack on October 7, 2023 has led to a major intensification of this pressure, with Palestine solidarity activity on campus even more closely scrutinized by Israel supporters. Supporters of Israel have inundated university administrations with complaints about, or even demands for the dismissal of, various Palestine solidarity activists. Zionists have also regularly tried to censor courses deemed insufficiently favourable to Israel.³

Blatant attempts to censor Palestinian activists by Zionist lobbyists have, in recent times, extended to international academics. In 2022, Dr Louise Adler, a noted critic of Zionism in the Australian cultural world, was appointed as the director of Adelaide Writers' Week (AWW).⁴ Her first Writers' Week as director took place in March 2023, and was to include a special focus on Palestinian writers, both local and international. In the months before, invited Palestinian-American author Susan Abulhawa tweeted critically about Israeli violence toward Palestinians. In response, various pro-Zionist organizations lobbied to have Abulhawa removed from the festival line-up because they deemed her tweets offensive and anti-Semitic.⁵ From her own perspective, as a displaced Palestinian who had witnessed for decades Israel's aggression, Abulhawa was not inclined to temper her language to satisfy a collective of Australian Zionists. Various supporters of Israel used these tweets to pressure the Australian Immigration department to not issue visas to her and other international guests. Because Abulhawa's criticisms were also directed at Ukraine's leader Zelensky, who had aligned the plight of Ukrainians against the Russian invasion with the 'plight' of Israel at the hands of Palestinians, prominent Ukrainians in Australia also spoke out against Abulhawa's participation (Tumarkin 2023).

Since the three international guests were all US passport holders, including Professor Saree Makdisi from UCLA, their visas should have been easily granted via an online process that normally issues entry permits to US citizens in days. Approximately two weeks before the festival was due to start, Dr Adler and prominent members of the Palestinian community recognised the delay in the issuing of visas was not a mere administrative issue.

Dr Adler and various others continuously contacted the Australian Office of Home Affairs to ascertain the reason for the delay with the visas, asking to speak to the Immigration Minister himself and promising to go public with these clear efforts to censor discussion. A media campaign against Abulhawa ensued, with several prominent Zionists penning articles in *The Australian* and the local South Australian newspaper *The Advertiser*, with stories also appearing on TV news (Abulhawa 2023; Szego

²See also article by Neve Gordon in this Special Issue, who discusses a similar pattern in relation to alleged cases of antisemitism in the academy in UK and Europe.

³We cannot give specific details of attacks on academics since October 7, 2023, as they are still subject to enforced confidentiality requirements.

⁴AWW is part of Adelaide Festival, a month-long cultural arts festival that is funded by the South Australian state government.

⁵Abulhawa's X (formerly Twitter) account is suspended and accessing the tweets she posted prior to Adelaide Writers Week is currently not possible.

2023). Abulhawa was accused by journalist Julie Szego of anti-Semitism because she tweeted messages like ‘One cannot overstate what an abomination Israel truly is ... They’re worse than Nazis’ and she referred to Ukraine president Zelensky as a depraved Zionist. For Szego, this slur against Zelensky was not about him being a Zionist—he was from Ukraine and not fighting for Israel—but was motivated by the fact that he is Jewish. Szego’s article captures the main opposition to Abulhawa, namely that Abulhawa uses anti-Zionism as a cover for anti-Semitism. Despite efforts by Palestinians to have their own pieces published in these newspapers, or their voices heard on TV, only one article in any Australian newspaper by a Palestinian went to print, and after considerable lobbying (Mughrabi 2023). Just twenty-four hours before the three American Palestinian invitees were due to board their flights, their visas were finally issued.

While Abulhawa was the focus of the media onslaught, the general aim on the part of Zionist activists was to suspend the Palestine focus of Adelaide Writers’ Week and scuttle efforts by organizers around the country who had set up satellite talks for the other international guests. Makdisi, for instance, had speaking engagements at a bookshop in Sydney, at the University of Sydney and in Melbourne, all in the context of his recently published *Tolerance is a Wasteland: Palestine and the Culture of Denial* (Makdisi 2022).

