

1. Why does the ABC refuse to acknowledge that Ghost Train Fire accused Wran of political corruption and a cover up?

Program Response:

The program did not 'accuse Wran of political corruption and a cover up'. Rather, it reported allegations.

The final episode of the Exposed program reported an historic allegation (being 'Allegation 27') regarding Neville Wran, Lionel Murphy, Morgan Ryan, Abe Saffron and the Luna Park lease. Allegation 27 came from the 1986 Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into the conduct of Justice Lionel Murphy and was among the most serious of the 14 formal allegations the Inquiry was planning to pursue. Unfortunately Allegation 27 was never investigated to its conclusion, and has remained un-investigated, because the Inquiry was shut down in 1986 upon Justice Murphy's sudden death.

Importantly, the Exposed program reported the claims regarding Mr Wran and Luna Park as an "allegation" (as well as being a "scenario" and not proven) no less than 10 times in the space of 20 minutes in the final episode.

It's also important to note that Exposed is not the first program or publication to report on the allegation about Mr Wran.

Specifically, Allegation 27 (and Mr Wran's alleged involvement) was widely reported by multiple journalists and publications in 2017 including several articles in The Daily Telegraph, and also by The Australian, The Weekend Australian, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Guardian, and The West Australian.

Several of these 2017 publications also pictured Mr Wran in relation to the allegation (just as Exposed did).

Here is an example from The Australian's coverage:



The screenshot shows a news article from The Australian. The page header includes "HOME / NATION / NATION" on the left, "All sections" in the center, and "THE AUSTRALIAN" on the right. The main headline is "Chain of command 'that flowed from Abe to Nifty'". Below the headline, the authors are listed as "By RICK MORTON and MARK BRENCHLEY". The date is "12:00AM SEPTEMBER 15, 2017". A large black and white photograph of Neville Wran is featured, with a small "X" icon in the top right corner of the image. Below the photo is the caption "Neville Wran."

And this from the Sydney Morning Herald:

By way of another example, here is The Daily Telegraph in one of its 2017 reports:

Murphy's inability to say "no" put Saffron at the centre of a powerful, if seedy, network of influence, a web of corrupt cops and crooked politicians.

It was Sydney in the '70s and early 1980s. A stinking dirty mess.

Problems with illegal gambling dens when the cops you were paying let you down? Have a word with Murphy. Want the lease over Luna Park? Ring Murphy, he will have a chat with then-NSW premier Neville "Nifty" Wran.

The reporting and exploring of historic allegations that had already been widely reported by multiple journalists and publications several years before Exposed, does not constitute accusing Mr Wran of political corruption and a cover up.

2. *Given the Review found against the program on this matter, does the ABC accept that editorial standards were breached?*

Response from the ABC:

External reviews cannot and do not investigate whether coverage has breached editorial standards. External reviews are qualitative reviews. They are not compliance reviews or audits.

Audience & Consumer Affairs investigated EXPOSED, including a complaint regarding Mr Wran, and found there was no breach of editorial standards.