

Parliament of New South Wales

1990-91

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON THE ICAC

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT WITNESSES BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE COMMITTEE AND THE COMMISSIONER, MR IAN TEMBY QC

DATED JUNE - AUGUST 1990

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PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

COMMITTEE ON THE ICAC

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT WITNESSES BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Correspondence between the Committee and the Commissioner, Mr Ian Temby QC

June - August 1990



Secretariat 121 Macquarie St Sydney NSW 2000 Tel (02) 287 6780 or (02) 287 6624 Fax 287 6625

12 June 1990

COMMITTEE ON THE ICAC

Mr Ian Temby QC Commissioner . Independent Commission Against Corruption GPO Box 500 SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Temby

I refer to the <u>Report on Witnesses</u> prepared by the ICAC for the Parliamentary Joint Committee, which I tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 1 March 1990.

Copies of the report were distributed to all Members of Parliament for their information. A number of comments were subsequently received and, in the light of those comments, the Committee on the ICAC at its last meeting resolved that you be requested to provide the Committee with further advice on a number of issues in relation to this report.

What has been suggested to the Committee, and the Committee is in agreement with, is that information is required on the principles which activate the Commission in exercising its discretion to grant or refuse to grant various protections. A further report would be helpful examining, "How and upon what grounds the Commission seeks to protect or refuses to protect the rights of witnesses, in accordance with the provisions of the ICAC Act."

Furthermore, there are a number of specific questions which the Committee would like answered. These are set out below.

A) Power over Witnesses

How many witnesses have been summonsed by the ICAC and have any been arrested for not appearing? Are present procedures adequate for ensuring the appearance of witnesses to hearings?

B) Protection of Witnesses

- 1 Have all witnesses received legal representation at or before hearings?
- On what bases has the Commission considered (or would it consider) recommending that a witness be granted an indemnity from prosecution? Has the Attorney-General accepted such recommendations?

Mr Ian Temby QC 12 June 1990

On what bases would the Commission consider recommending that an undertaking be given that an answer given by a witness not be used in evidence against that person?

- 3 How often is security provided for witnesses? What considerations are taken into account in deciding to give a witness protection at all, or at a particular level? Has the protection provided been adequate? What costs have the ICAC incurred in providing protection?
- What protection is there for the reputation of those named in hearings, whether or not they are witnesses? Are the present safeguards adequate?

C) <u>General</u>

- What considerations have been or would be taken into account when deciding whether to hold a hearing in private?
- 2 How are the expenses of witnesses who appear at hearings assessed?
- 3 How is feedback from witnesses who appear at hearings obtained? Should a system of individual witness surveys be introduced?
- 4 Are witnesses informed of their rights and obligations under the ICAC Act when appearing at hearings?
- 5 What improvements could be made in the protection of witnesses to ICAC hearings?

Your advice on these matters would be most appreciated.

Yours sincerely

M J Kerr MP Chairman



INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

NEW SOUTH WALES

All correspondence to:

Commission Secretary Box 500, GPO SYDNEY 2001 Cnr. Cleveland & George Streets REDFERN NSW 2016 Tel: (02) 318 5999 Telephone: (02) 349 0900

Facsimile: (02) 699 8067

17 July 1990

Mr. M.J. Kerr, M.P., Chairman, Committee on the ICAC, 121 Macquarie Street,

SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr. Kerr,

Thank you for your letter dated 12 June 1990 seeking further information about witnesses before the Commission.

As mentioned in your letter, the Commission provided you with a Report on Witnesses which was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 1 March 1990. That report dealt quite comprehensively with the Commission's powers which directly affect witnesses such as witness protection and expenses and the conduct of hearings including an explanation of the factors taken into account in determining whether a public or private hearing is held. Offences relevant to witnesses, contempt provisions of the Act and a chapter on witness protection were also included in the Report.

It seems that the answers to the specific questions asked in your letter will satisfy your request for a further report entitled "How and upon what grounds the Commission seeks to protect or refused to protect the rights of witnesses, in accordance with the provisions of the ICAC Act". In the event that further information is still required by the Committee, I will be happy to assist.

This letter is forwarded for the information of the Committee and I would hope to be consulted if wider dissemination is intended.

