



Peter Ridd Wins Biggest Victory On Free Speech In A Generation

Gideon Rozner / 16 April 2019

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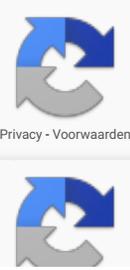
The Institute of Public Affairs has today welcomed the historic judgement in the case of Peter Ridd vs James Cook University (JCU) with Judge Vasta finding that Peter Ridd was wrongly dismissed by JCU.

“This judgement should rightly send shockwaves through Australian universities regarding their commitment to academic freedom and how they deal with academics who hold a contrary view to established group think,” said Gideon Rozner, Director of Policy at the free market think tank, the Institute of Public Affairs.

Dr Peter Ridd, a professor of physics at JCU, was sacked by the university for misconduct for questioning in the IPA’s publication *Climate Change: The Facts 2017* the climate change science around the Great Barrier Reef and for public statements made on the *Jones & Co Sky News* program.

“Many academics are censured, but few are prepared to speak out and risk their career, faced with the prospect of legal battles and possible bankruptcy,” said Mr Rozner.

“Peter Ridd was only able to challenge James Cook University’s decision because of the IPA’s work to ensure he had the financial, legal and moral support of thousands of Australians to pursue his fight for freedom of speech on climate change.”



“Today’s decision is a huge win for academic freedom and for freedom of speech in Australia. This is something the IPA has been fighting for, for years, and we will continue to do so.”

“The case has identified a culture of censorship when it comes to challenging claims surrounding climate change and the Great Barrier Reef. Not once did JCU attempt to disprove claims made by Dr Ridd about the Great Barrier Reef.”

“Fearmongering about the health of the Great Barrier Reef must now desist.”

“JCU has shredded the idea that Australian universities have any sort of commitment to scientific integrity and free academic inquiry. JCU’s actions prove the depth of the free speech crisis confronting Australia’s universities.”

“Australian Universities must now commit to signing up to the model code as recommended by the Hon. Robert French AC in his review of freedom of speech at Australian Universities,” said Mr Rozner.

For media and comment: Gideon Rozner, Director of Policy, on 0419 193 114, or at grozner@ipa.org.au

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