It is not only academic staff who face attacks and censorship from pro-Zionist organizations in Australia; students have also been a target. There are various historical incidents involving students; one recent example involves South Australian journalism student, Habibah Jaghoori. On September 13, 2022, Jaghoori was dismissed from her role as an editor at the University of Adelaide student magazine, *On Dit*. Jaghoori had published a piece on August 8, 2022, in *On Dit* with the headline ‘For Palestine, There is no Ceasefire.’ The article was written in the context of an intense three-day battle between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants in Gaza where approximately 50 Palestinian civilians were killed almost entirely without, as is customary, international condemnation of Israel’s aggression.

Jaghoori’s article would normally have gone virtually unnoticed. However, its closing lines—‘Free Palestine and Death to Israel’—were the focus of attention by the Australia Israel and Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) and the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA). Both leaders of the two main political parties in the South Australian Parliament also condemned her. For South Australian Premier, Peter Malinauskas, the controversy provided an opportunity for his parliament to condemn anti-Semitism in all its forms. At the conclusion of an investigation by the board of Adelaide university’s student union, YouX, Jaghoori was dismissed from *On Dit*. The decision was not related to the article in question, but due to her using ‘language in public forums that can be clearly construed to support actions that could threaten the welfare of students’ (YouX 2022). Jaghoori’s public statements about Israel’s aggression, in other words, led to her censorship and exclusion as an office bearer within the student union.

At the University of Sydney, a student forum entitled ‘Gaza: The Case for a Global Intifada’ in November of 2023 was banned by the university’s Vice-Chancellor, Mark Scott. The VC’s objection was related to the use of the word ‘Intifada’ in the event

title, and the fact that the leaflet advertising it featured a photograph of a Hamas bulldozer dismantling the Gaza barrier on October 7. In an extraordinary instance of McCarthyite overreach, the term and image were enough grounds for Scott to allege that the forum could constitute support for terrorism (Luu 2023).

Structural and Ideological Aspects of Academic Zionism

The Zionist lobby's direct attacks on Palestine solidarity in universities are complemented by a systematic 'war of position'⁶ aimed at naturalizing boycott-violating collaboration with Israeli universities, boosting the prominence of Israel generally, and consolidating its own influence. Ideologically, this work runs along internationally familiar lines, involving attacks on BDS and anti-Zionism as violations of 'academic freedom,' 'civility,' 'balance' and similar notions, as well as alleged instances of anti-Semitism.⁷ The fullest public expression of anti-BDS arguments can be found in a 2015 book, *Boycotting Israel is Wrong*, by two Australian Zionist academics, Mendes and Dyrenfurth (2015). Since October 7, 2023, the charge of anti-Semitism has been increasingly complemented by the classic Zionist accusation that the Palestine solidarity movement supports terrorism.

Universities offer Zionists fertile ground for promoting anti-Palestinianism, including by obstructing their political opponents. In Australia as elsewhere, academic professionalism has a structural aversion to political controversy, and consistently seeks out the safety of the 'middle ground.' At the same time, it cocoons itself in a congratulatory self-talk where academics praise each other for their supposedly 'critical' and 'nuanced' political insight. The rigidly hierarchical governance structure of Australian universities reinforces these dispositions. Australian higher education is characterized by repressive and arbitrary managerial practices, discharged by a layer of professional university bureaucrats for whom resistance to dominant political actors is highly counterintuitive.⁸ Neoliberal governance reforms and the relentless austerity to which Australian higher education has been subject over recent decades have seriously undermined academic self-governance in Australian universities, creating a highly repressive workplace culture in which many academics are unwilling to speak out. In this context, Zionism's embeddedness in the Australian political establishment allows it to exert significant influence on Vice-Chancellors and university governing bodies.

