

INTEGRITY MATTERS



Issue # 4 November 2016

From the Acting CEO

Michael Easton, Acting Chief Executive Officer

One of the challenges we face at the Commission is a perception that, at least from an investigative perspective, not much is happening. Much of our investigative work is conducted in private to protect reputations and to ensure information that is important to a matter is not lost. Investigations can take a considerable amount of time, due to the need to collect and analyse information, and to speak to the key parties involved. It can be a number of months before an investigation report is presented to the Board of the Commission, and the report may never be released for public viewing, particularly if desired outcomes can be achieved behind the scenes. So the work may never be evident to the public.

This is not to say that the Commission should not be taking the opportunity to release information about our activities when it is appropriate to do so. It is my belief that, in order to enhance the public's confidence that misconduct in the public sector will be appropriately investigated and dealt with (one of the three key objectives of the Commission in the *Integrity Commission Act 2009*), the Commission needs to be telling the public what it is doing. This may mean publicly releasing investigation reports where there is a sound basis for doing so, however it is also achieved through publicly discussing the relevant misconduct risk areas and quoting de-identified case studies as examples of the issue of concern or the alleged misconduct. We can do this through our website, newsletters such as this, and our education and prevention activities (which by their nature are public).

This newsletter includes one such risk area, with an accompanying case study obtained from a recent Commission investigation. I hope that it helps readers to better understand how the Commission approaches its investigative work.

The newsletter also reflects on other achievements and exciting developments during 2016. This year has seen the legislated five-year review of the *Integrity Commission Act*, which provided a great opportunity for the Tasmanian community and the Commission to participate in a constructive review process. We have articles on training and prevention initiatives, particularly in relation to confidential workplace information, and ethical support for members of public sector boards.

As ever, it is the combination of both our investigative and preventative functions that will ensure the Commission operates as an agent for change across the Tasmanian public sector.

Thanks is enough for King Island Council

Jenny McQuilkin – Misconduct Prevention and Education team

King Island Council was one of nine councils to take up the **Thanks is Enough** campaign at the end of 2015. Council customised our promotional materials to ensure the King Island community was fully aware of Council's commitment to the campaign and the philosophy behind it.

[Read the full article ...](#)



Early reporting of suspected criminal offences makes a difference

Scott Nicol, Operations team

A Commission investigation into the alleged misuse of an agency's fuel cards and suspected thefts of fuel by multiple public officers within the agency, highlighted the lost opportunities and unfortunate consequences of not reporting misconduct to Tasmania Police in a timely manner.

[Read the full article ...](#)

Upcoming training package and forum for board members



Tassie Strafkos, Misconduct Prevention and Education team

Based upon the Commission's considerable engagement with government businesses and general feedback from the sector, we believe there is substantial interest in, and need for, ethics and integrity training for members and directors of government boards. As a result, the Commission is developing a training package that can be delivered 'in-house' by boards.

[Read the full article ...](#)

The importance of recognising perceptions

Scott Nicol, Operations team

Code of conduct breaches continue to be the most common type of allegation considered by the Commission. Of the 302 allegations of misconduct identified in complaints received by the Commission in 2015–16, 6.9% involved conflicts of interest.

[Read the full article ...](#)

A tale of two roundabouts



Nic D'Alessandro, Misconduct Prevention and Education team

The roundabout. What an invention. Many of us transit them every day with reasonable success. We generally know the rules, what to expect, and how to look after ourselves when we're driving through them.

I had a very different experience of 'roundabout culture' during a recent driving holiday in Italy. It got me thinking about differences in cultures and how they relate to

ethics.

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Five year review of Commission update

Michael Easton, Acting Chief Executive Officer

In our [May newsletter](#) I noted the Five-year Independent Review of the *Integrity Commission Act 2009*, undertaken by the Hon William Cox AC, RFD, ED, QC, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Tasmania.

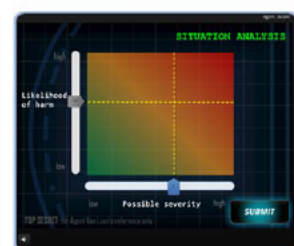
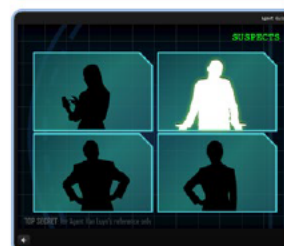
Mr Cox received [28 written submissions](#), including an extensive submission by the Commission. We also provided oral submissions as requested by Mr Cox. It was a time-consuming yet necessary contribution, and a great opportunity to address issues in relation to both the Act itself and operational matters that have become clear after five years of operation.

[Read the full article ...](#)

Respecting and protecting work information

Peta Van Luyn – Misconduct Prevention and Education team

As public sector employees, we have access to confidential information on a daily basis. We are trusted by our employers, the government and the public to handle this information carefully and appropriately. Carelessness, complacency and deliberately using information for personal benefit can have disastrous effects on the organisation, your fellow employees, and particularly the individual whose privacy may have been breached.



[Read the full article ...](#)

Tasmania Police 2015 annual audit report tabled

Sarah Frost - Operations team

The Commission has recently tabled in Parliament a report on its fourth annual audit of complaints finalised by Tasmania Police. The audit is carried out as part of the Commission's oversight of police misconduct under the *Integrity Commission Act 2009*.

[Read the full article ...](#)

Ethics training for Kingborough Council's outdoor workforce



Jenny McQuilkin, Misconduct Prevention and Education team

In September this year, Kingborough Council successfully completed its delivery of the Commission's foundation module, Ethical Decisions at Work. The program was specifically tailored for Council's outdoor workforce as part of Council's ongoing training program and was delivered to 65 staff over five sessions.

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