

# Integrity Committee

## Meeting

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<b>Date</b>	Wednesday, 24 March 2021
<b>Time</b>	3pm
<b>Location</b>	Level 13, 53 Albert Street, Brisbane

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## Attendees

- Nikola Stepanov                      Committee Chair and Queensland Integrity Commissioner
- Alan MacSporran QC                Chair, Crime and Corruption Commission
- Pat Vidgen                              Electoral Commissioner
- Kathleen Florian                      Independent Assessor
- Rachael Rangihaeta                Information Commissioner
- David Reed                              Executive Director, Public Service Commission

## Attendees via Video Conference

- Brendan Worrall                      Auditor-General, Queensland Audit Office
- Anthony Reilly                        Queensland Ombudsman

## Apologies

- Robert Setter                         Commission Chief Executive, Public Service Commission
- Mark Ainsworth                      Acting Racing Integrity Commissioner

## Secretariat

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

## Matters Discussed

### 1. General updates

#### 1.1. Crime and Corruption Commission

- The start of 2021 has been very busy, a lot of projects in the pipeline including co-hosting the Integrity Summit in Brisbane.
- Oversight meeting with the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee commences on Friday.

#### 1.2. Queensland Audit Office

- Since start of 2021, QAO has tabled seven reports with another to be tabled tomorrow for 'Planning for sustainable health services'.

### 1.3. Office of the Independent Assessor

- OIA commenced operations in December 2018, the Economics and Governance Committee of the Queensland Parliament became responsible for monitoring and reviewing the performance of the Independent Assessor in May 2020.
- Looking at complaints in First Nations communities to understand some of the unique issues faced by those councillors.

### 1.4. Office of the Information Commissioner

- Follow up Audit report on Awareness of Privacy Obligations tabled yesterday.
- Privacy Awareness Week campaign in May – theme is “Make privacy a priority”. Resources available on OIC website.
- Privacy waiver application by Ipswich City Council refused.

### 1.5. Electoral Commission of Queensland

- 2021 has been more manageable so far.
- Since October 2020, ECQ has conducted 7 council by-elections.
- Developing a Local Government Strategy to better engage with that sector.

### 1.6. Public Service Commission

- PSC developing range of resources to assist employees involved in recruitment and selection to identify conflicts of interest.
- Resources will be available on the Queensland Government website.

### 1.7. Queensland Ombudsman

- New publication, *Casebook 2020* available on the website.
- Training and education courses, internet based training as well as face-to-face.

### 1.8. Queensland Integrity Commissioner

- We had extensive commitments post-election under the Ministerial Code of Conduct together with Estimates, and this has meant that these past 5-months have been very busy. During the month of December 2020, we received more requests for advice that month alone (62) than former commissioners received in an entire year, save for two years, 2012 and 2015. As well, we are now entering the period of the financial year where there is a great deal of compliance work to be done. I have had to introduce some interim service limits to manage demand.
- Regarding lobbying, the inaugural Integrity Summit will happen tomorrow, and the topic is lobbying. We are very excited to be in partnership with the CCC and SA ICAC.

- As well, each year we write to departmental State and Local Government Chief Executives (CE) and request that, in the interest of ensuring the highest ethical standard is maintained, they compare any information on their lobbyists contact registers, with the information on our Lobbyists Register, and we call this our annual 'audit'. We also asked that each CE contact each entity within their Minister's portfolio to ensure that the relevant CE from those entities also do the same check. This is our third year of such activity.
- The audit is designed to ensure that the public can have confidence that the information on the various government registers is accurate, whilst also taking into account the considerable time and resources that would be required, if my office was to undertake the comparison ourselves, as there are many government registers and records, most of whom are required to keep records.
- I cannot legally compel any CE to undertake a review of their register, however, all in public service know that they must strive to achieve the highest ethical standard, particularly as lobbying is an area under great public scrutiny.
- To date, the response has been overwhelmingly positive and helpful.
- At this stage, although the audit is still under way, we have had several discrepancies reported to us by CEs at State and Local Government level and we will be following those up, including assessments being made as to which matters, we will refer to CCC, or QPS, or take action via 'show cause' process.
- Regarding public awareness: we continue with taking opportunities when able, to raise public awareness. We have been involved with a number of workshops and events on a range of topics that includes COIs, board governance, International Women's Day events including one at Maryborough on behalf of Zonta.
- On a final note, the Strategic Reviewer is due to be appointed and we are very excited about this body of work.

## Next Meeting

Wednesday, 23 June 2021