



**Date** Thursday, 12 June 2025

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## Settlement between Ms Brittany Higgins and the Commonwealth

The settlement between Ms Brittany Higgins and the Commonwealth has been the subject of scrutiny and speculation, including as to whether the settlement involved corrupt conduct.

The National Anti-Corruption Commission (the Commission) conducted an extensive preliminary investigation into the settlement and found no corruption issue.

During the preliminary investigation, the Commission issued multiple notices to produce to the relevant departments and legal representatives, and analysed thousands of documents tracking the claims and negotiation of the settlement.

### Independent external legal advice

Documents produced showed that decisions made in relation to the settlement were based on advice from independent external solicitors and experienced senior and junior counsel.

Initial advice was received during the period of the Liberal-National Coalition government, before the May 2022 election. There was no material difference in the updated legal advice later provided to the new Labor government. Nor was there any identifiable difference in approach to the matter before and after the change in government.

There was no inappropriate intervention in the process by or on behalf of any minister. The then Attorney-General approved the settlement in accordance with the Departmental advice.

## Mediation

The Commonwealth engaged in mediation consistent with Departmental advice that was informed by legal advice.

That the mediation conference itself was concluded within a day is unexceptional. It was the culmination of a process which took approximately 12 months. None of this is unusual for a non-litigated personal injury claim.

A critical consideration during the settlement process was avoiding ongoing trauma to Ms Higgins.

## Settlement amount

The settlement amount was less than the maximum amount recommended by the external independent legal advice.

## Conclusion

There is no evidence that the settlement process, including the legal advice provided, who was present at the mediation, or the amount, was subject to any improper influence by any Commonwealth public official. To the contrary, the evidence obtained reflected a process that was based on independent external legal advice, without any inappropriate intervention by any minister of either government. There is therefore no corruption issue.

## Public disclosure about preliminary investigation

Given the highly publicised nature of the referrals and widespread speculation regarding potential corrupt conduct, the Commission has determined it is in the public interest to make a public disclosure about the preliminary investigation under subsection 230(1) of the *National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022* (Cth).

See the [public disclosure of information about the outcome of the preliminary investigation](#) for more detail on the matters mentioned above, on the Commission website.