

INTEGRITY MATTERS



Issue # 2 October 2015

Integrity Commission welcomes new Chief Commissioner

On 10 August 2015, Senior Counsel Mr Aziz Gregory (Greg) Melick AO SC was appointed as the new Chief Commissioner of the Integrity Commission. Mr Melick has replaced the outgoing Chief Commissioner, the Hon Murray Kellam AO, whose term in the role concluded on 16 August 2015 after 5 years.

Seeing clearly: transparency and accountability in the public sector

Public acceptance of Government and the roles of officials depends upon trust and confidence founded upon the administration being held accountable for its actions (United Nations, 2005).

Ethical conduct in the public sector is an issue which attracts scrutiny and publicity at a local, national and international level. Not surprisingly, the operations, policies and decisions of public authorities are of high interest to the public they serve. Operating with integrity, accountability and transparency is critical for public authorities as they seek to fulfil their intended role: to serve the public interest.

Integrity, transparency and accountability are interdependent.

Integrity requires public authorities to consistently operate in a transparent and accountable manner to serve the public.

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Notifications: a vital intelligence source

The Operations arm of the Commission provides it with capacity to undertake investigations into misconduct. The Commission has particular powers otherwise unavailable to public authorities and experienced, trained investigators. Generally, investigations are conducted in private and not made public unless they are the subject of a report tabled in Parliament.

The Commission also has a significant role in the monitoring of misconduct allegations and investigations within Tasmania Police.

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‘Thanks should be enough’ – Integrity Commission report on gifts and benefits in the State Service

In September 2015, the Integrity Commission tabled in Parliament a report of a 12 month own-motion investigation that found a systemic failure across the State Service agencies to adhere to proper practices, policies and procedures in relation to employees receiving gifts and benefits.



This failure not only gives rise to the risk of misconduct occurring but also to the risk of the State Service developing a culture of entitlement to gifts and benefits.

Of particular concern to the Commission was the presence of gift giving in high-risk areas such as asset management and procurement.

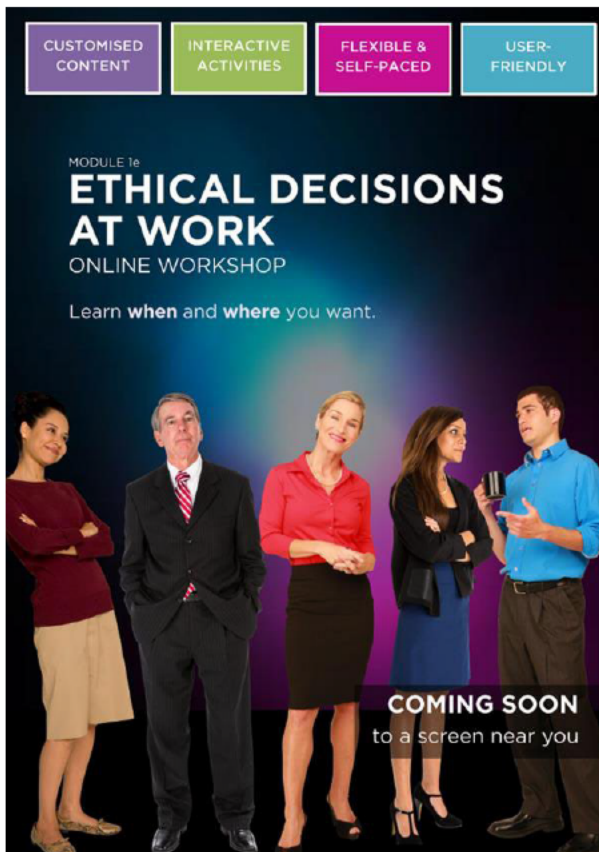
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Ethics elearning: coming soon to a screen near you

The Commission has developed an elearning version of its foundational module (module 1) within the 'Ethics and Integrity Training Program.' The elearning module will enable principal officers to more efficiently meet their obligations to ensure public officers are given appropriate education and training relating to ethical conduct.

The Tasmanian public sector is incredibly diverse with varying roles, responsibilities and misconduct risk areas. This was a key consideration in the design of the elearning module.

Learning activities are tailored according to each learner's context, taking into account the type of public authority they work in and the nature of their role: whether they are generally office-based, part of the outdoor workforce, or specialising in human resources, procurement, permits or grants.



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Councils get on-board across the state

The Commission continues to work extensively with the local government sector. It is undertaking considerable work with individual councils, while also assisting 'behind the scenes' with policy work, development of education and prevention tools, and providing advice.

In recent months our misconduct and prevention team has visited many councils throughout the north, north west and west of the state particularly. The team has delivered ethics training for councils – tackling and discussing the ethical risk issues that councillors often face, and providing tools and strategies to help councillors to better manage their roles and these risks. We have also provided tailored workshops for councils on specific ethical risk areas and a workshop to redevelop a councillor code of conduct.

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'Speak up' continues to grow in the Tasmanian public sector

Speak up. Help us build a better place to work.

Be upfront.
Speak up.
Draw a line.

Speak up is about removing the barriers to reporting misconduct and supporting employees to help ensure an ethical culture in their agency and across the public sector.

Over 30 public authorities have now joined and are working at implementing the **Speak up** campaign for their employees, while others have committed to adopting the campaign in the near future.

The Commission has developed further promotional and education resources to support **Speak up** within public authorities. The resources are innovative and attention grabbing and will help to keep the importance of speaking up at front of mind for everyone in the workplace. They are designed for use around the workplace and by individual employees.

Visit the Commission's [Speak up webpage](#) for more information.

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