Materially, Zionism is embedded in the structure of higher education in a variety of ways. Study tours of Israel for university leaders or academics are regularly arranged by the main Zionist organizations, including the Israeli embassy (AJN Staff 2023; Sofer 2019). The Dan David prize, a lucrative award for historians, is promoted in Australia and in 2021 was accepted by University of New South Wales historian Professor Alison Bashford, despite a vocal campaign urging her not to violate the

⁶We draw on Gramsci's notion of 'war of position' here to refer to political agitation carried out by academic staff through union activities, politically-focused groups like Sydney Staff for BDS, as well as various other on-campus events and activities that raise awareness of Palestine.

⁷See Robinson and Griffin (2017); Landy, Lentin, and McCarthy (2020); Riemer (2023).

⁸See Riemer (2023) for discussion of all these points.

boycott. In recent years, the focus of Zionist efforts has been directed towards encouraging universities to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance ‘definition’ of anti-Semitism, most publicly through pressure exerted by a group of federal politicians calling themselves the Australian Parliamentary Friends of the IHRA, whose first activity was to urge Australian Vice-Chancellors to adopt the controversial definition. At the time of writing (February 2024), this campaign has had distinctly mixed success. Some high-profile institutions, including the Australian National University, the University of Sydney, the University of New South Wales, and the University of Adelaide explicitly declined to endorse the IHRA. Others, like La Trobe University, adopted the definition without the accompanying examples—the most contentious aspect of IHRA—and in conjunction with the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism, an alternative definition that also ignores Palestinian perspectives, but is specifically framed in order not to shield Israel from critique.

BDS-violating collaborations between Australian and Israeli universities are also reasonably common. Many Australian universities have student exchange agreements with Israeli institutions, allowing undergraduates to study at partner universities in Israel directly responsible for anti-Palestinian persecution (Wind 2024), in direct violation of the academic boycott (Macquarie University 2023). Institutional partnerships and staff exchanges, like those done under the aegis of Zelman Cowen Academic Initiatives (previously the Zelman Cowen Universities Fund), an organization established to foster Australian universities’ collaboration with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, are increasingly common (J-Wire Newsdesk 2022). The full extent of institution-level boycott violations in Australian universities has not been fully studied. A high-profile recent example is the partnership between the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and Israeli arms manufacturer Elbit Systems—a collaboration that ended as a result of pressure from BDS activists in 2023 (Smith 2023; Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUPE) 2022).

Israel’s reputation for technology and innovation means that it is often held up as an example that Australian society should follow, with universities particularly anxious to participate in the ‘global innovation revolution’ of which Israel is seen as a leader (Wesley 2023). Since 2013, Universities Australia—the official peak-body and mouthpiece for Australian universities—has maintained a bilateral agreement with Israel’s Association of University Heads, which covers collaboration and exchange between students, academics, managements, and institutions. This means that Australian university managements actively seek out, or enthusiastically welcome, boycott-violating collaboration. Under these circumstances, the aversion to boycotts of liberal academia is significantly amplified and anti-BDS arguments have even more traction than they otherwise would.

Conclusion

The fact that Mendes and Dyrenfurth, authors of *Boycotting Israel is Wrong*, felt the need to polemicise against the boycott at book-length reflects Australian Zionists’ rising anxiety. With Israel’s genocidal devastation of Gaza in the wake of the October 7, 2023, attacks and the attendant public outcry, this anxiety can only have intensified.

In this context, the extreme brevity of the 'progressive alternative to BDS' that Mendes and Dyrenfurth's book purports to offer is also relevant. The sketch of this alternative, which will 'guarantee Israeli security needs and genuine Palestinian self-determination' (Mendes and Dyrenfurth 2015, 146–147), occupies a mere four and a half of the book's 153 pages of text. The perfunctory nature of this exposition suggests two possibilities: either contemporary Australian Zionists are unable to mount any argument for their position that goes further than platitudes of 'empathy, dialogue, and compromise' (146), or they feel that, with Zionism the default setting in the Australian political class, there is simply no need for even a pretence at any serious or convincing program for Palestinian justice. This unwillingness or inability to convincingly argue a public case also characterizes Zionists' interventions against the Palestine solidarity movement in academia. As we have illustrated in this article, these attempts overwhelmingly proceed by force, through bids to harness the coercive powers of university authorities to suppress pro-Palestinian campus voices. Zionists and Vice-Chancellors are increasingly facing an uphill battle: there seems to be little doubt that the tide is turning against Zionism among students and among 'rank-and-file' academic staff. The stance of the National Tertiary Education Union, explored earlier, is one clear indication. Yet the pace of change is far slower at the leadership level of universities than it is among ordinary staff. Vice-Chancellors and other university heads' proximity to the official political establishment, in which Zionism is presupposed, along with their wish not to alienate potential Zionist donors, supply a strong disincentive from principled support for Palestine, and dispose them positively to Zionist lobbying for action against pro-Palestinian students and academics. The growing authoritarianism of the Australian academy in many areas makes repression of Palestinian voices only more expected.

