

Public Statement

EVALUATION OF EMERGENCY GRANTS ADMINISTRATION

24 July 2023

Statement by the Hon. Michael David KC Acting Commissioner, Independent Commission Against Corruption

In January Commissioner Vanstone announced the commencement of an evaluation of grants administration. The Commission then invited a number of public authorities to provide information about the way they administer that function.

In view of the variety, volume and complexity of grants activity occurring within the public sector, the Commissioner announced in May that the evaluation will progress in stages and produce a series of discrete reports.

The Commission is currently evaluating the administration of commercial, investment, research and entrepreneurial grants schemes. This is occurring through review of the practices, policies and procedures of the Chief Executives of the Department for Trade and Investment and the Department for Industry, Innovation and Science as they relate to the administration of grants. The report on this first stage of the evaluation will be completed in the near future.

Further analysis has been undertaken of the responses received from public authorities. Grants administered in response to emergencies - including the COVID-19 pandemic, bushfire, flood and drought - form a substantial proportion of all funds disbursed. The second stage of the evaluation will consider the administration of these grants.

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Corruption risks in emergency grant programs may arise due to the pressure and haste to expend funds to support communities and provide relief from social and economic hardship. Such pressures can lead to inadequate planning, budgeting, governance and review of such programs, leaving them exposed to potential corruption.

The Commission will specifically evaluate the practices, policies and procedures of the Chief Executives of the Department for Primary Industries and Regions and the Department for Treasury and Finance as they relate to the administration of emergency grants. Submissions will also be sought from a range of agencies administering emergency grants and with regulatory functions in emergency management.

Persons who have applied for a government grant, received a grant, or been involved in the administration of a grant, are also invited to make written submissions. More information about the project, including details of how to make a submission, [is available here](#).

More information is available: <https://www.icac.sa.gov.au/evaluations-and-reviews/evaluation-of-grants-administration>

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