

## Professor Allan Fels AO

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### *Former Chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)*

Professor Allan Fels is an Australian economist, lawyer and public servant who is most widely known for his role as chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) from its inception in 1995 until 30 June 2003.

Upon his retirement from the ACCC he became foundation Dean of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) until 2012 when he was appointed Professor of Government.

In May 2011 he was appointed as head of the Victorian Taxi Industry Inquiry and also as chairperson of the Taxi Services Commission.

In 2013 Professor Fels was an Honorary Professor in the Faculty of Business and Economics at Monash University, a Professorial Fellow in the Department of Political Science at the University of Melbourne, and a consultant to law firm Arnold Bloch Leibler.

Allan Fels commenced a Law/Economics degree at the University of Western Australia, before heading to Duke University in the US to undertake his Ph.D. After leaving Duke University, he was appointed as a Research Fellow in the Department of Applied Economics, University of Cambridge, where his Duke Ph.D thesis was published as *The British Prices and Incomes Board* by Cambridge University Press. This set the stage for his interest in wages policy and price regulation.

He returned to Australia in 1972 to take up a lectureship at the University of Melbourne, but soon after moved to Monash University where he was offered the job of Senior Lecturer. He was appointed as Professor of Administration at Monash University in 1984 and was the Director of the Graduate School of Management, Monash University from 1985 until 1990.

His first move into the regulation area was a part-time role as the ACTU's nominee on the Whitlam government's Prices Justification Tribunal. He was later Prices Commissioner, Victoria from 1982-1991.

It was during this time that Allan Fels gradually converted to a belief in the primacy of competition to reform economies and to control inflation. After running the Prices Surveillance Authority under the Hawke government, he was appointed to the TPC just as competition policy became the buzz issue. He was Chairman of the former Trade Practices Commission from 1991 until 1995 and



Chairman of the Prices Surveillance Authority from 1989 until 1992.

As head of the TPC and ACCC, Allan Fels became one of the economy's most influential figures - and probably one of the most important and activist regulators Australia has ever seen.

Fels was the Co-Chairman of the Joint Group on Trade and Competition at the OECD from 1996 until 2003.

He was made an officer of the Order of Australia in June 2001.

In 2003, Fred Brenchley wrote a book entitled *Allan Fels: A Portrait of Power* about his contribution to Australian competition law and policy.

In 2005 he was inducted as an honorary member of the Monash University Golden Key Society.

In 2003, Fels argued that the retirement age should be raised above 65 in order "to offset the economic costs of our ageing population".

In 2009 he was appointed a part-time Productivity Commission Associate Commissioner for the inquiry into Regulation of Director and Executive Remuneration in Australia.

In 2013 Professor Fels was a member of the Alfred Health Board and chair of the Haven Foundation which supports accommodation for the long term mentally ill. He is a long-term advocate of mental health policy reform and is a Patron of the Mental Health Council of Australia and a member of the National Advisory Council on Mental Health. He is also a Patron of Creativity Australia.

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