Despite the strong base Zionism enjoys in Australian universities, there have been significant recent gains for the BDS movement, and increasing awareness both of Israeli apartheid and of the threats Zionist interference poses to academic work: in general, and especially outside crises like the 2023–2024 Gaza genocide, the censorship and silencing that was possible two decades ago (the Macquarie University case discussed above, for instance) are less possible today. Nevertheless, it is clear, given the ongoing traction of anti-BDS arguments, that more work from BDS advocates is vital. This is especially the case since it remains to be seen how ongoing events in Palestine will change the situation for Palestine advocacy on campus, and in whose favour. Australian academia is not especially culturally diverse, so many people in support of BDS are neither Palestinian, Arab nor Jewish. As awareness of the deprivations of Australian settler-colonialism against First Nations deepens in the Australian community, the Palestine solidarity movement will need to continue to assert Palestinian Indigeneity between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River, and to insist that it is unprincipled to support the self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, but not that of Palestinians.

Western allies should never drown out Palestinian voices or distract the conversation from the daily violence taking place in Palestine itself, including against its universities. But diaspora Palestinians and Arabs are especially vulnerable to Zionist repression in Australia, where efforts to delegitimize their political activism are all too

common. For this reason, allies of the BDS movement are crucial in the Australian context, as in other parts of the Global North. Strengthening the call for boycott along the lines articulated by Palestinians themselves is a keyway to demonstrate solidarity without displacing Palestinian voices from the centre of the struggle.

As we observed at the outset of the article, we believe that it is essential to avoid over-intellectualizing the question of Palestine solidarity on campus. Over-intellectualization is a danger that academics face in many contexts of political debate, and it is particularly likely in the case of the struggle for Palestinian rights (Riemer 2023). In this article, we have largely stayed close to the grain of the experiences of the Palestine solidarity movement in universities over the last fifteen years. With our respective disciplinary backgrounds in literary studies (Bayeh) and linguistics (Riemer), we write as reflective participants in this movement, and we do not aim to theorize around it. Palestine solidarity activists regularly criticize Zionists' claim that the situation in historic Palestine is too 'complex' to allow a clear side to be taken and reject their assertion that only experts can validly take a stand on the politics of the region. We should approach the analysis of the Palestine solidarity campaign in the same spirit: what we need is a greater willingness to take considered action for Palestinian emancipation, the obstacles to which are, as the article demonstrates, in perfectly plain view.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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Form 1
Rule 2.13(2)

Annexure Certificate "B"

No. VID404 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Victoria
Division: General

In the matter of

ALAN CASSUTO

Applicant

MARY KOSTAKIDIS

Respondent

This is the Annexure "B" produced and shown to Jack Douglas Vaughan at the time of affirming his affidavit on 30 April 2026.

