

Integrity Committee

Meeting

Date	Monday, 21 September 2020
Time	2pm
Location	Video Conference

Attendees

- Nikola Stepanov Committee Chair and Queensland Integrity Commissioner
- Jennifer O'Farrell Chief Executive Officer, Crime and Corruption Commission
- Angela Pyke Deputy Ombudsman, Queensland Ombudsman
- Rachael Rangihaeta Information Commissioner
- Ross Barnett Racing Integrity Commissioner
- Kathleen Florian Independent Assessor
- Brendan Worrall Auditor-General, Queensland Audit Office
- Wade Lewis Assistant Electoral Commissioner
- Robert Setter Chief Executive, Public Service Commission
- David Reed Executive Director, Advisory and Analytics, Public Service Commission

Apologies

- Alan MacSporran QC Chair, Crime and Corruption Commission
- Pat Vidgen Electoral Commissioner
- Anthony Reilly Queensland Ombudsman

Secretariat

- Pua Samia Office Administrator, Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner

Matters Discussed

1. General updates

1.1. Crime and Corruption Commission

- Mr Alan MacSporran QC was reappointed as Chairperson of the Crime and Corruption Commission for a further term of three years.
- Staff continue to work flexibly including a balance between working from home and working in the office.

- The Commission is currently developing a new corruption strategy which is due to be completed by 2021.

1.2. Queensland Audit Office

- A combination of staff has transitioned a return to the office, with some rotating working remotely to maintain physical distancing at the office due to COVID-19.
- Focus on finalising reports due prior to Caretaker period preceding the 2020 State Election.

1.3. Office of the Independent Assessor

- A new conflict of interest regime for local government councillors will commence on 12 October 2020 – *Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Act 2000*.

1.4. Office of the Information Commissioner

- Two recent audit reports:
 - *Privacy and Public Data: Managing the risks of re-identified data*
When agencies publish re-identified data, they should manage privacy risks the same way they do for risks in all activities. The external environment is constantly evolving and can make assessing the re-identification risk challenging.
 - *Disclosure Logs – Queensland Government Department*
Departments maintain mostly compliant disclosure logs but there are gaps. The report makes recommendations to all agencies to enhance openness and transparency. Report is available at www.oic.qld.gov.au.

1.5. Queensland Racing Integrity Commission

- Review of the Racing Integrity Act has been undertaken to explore racing Appeals reforms. Submissions from racing industry stakeholders have been received and are being reviewed.

1.6. Public Service Commission

- A main focus has been on mobilising public sector employees to support essential roles as part of community recovery including the 'Ready Reserves' initiative and deployment of public sector employees to train and act as Contact Tracing Officers.
- In 2018, there was a review of Queensland's public sector employment laws; the 'A fair and responsible public service for all' (Bridgeman review), to identify recommended changes to the law, policies, and procedures of employment. As a result, the *Public Service Act 2008* was amended to place an emphasis on the positive and proactive management of employees and their performance including regular and constructive communication between managers and staff.

1.7. Electoral Commission of Queensland

- Focused on the preparation and delivery of the State election on 31 October 2020.
- Postal vote applications opened early from 14 September 2020 to 16 October 2020 to allow more time for electors to apply.
- Handbooks, fact sheets and forms available on the Electoral Commission's website in response to the *Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019*.

1.8. Queensland Ombudsman

- Anthony Reilly is the new Queensland Ombudsman and was appointed in July 2020.
- Contact (complaints and inquiries) with the Queensland Ombudsman office have returned to pre-COVID-19 levels. There was a decrease during the early months of COVID-19.
- Majority of staff have transitioned a return to the office, with some working remotely to maintain physical distancing at the office due to COVID-19.

1.9. Queensland Integrity Commissioner

- Nikola Stepanov was reappointed as the Queensland Integrity Commissioner for a further term of three years.
- Continue with a sustained rise in advice requests. As well, a significant rise in requests for lobbying has occurred during the 2019-2020 financial year – representing a ten-fold increase on some previous years.
- This means staffing and resourcing to meet sustained demand across the functions of the Integrity Commissioner has proven to be the most difficult aspect of the work that we do. Additionally, we still have the usual administrative and operational requirements of any other office, including preparing the Annual Report, etc.
- Amendments made to the *Integrity Act 2009*, chapter 3A applicable to Cabinet Ministers commenced on 7 September 2020.
- Requests for advice from local government will be beyond the scope of the Integrity Commissioner once the *Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019* is enacted.
- Chapter 6 of the *Integrity Act 2009* deals with strategic reviews of the Integrity Commissioner's functions every 5 years. The last review was conducted on 31 January 2015 and reported on 16 July 2015. The next review is expected for January 2021.

2. General business

2.1. Queensland Audit Office

- Joint briefing session between integrity agencies to onboard new MPs/Boards after October election and to promote key messages.

2.2. Queensland Integrity Commissioner

- "IQ: Integrity in Queensland" – a podcast series is being planned of the Heads of the Integrity Committee 'in conversation with' leading figures and authorities of ethics, integrity, and anti-corruption.
- Following on from the podcast, Dr Stepanov, Mr MacSporran, and Ms Florian, are organising "The Big Interest Issues" session – it will be a free public session being scheduled for early 2021 where the three agency heads will discuss and compare interest issues across sectors and settings, including local and State Government. At this stage it looks like the session will be hosted by the Corruption Prevention network of Queensland, of which Alan is co-patron.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, 16 December 2020