

## Media Release

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### For immediate release

## Engineers win political comedy debate with lawyers at NSW Parliament House

As the team of lawyers were quick to point out, 11 of the 27 prime ministers of this country have practised law. So how did a team of engineers convince an audience that they, rather than lawyers, would make better politicians, when even Gillard and Abbott both have law degrees?

Try this argument from the engineers' second speaker, Andrew Pratley: "Australia had only one choice at the election, and that was to elect a lawyer. And what did we do? We rejected them both."

The inaugural debate between Young Engineers Australia Sydney Division and the Law Society of NSW Young Lawyers was held at NSW Parliament House on August 26. The adjudication panel of Tanya Gadiel, Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Senior Civil Magistrate David Heilpern and Dr Chris Nicol, Chief Technology Officer at NICTA, unanimously awarded the debate to the engineers.

The engineers team of Maryam Khajeh, Andrew Pratley and Andrew Botros defeated the lawyers team of Tom Payten, Anthony Jucha and Katie Price.

Appropriately, amidst a hung federal parliament, the adjudicators were particularly swayed on the subject of teamwork. "In a few elections' time we'll have about 150 independents in federal parliament, and then they'll all have to talk about teamwork and mixing and matching," said the engineers' third speaker, Andrew Botros. "For engineers, teamwork is everyday activity. You don't build a Harbour Bridge with just one engineer."

The lawyers, who entertained the audience most, gave their point of view on the subject tongue-in-cheek. "We lawyers invented going into partnership with people we hate," said the lawyers' second speaker, Anthony Jucha. "Engineers are too binary—either yes the bridge will collapse or no it won't. Boring."

And on the subject of who the politicians themselves might rather be, both sides campaigned hard. The lawyers: "Look at your average lawyer: erudite, handsome, watches and wins Masterchef." The engineers: "When was the last time you saw a politician wearing a lawyer's wig out campaigning? No, they all wear hard hats."

But regardless of which side won on the night, neither the engineers nor the lawyers could resist having fun at the expense of the common opponent, the politician. As Andrew Pratley put it, "Lawyers don't actually write the laws, nor do

politicians write the laws. As we're told in the media, it's the faceless men of the back rooms who write the laws."



100827-128.jpg: Engineer Andrew Pratley speaking, with adjudicators Chris Nicol, Tanya Gadiel and David Heilpern onlooking (from left to right). Photo by Jon Lee.

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**About Expressive Engineering:**

Expressive Engineering aims to promote engineering through better communications. Services include prepared speeches, presentations, articles and event hosting, both on behalf of organisations and independently. The Young Engineers vs Young Lawyers debate was sponsored by Expressive Engineering.

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