Before me:



Signed by Anthony Bonaccorso, Solicitor

Date: 30 April 2026

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	Mary Kostakidis, the Respondent	
Prepared by (name of person/lawyer)	Jack Douglas Vaughan	
Law firm (if applicable)	XD Law & Advocacy	
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MEDIA OPINION POLITICS WORLD MIDDLE EAST

In the quest to appease Israel, the media undermine our basic rights

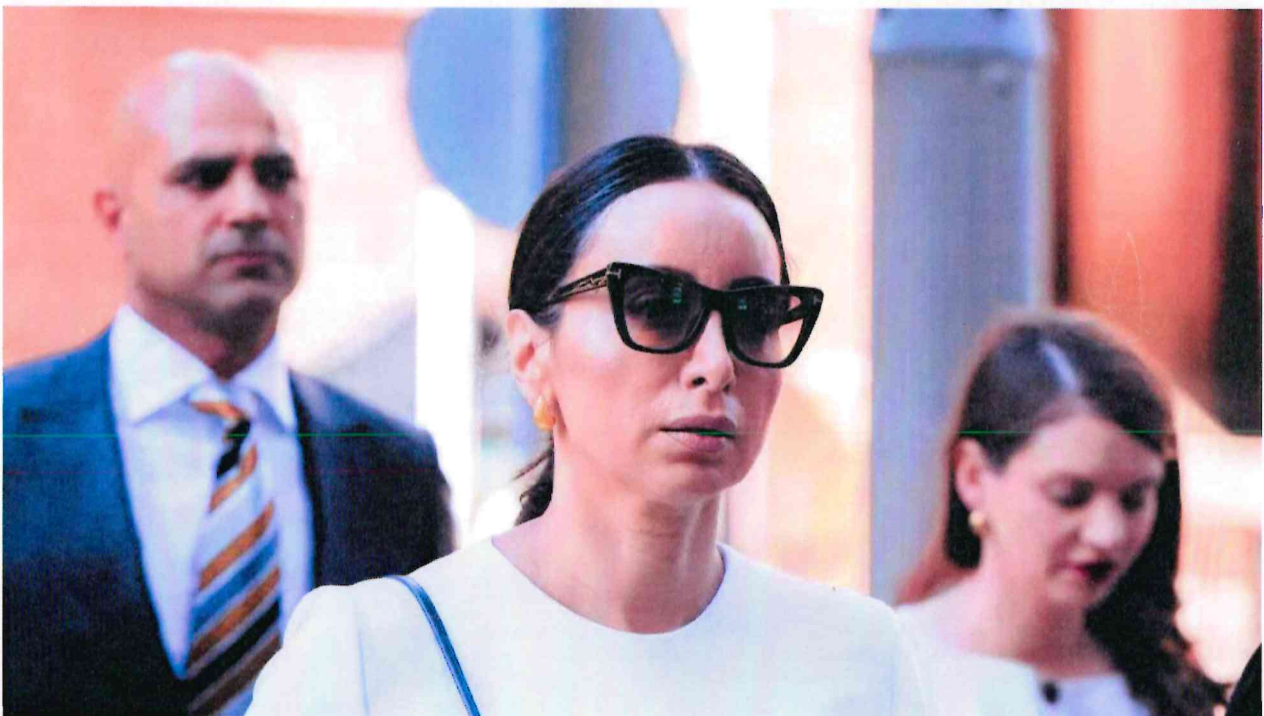
In its eagerness to appease supporters of Israel, the media is happy to ride roughshod over due process and basic rights. It's damaging our democracy.



BERNARD KEANE • FEB 10, 2025 • 4 MIN READ

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Prefer Crikey



Antoinette Lattouf arrives at the Federal Court on February 7, 2025 (Image: AAP/Bianca De Marchi)

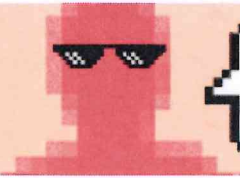
Two moments stand out so far from the Federal Court hearings relating to Antoinette Lattouf's sacking by the ABC, insofar as they demonstrate how power works in Australia and especially in Australia's media.

The first is how the ABC's senior management abandoned due process in the face of a sustained lobbying effort by a pro-Israel group to have Lattouf taken off air, under the



confected basis she was antisemitic.

Crikey.



Tips and Murmurs

Managing director David Anderson admitted in court that there was a “step missing” in the process that led to her sacking — in particular, a failure to consult with the ABC’s HR area, and a failure to discuss the attacks on Lattouf with Lattouf herself, before kicking her out. To this, it might be added, was acting editorial director Simon Melkman’s advice to management that Lattouf had not breached any editorial policies.