A. Power over witnesses

How many witnesses have been summonsed by the ICAC and have Q.

any been arrested for not appearing? Are present procedures adequate for ensuring the appearance of witnesses to hearings?

A. Over 270 witnesses have been summonsed to appear before the Commission and over 50 have appeared before the Commission without being summonsed. No person has been arrested for failure to appear. The Commission has not experienced any difficulties in ensuring the appearance of witnesses resident in New South Wales. The jurisdictional restraints do not permit the Commission to require the attendance of those outside of the State's borders. Where such people are needed, the Commission can only request that they give evidence.

B. Protection of witnesses

- Q1. Have all witnesses received legal representation at or before hearings?
- A1. Not all witnesses before Commission hearings have sought to be legally represented. Of those that have, the Commissioner has always granted their lawyer the right to appear on their behalf while their evidence is given.
- Q2. On what bases has the Commission considered (or would it consider) recommending that a witness be granted an indemnity from prosecution? Has the Attorney-General accepted such recommendations? On what bases would the Commission consider recommending that an undertaking be given that an answer given by a witness not be used in evidence against that person?
- A2. The question whether an indemnity or undertaking should be sought from the Attorney General will arise in circumstances where the Commission wishes to take evidence from a witness who requires (in the Commission's judgment, rather than that of the prospective witness) such protection.

Section 49 of the ICAC Act, 1988 provides as follows:-

- "(1) The Commission may recommend to the Attorney General that a person be granted (under s.13 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986) an indemnity from prosecution.
- (2) The Commission may recommend to the Attorney General that a person be given (under s.14 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986) an undertaking that -
 - (a) an answer, statement or disclosure in proceedings before the Commission; or
 - (b) the fact of a disclosure or production of a document in proceedings before the

Commission, will not be used in evidence against the person.

- (3) Section 14 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 applies in relation to proceedings before the Commission in the same way as it applies in relation to proceedings for an offence.
- (4) A reference in this section to proceedings before the Commission includes a reference to a hearing before the Commission or any other investigative activity involving the Commission or an officer of the Commission."

Put broadly, an indemnity gives far wider protection to a witness than does an undertaking. When a person is granted an indemnity (and in New South Wales the only person who may do so is the Attorney General), the indemnity prevents the institution or continuation against that person of any proceedings of the type specified in the indemnity. An undertaking has the effect of preventing any answer given or statement or disclosure made by the person giving evidence being used in evidence against that person. practical terms it removes the need for a witness to claim the privilege against self incrimination. A protection similar to that afforded by s.14 of the Criminal Procedure Act is provided by the operation of ss.37 and 38 of the ICAC The effect of these two sections is that the Act. statements made or answers given by the witness upon objection while giving evidence before the Commission cannot be used against the witness.

The Commission will not often seek indemnities or undertakings from the Attorney General as the protection provided a witness by the operation of ss.37 and 38 will, more often than not, be adequate to obtain that witness' evidence.

Only one application for an indemnity has been made to the Attorney and that application was granted. No applications for an undertaking have been made.

That application was on behalf of Stephen Roy Lennon, an informer to the investigation into the RTA. He had given a number of induced statements to investigators, wherein he made apparently frank admissions as to his criminal conduct. Clearly those admissions could not be used against him because of the inducements offered and recorded in the statement. Similarly, his answers to questions in the hearing if given on objection could not have been used against him. However, he was involved in the ongoing police investigation in obtaining evidence by the use of listening devices. In the course of the conversations which he had with various persons who were known or suspected to have been involved in corrupt activity, he made admissions of his

own involvement in circumstances where such admissions were not induced or otherwise improperly obtained and were, at least theoretically, available to a prosecutor to be used in proceedings.

In addition, Lennon was a serving police officer at the time the indemnity was sought. It was granted by the Attorney General on the condition that he resign from the Force. His case was somewhat unusual in that a police investigaton preceded the Commission's investigation and during the former, Lennon had been informed that an indemnity would be sought for him.

In this case the need for an indemnity was clear - an undertaking pursuant to s.14 of the Criminal Procedure Act or the protection afforded by ss.37 and 38 of the ICAC Act would not have prevented a person taking action against the witness on the basis of, inter alia, the listening device material.

Each subsequent case will need to be assessed on its merits.

