

Julian Jordan

From: Communications, AFA <communications@atheistfoundation.org.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 12 December 2023 11:00 AM
To: Mr. Julian Jordan
Subject: Secularism Australia Conference 2023

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Secularism Australia Conference 2023

Dear Julian,

Some months ago the AFA was invited to become a sponsor of the 2023 Secularism Australia Conference. After some discussion the AFA committee decided to promote and attend rather than become an official sponsor. This saved financial expenditure, but allowed us to participate.

We had in attendance President Andrew Skegg, and other Committee members Steve Marton, Adam Reakes, and Russell Hanna.

The conference had a series of influential speakers including former High Court Justice Michael Kirby, political adviser Chris Schacht, and Greens Senator David Shoebridge among many others. If you would like to see the speakers, a video of the proceedings is being prepared by the organisers and we will be advised when it becomes available.

There were many topics explored over the one-day conference, with considerable interest being shown on the removal of Special Religious Instruction in public schools in Queensland and NSW, and the replacement of Chaplains with Secular Counsellors in public schools and the Armed Forces.

It was acknowledged that some political ground had been gained over the past decade with issues such as Marriage Equality, Voluntary Assisted Dying, and Women's Reproductive Rights. However, there was a prevailing view that there was still much more to be achieved.

There was a final meeting held with the various secular groups in attendance, including the AFA, Humanists Victoria, National Secular Lobby, Rationalist Society of Australia, and others. There was a proposal to set up more formal lines of communication and cooperation between the various groups in order to improve our overall presence in the media and lobbying. We will keep members aware of developments over coming months.

Thank you,

Kind regards,
Communications,
Atheist Foundation of Australia

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