Anderson bizarrely singled out Lattouf’s authorship, alongside Cameron Wilson, of a *Crikey* [article](#) questioning the narrative that pro-Palestinian protesters had chanted “gas the Jews”, as basis for his concerns about her, only for one of his executives to point out the article was “[balanced and journalistically sound](#)”.



‘Does not deny the existence of any race’: ABC scrambles to reassure staff amid Lattouf revelations

That is, by the ABC’s own admission, there was no basis to sack Lattouf and the sacking was conducted improperly. And yet, here we are, with the ABC tying itself in absurd knots — no such race as Lebanese, indeed — spending millions defending its inappropriate actions in response to a lobbying campaign.

The second moment that stands out is a decision by the court early in the trial to [protect the identities](#) of those calling for Lattouf’s sacking.

The campaign that the group rolled out prompted the ABC chair and managing director to immediately react — and the ABC to abandon due process and procedural fairness. Yet the court protects their identities.

The reasoning — that the identities behind the complaints should be protected for their safety — may or may not be based on reasonable fears, but it’s the second time that institutions have worked to protect people who planned to undermine the careers of people — specifically, women — who have dared to criticise Israel.

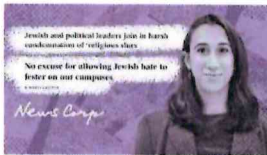


The first was when some members – a minority – of a WhatsApp group supposedly composed of pro-Israel “creatives” discussed how to wreck the careers of, *inter alia*, Clementine Ford and Lauren Dubois for their criticism of Israel. The publishing of the identities of this group was held by both the media and the political class to be an outrageous, antisemitic act of “doxing”, and the federal government rushed through laws to make such publications illegal.

No mention of making the act of trying to destroy people’s careers because they hold different political views – or, cancel culture, as the right likes to call it – illegal.

Whether it’s courts, politicians or the media, it seems that the dice are always loaded in favour of those wanting to crush criticism of Israel, while its victims are left to fend for themselves.

Human rights lawyer and fighter against antisemitism Sarah Schwartz has been repeatedly threatened with (entirely vexatious) lawsuits by Israel supporters for her criticism of Israel, and her discussion of the exploitation of Australian Jews by Peter Dutton. She’s been targeted by yet another News Corp smear campaign, based on nothing more than a wilfully misinterpreted slide. She has no government or court rushing to protect her.



Sarah Schwartz must be punished: The instrumentalisation of a dissenting Jew

Meanwhile, Peter Lalor, one of Australia’s finest sports journalists (and I write as someone who can’t abide most sports journalism) lost his job with SEN because he, too, dared to criticise Israel and call out the Palestinian genocide. No-one’s rushing to his aide, either. No powerful institutions are weighing in to safeguard his privacy, or protect him from the consequences of his opinions.

The individual cases add up to a pattern: Australian institutions, and especially its major media institutions, will punish you for criticising Israel. Pro-Israel groups will demand you be sacked, they will call for your career to be destroyed. Those groups will be protected. Media companies will ride roughshod over basic rights and due process to comply with their demands. You will be smeared and publicly vilified on completely spurious bases. Politicians will join in, as Jason Clare did with the campaign against Schwartz and as Chris Minns is doing in NSW, imposing hate speech laws that even Christian groups think are a bad idea.

This is how the campaign to legitimise the Palestinian genocide and destroy critics of the Netanyahu government has damaged the fabric of Australia’s democracy and the rule of law. The basic rights and protections that Australians should have under a legal system devoted to preventing discrimination can be stripped away in a moment, while those engaged in destroying people’s careers and livelihoods are protected. Ill-advised laws are rushed in to

27

stifle freedom of speech. Australian Jews are stereotyped as a politically convenient monolith aligned with the Israeli government. The experience of Palestinians themselves, and of Arab communities in Australia, is minimised and erased. And the media are the worst perpetrators of all.

Have something to say about this article? Write to us at letters@crikey.com.au. Please include your full name to be considered for publication in *Crikey's Your Say*. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.

About the author.