- Q3. How often is security provided for witnesses? What considerations are taken into account in deciding to give a witness protection at all, or at a particular level? Has the protection provided been adequate? What costs have the ICAC incurred in providing protection?
- A3. Security is provided for witnesses as often as is considered necessary by the Commission. The need has arisen rarely to date.

The Commission has appointed a Witness Protection Committee which consists of the Director of Operations, General Counsel, Director of Administration and the Co-ordinator of the Technical and Security Unit. Each case is considered on its merits and witnesses are not provided with protection until exhaustive examination of the situation prevailing has been conducted by Commission officers in conjunction with a member of the Witness Protection Unit of the agency that will undertake the protection.

In screening candidates for witness protection, the Committee in liaison with other sections of the Commission and with such outside agencies as necessary, will assess the following:-

- a. the significance of the matter under investigation;
- b. the significance of the evidence held by the witness;
- c. the threat facing the witness (and his/her family);
- d. the degree and extent of the protective response to be mounted;

 the value of the matter and response as a precedent for further instances of obtaining evidence.

Risk and response assessment will be done on a formal detailed basis by the Committee in conference with a witness protection officer. The protection to date has been adequate and the ICAC has incurred \$33,734.92 in providing protection.

- Q4. What protection is there for the reputation of those named in hearings, whether or not they are witnesses? Are the present safeguards adequate?
- A4. There are several provisions in the Act and procedures followed by the Commission which can operate to protect those appearing or named in proceedings before the Commission.

As noted in the Report on Witnesses, s. 112 of the Act enables the Commission to direct that evidence, the identity of a witness or the fact that evidence has been given be suppressed. There are a number of areas where a suppression order is likely to be necessary including the protection of a witness or a person other than a witness. A suppression order is also directed to the media and can prevent the publication of evidence which may affect a person's reputation.

The Act permits the Commission to direct that a hearing be held in private if it is satisfied that it is desirable to do so in the public interest for reasons connected with the subject-matter of the investigation or the nature of the evidence to be given. (s.31). If the protection of witnesses fell within the two reasons permitted under the Act, a private hearing could be held. If a hearing is held in public, the Commission is required to furnish a report in relation to the matter. The results of its investigations would accordingly be made public, including the Commission's conclusions as to allegations made.

The Commissioner has indicated to the Committee in evidence given on 30 March 1990 that the Commission endeavours, where appropriate, to inform people of allegations made against them or adverse comments made in a hearing and provide them with a right of reply to those allegations or comments.

Further, the Commission is not bound by the rules of evidence and can limit the questioning of witnesses to matters which it considers relevant. Accordingly, irrelevant material which may affect people's reputations can be and is excluded.

The Commission is satisfied with the existing provisions and procedure in this regard.

The only real present difficulty arises from the provisions of the ICAC Act relative to reporting, which are distinctly unclear, have led to litigation and will continue to do so. The Act should be amended so as to make clear what the Commission must say in its Reports, what it may say and what it must not say. Until that happens, some Reports will be long delayed, which means that those not the subject of an adverse finding will have to suffer uncertainty at best and ignominy at worst for an excessive period. In the Commission's view this position must be rectified.

C. General

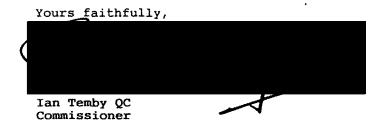
- Q1. What considerations have been or would be taken into account when deciding whether to hold a hearing in private?
- A1. You will note that at pp.9 and 10 of the Report on Witnesses there is a lengthy explanation of the considerations taken into account in determining whether a public or private hearing is held. Further the Commissioner at p.6 of the evidence referred to previously sets out some of the criteria applied by the Commission in this respect. At that time he also referred the Committee to pp.15 and 16 of the Park Plaza Report and Schedule 1 of the Hakim Report where this matter is dealt with at more length.
- Q2. How are the expenses of witnesses who appear at hearings assessed?
- A2. The Commission's witness expenses policy and the information provided to witnesses together with claim for for witnesses' expenses which are forwarded to all witnesses who appear before the Commission, is attached.
- Q3. How is feedback from witnesses who appear at hearings obtained? Should a system of individual witness surveys be introduced?
- A3. There is no formal system to ascertain feedback from witnesses, however, on occasions former witnesses have contacted the Commission. The matters raised by them have been dealt with on a case by case basis.
 - The Commission believes there is no need for the establishment of a more formal system.
- Q4. Are witnesses informed of their rights and obligations under the ICAC Act when appearing at hearings?
- A4. The summons requiring attendance before the Commission sets out many of the rights and obligations of witnesses under the ICAC Act. The summons informs witnesses of their right to legal representation, sets out the scope and purpose of

