

Preface

This book is the outcome of a three-day symposium held in July 2007 to discuss and debate the role of law in responding to the threat of terrorism. Australia has adapted quickly to the new global security climate ushered in by the attacks of 11 September 2001. This has presented numerous challenges and the measures adopted have attracted much controversy. The purpose of the symposium – and now this book – was to bring together as many different perspectives on the relationship between law and security as possible so as to enable ideas and positions to be better understood and challenged. We are enormously grateful to all who participated in that event and to those who have continued this process of engagement by contributing a chapter to this book.

We feel that some mention should be made of the inclusion of the phrase ‘war on terror’ in the book’s title. This expression is widely contested and our use of it is not an endorsement of the adoption of a war paradigm in responding to terrorism. Nor does it indicate unqualified approval of the many political uses to which others have put that phrase. It should be apparent, in any case, that a book featuring over 20 authors cannot be categorised as adopting any one particular view or position. Nevertheless, the expression – for good or ill – is arguably the defining one of our times and we decided that its use appropriately conveyed the context in which Australia’s national security law has been rapidly developed. We were content for individual contributors to distance themselves from it as they felt necessary – something which several do.

Last, we wish to thank the Australian Research Council for its support of the symposium through the *Discovery Projects* funding scheme, and Chris Holt and the editorial team at Federation Press for their support and enthusiasm in publishing this work – and particularly the speed with which they did so as to ensure it speaks to current events.

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