Bernard Keane

Politics editor

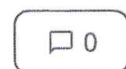
Bernard Keane is *Crikey's* politics editor. Before that he was *Crikey's* Canberra press gallery correspondent, covering politics, national security and economics. Got a tip? Contact him securely on Signal at [@Bernard Keane.66](https://signal.me/@BernardKeane66).



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28



The cost to the ABC – and the taxpayer – of sacking Antoinette Lattouf

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29

FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Lattouf v Australian Broadcasting Corporation (No 2) [2025] FCA 669

File number: NSD 189 of 2024

Judgment of: RANGIAH J

Date of judgment: 25 June 2025

Catchwords: **INDUSTRIAL LAW** – unlawful termination – whether the respondent contravened s 772(1) of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) (FWA) by terminating the applicant’s employment for reasons including political opinion, race or national extraction – whether s 772(1) should be construed similarly to Part 3-1 of the FWA – what constitutes “political opinion” – whether s 772(1)(f) protects the expression, as well as the holding, of political opinion – whether the findings of the Fair Work Commission give rise to an issue estoppel – whether there was a termination of the employment contract or of the employment relationship – whether termination of the employment relationship constitutes termination under s 772(1) – where the respondent has an obligation to provide work – where a substantial and operative reason of the relevant decision is the applicant’s holding of a political opinion – compensation awarded for non-economic loss under s 545 of the FWA

INDUSTRIAL LAW – whether disciplinary action taken by the respondent breached the Enterprise Agreement –

Lattouf wins unlawful termination case against the ABC. Read the judgment here

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Annexure Certificate "C"

No. VID404 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Victoria
Division: General

In the matter of

ALAN CASSUTO

Applicant

MARY KOSTAKIDIS

Respondent

This is the Annexure "C" produced and shown to Jack Douglas Vaughan at the time of affirming his affidavit on 30 April 2026.

Before me:



Signed by Anthony Bonaccorso, Solicitor

Date: 30 April 2026

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	<u>Mary Kostakidis, the Respondent</u>
Prepared by (name of person/lawyer)	<u>Jack Douglas Vaughan</u>
Law firm (if applicable)	<u>XD Law & Advocacy</u>
Tel	<u>(02) 8815 8118</u> Fax _____
Email	<u>md@xdlaw.au; sm@xdlaw.au; jv@xdlaw.au</u>
Address for service (include state and postcode)	<u>Level 1, 299 Elizabeth Street Sydney NSW 2000</u>

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Statement from the National Media Section of MEAA

📅 WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH, 2025 #MEAA MEDIA #PRESSFREEDOM NEWS OTHER STATEMENTS



The Media Entertainment Arts Alliance has long fought for media freedoms, rebuking censorship and calling for access to information. Since October 7, MEAA has seen a rise in threats, harassment, and intimidation of journalists who report and comment on Gaza. High-profile journalists including Antoinette Lattouf, Peter Lalor and Mary Kostakidis have found themselves dismissed, censored and harassed by powerful lobby groups, who seek to undermine press freedom.



When reporting, MEAA journalists are subject to the code of ethics, who in their professional capacity, often provide critical commentary on political warfare. These are the tenets of democracy.

Our colleagues across the entertainment and arts sectors are also facing censorship on Australian stages and screens.

We stand with our colleagues in their workplaces, in the courtrooms, and in their deaths to raise our voices against the silence.

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Annexure Certificate "D"

No. VID404 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Victoria
Division: General

In the matter of

ALAN CASSUTO

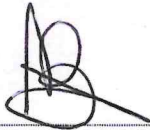
Applicant

MARY KOSTAKIDIS

Respondent

This is the Annexure "D" produced and shown to Jack Douglas Vaughan at the time of affirming his affidavit on 30 April 2026.

