



Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of
Domestic and Family Violence

1 William Street Brisbane Q 4000
GPO Box 149 Brisbane Q 4001
Telephone +61 7 3719 7400
Email attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au

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08 DEC 2022

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to e-Petition 3771-22 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 8 November 2022 titled 'Queensland residents have lost confidence in the CCC to address corruption'.

I note the petition seeks to draw the House's attention to the Crime and Corruption Commission's (CCC) report, *Investigation Workshop: An investigation into allegations of disclosure of confidential information at the office of the Integrity Commissioner* and submits that 'the people of Queensland have lost confidence in the CCC's ability/ willingness to properly investigate corruption in the Queensland Public Service'.

The CCC is established under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001* (CC Act) as an independent entity responsible for combatting, reducing and preventing the incidence of major crime and public sector corruption. In line with the recommendations of the landmark Fitzgerald Inquiry Report, the CCC's independence is firmly entrenched under the CC Act. Section 57 of the CC Act requires the CCC to 'at all times, act independently, impartially and fairly having regard to the purposes of this Act and the importance of protecting the public interest'.

To ensure the CCC is fulfilling its statutory functions to the highest standards, the CCC and its officers are subject to a range of accountability mechanisms, including oversight by the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee (PCCC), the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner, the Public Interest Monitor and the courts. The PCCC's role is enshrined under the CC Act to include monitoring and reviewing the performance of the CCC's functions and reporting to the Legislative Assembly about such matters as appropriate. Under section 295 of the CC Act, the PCCC can deal with complaints or concerns about the conduct or activities of the CCC or a CCC officer and any individual or organisation may make such a complaint, in writing, to the PCCC.

While the Government has no plans to dismantle the CCC, it is acutely aware of the need for the CCC, like all our integrity bodies, to be supported by high levels of public trust. The Government therefore moved swiftly to accept all of the PCCC's recommendations directed to it in Report No. 108, *Inquiry into the Crime and Corruption Commission's Investigation of former councillors of Logan City Council; and related matters*, tabled on 2 December 2021.

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The PCCC's findings and recommendations, which included a recommendation for a review of the CCC's structure in regards to its investigatory and charging functions, and the role of seconded police officers at the CCC, were designed to enhance public confidence in the CCC's performance and ensure that where mistakes have been made, they are not repeated in the future.

On 7 February 2022, to implement the Government's response to the PCCC recommendations in Report No. 108, a Commission of Inquiry comprised of the Honourable Tony Fitzgerald AC KC as Chairperson and the Honourable Alan Wilson KC as Commissioner commenced. The Commission of Inquiry relating to the Crime and Corruption Commission (the COI) which delivered its report on 9 August 2022, importantly concluded that the CCC continued to have a central role in Queensland's integrity landscape as envisaged in the Fitzgerald Inquiry Report and remained fundamental to combatting major crime and corruption in Queensland.

However, the COI accepted that the success of an organisation like the CCC must involve public approval and respect and, critically, trust. The COI's report made 32 recommendations intended to improve the way the CCC operates under the guiding principle that they should also serve to restore and cement public confidence in the CCC. The Government has supported in-principle all recommendations made by the COI and is committed to implementing those recommendations directed to the Government alongside other important integrity reform work, including implementation of the reforms proposed by Professor Peter Coaldrake AO in his June 2022 report, *Let the sunshine in, Review of culture and accountability in Queensland Public Sector*.

I thank the petitioners for bringing their concerns to the attention of the House.

Yours sincerely



Shannon Fentiman MP

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

Member for Waterford