

# Media Release

## **LOOKING BACK: A REPORT BY THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONER AGAINST CORRUPTION**

**16 October 2019**

The Looking Back report reflects upon conduct and practices in South Australian public administration and the operations of the Commissioner's office and the Office for Public Integrity (OPI) over six years.

In the report the Commissioner expresses his support for some relaxation of the secrecy provisions within the ICAC Act and says "There are some aspects of my functions that the public have a right to know about...". He also acknowledges that the definition of corruption can be problematic because it picks up relatively low level offences and "...does not recognise that a person can be 'corrupt' as the term is widely understood, without that person committing a criminal offence". He goes on to suggest that "Perhaps the yardstick of corruption should not merely be proof beyond reasonable doubt of a criminal offence but include proof of conduct that is wanting in integrity".

Whilst stating that in his view South Australian public administration is not systematically corrupt, the Commissioner discusses some of the problems he regularly observes including maladministration, poor record keeping, inadequate oversight, conflicts of interest, compromised recruitment processes and poor personal conduct.

Additionally, the Commissioner addresses poor reporting cultures that exist in public administration, "It is incomprehensible to me that a public authority would not want to hear from its staff about matters they are concerned about. Public officers who are willing to speak up should never be punished."

The Commissioner has informed the Attorney-General that he intends to see out his full term as South Australia's first Independent Commissioner Against Corruption.

A copy of this report can be downloaded from the ICAC website – [icac.sa.gov.au/report/looking-back](https://icac.sa.gov.au/report/looking-back)

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