Before me:



Signed by Anthony Bonaccorso, Solicitor

Date: 30 April 2026

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	<u>Mary Kostakidis, the Respondent</u>
Prepared by (name of person/lawyer)	<u>Jack Douglas Vaughan</u>
Law firm (if applicable)	<u>XD Law & Advocacy</u>
Tel	<u>(02) 8815 8118</u> Fax _____
Email	<u>md@xdlaw.au; sm@xdlaw.au; jv@xdlaw.au</u>
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29 September 2025

Australia: Journalists censored for reporting on Gaza

A number of Australian journalists have been targeted, harassed, and censored by lobby groups for reporting critical of Israel's war on Gaza. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and its Australian affiliate, the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA), condemn these attempts to silence journalists and call on media outlets and regulatory bodies to ensure the fundamental rights to freedom of expression and access to information are upheld.

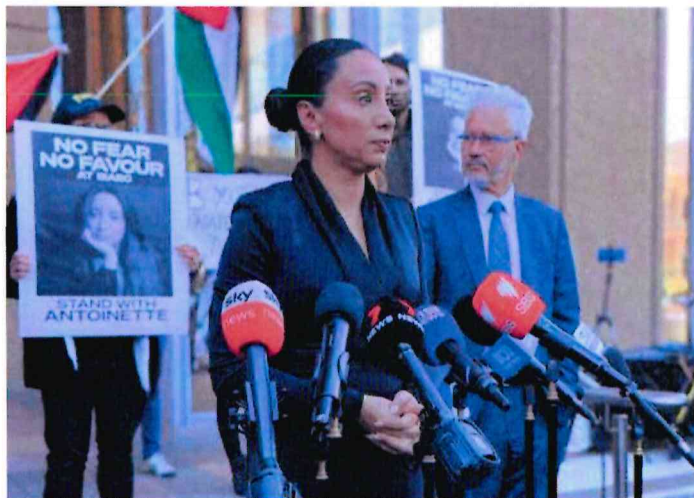
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Journalist Antoinette Lattouf speaks at the verdict of her unfair dismissal case against the ABC on June 25, 2025. Credit: X

In a high-profile case, Australia's Federal Court found on June 25 that Lebanese-Australian journalist Antoinette Lattouf was unlawfully dismissed



Palestine: At least 235 jou and media workers killed in

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37



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PLEASE provide your details. ABC was ordered to pay an additional AUD 150,000 (approx. USD 98,000) in compensation on September 24, in addition to AUD 70,000 (approx. USD 46,000) already awarded.

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Australia: ABC staff strike for first time in 20 years

In a separate incident, Australian cricket reporter Peter Lalor was dropped from radio coverage of Australia's Sri Lanka tour by broadcaster SEN in February after he reposted several posts on X regarding Israeli attacks in Gaza and the release of Palestinian prisoners in Israel. "I was told in one call there were serious organisations making complaints; in another I was told that this was not the case," said Lalor in a statement.

Prominent journalist and former SBS World News Australia presenter Mary Kostakidis has also faced ongoing harassment by the Zionist Federation of Australia, with a legal action filed in the Federal Court under Australia's Racial Discrimination Act for sharing two allegedly 'antisemitic' posts on X. Kostakidis said the case failed to identify which race, ethnicity or nationality was offended by her posts, with a verdict currently awaited on a strikeout order filed by Kostakidis in July.

Staff at Australia's public broadcaster the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), are striking for the first years following an...

The MEAA said: "MEAA journalists are subject to the code of ethics, who in their professional capacity, often provide critical commentary on political warfare. These are the tenets of democracy. We stand with our colleagues in their workplaces, in the courtrooms, and in their deaths to raise our voices against the silence."

The IFJ said: "Critical and independent journalism in the public interest is more crucial than ever in the face of incessant pressure from partisan lobby groups. IFJ stands in firm solidarity with journalists globally facing harassment and censorship for their reporting."

For further information contact IFJ Asia - Pacific on ifj@ifj-asia.org

The IFJ represents more than 600,000 journalists in 140 countries

Twitter: @ifjasiapacific, on Facebook: IFJAsiaPacific and Instagram

International Federation of Journalists

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About IFJ

The International Federation of Journalists is the global voice of journalists.

Founded in 1926, it is the world's largest organisation of journalists, representing 600,000 media professionals in 187 unions and associations in more than 148 countries.

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