the investigation, the purpose of the summons, the information that the witness may or may not disclose, the consequences of failure to appear as well as offences which apply in connection with the Commission for example the giving of false evidence and destroying documents etc. In addition a contact name and phone number is given to them if further information is required.

In addition, where appropriate, the Presiding Officer informs witnesses of their right to object to answer questions and the requirement that evidence is to be taken on oath or by making an affirmation.

Of course, witnesses retain the right to seek relief in the Courts, if they consider such action to be justified.

- Q5. What improvements could be made in the protection of witnesses to ICAC hearings?
- A5. The systems in place for safeguarding witnesses are reviewed by the Commission from time to time. They are considered adequate at this time.



WITNESS EXPENSES POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the payment of witness expenses as required by section 51 of the ICAC Act, which provides:

"A witness appearing before the Commission shall be paid, out of money provided by Parliament, in respect of the expenses of the witness's attendance an amount ascertained in accordance with the prescribed scale or, if there is no prescribed scale, such amount as the Commission determines."

The requirement under section 51 is to pay expenses, rather than some sort of attendance allowance as is the practice for juries. It has been decided not to have a scale prescribed: they always get out of date and become unfair.

Claims for witness expenses can be assessed and paid according to this policy. If any witness so requires, his or her claim will be taken up with and considered by the Commissioner who presided over the relevant hearing.

Witnesses appearing before the ICAC are performing a vital public duty. As with witnesses in the courts and jury service, this public duty is a price of citizenship. We must all remember that witnesses are part of the public for whom we work. We should at all times treat them with courtesy, and offer every assistance.

WHAT CAN BE CLAIMED

Public duty should not involve private hardship. Accordingly the ICAC's policy is to provide for reimbursement of expenses, including loss of income incurred as a result of attending the ICAC to give evidence (up to a maximum \$500 per day). Attendance in this context includes:

* travelling time;

- * travelling expenses;
- * conferences;
- * waiting time;
- * accommodation;
- * meals;
- * child minding or babysitting;
- * nurse or attendant fees or expenses for a person to accompany an incapacitated or elderly witness; and
- * time spent giving evidence.

LOSS OF GROSS INCOME

Claims may be made for reimbursement of gross income lost. Salary or wages may, subject to proof, be reimbursed either to the witness or to the employer. Self employed or professional persons may be reimbursed for actual losses suffered, subject to satisfying the certifying officer that the amount is fair and reasonable.

LOCAL TRAVEL

Witnesess may travel by taxi in the inner-metropolitan area (10 kilometre radius of the GPO) and by a combination of bus/ferry/train and taxi for the outer metropolitan area. Receipts must be submitted for taxi fares.

Witnesess may also travel by private car, in which case the claim form must detail the distance travelled.

COUNTRY AND INTERSTATE TRAVEL

Requests to arrange for witnesses to be brought to Sydney must be made by the team lawyer and are to be directed to the services section as much in advance as possible. Unless advised to the contrary by the team lawyer, the services section will arrange for country/interstate witnesses to be at the ICAC building at the time and on the date appearing on the face of a summons.

Travel by air is the normal means of transport. Transport to and from the airport and between accommodation and the ICAC is the same as for local travel (above).

WHAT CANNOT BE CLAIMED

The policy is not intended to provide businesses or individuals with compensation for loss of profits. To do so would replace public service and a pration of hardship with private gain. It is also undesirable witnesses to be, and to be seen to be, in receipt of payment for giving evidence. The only exception to this is for persons called as independent expert witnesses, in which case they are engaged by the ICAC and are no different from any other consultant.

PROCESSING CLAIMS

Prompt processing and payment of claims is essential. Witnesses who intend to claim for expenses should be encouraged by the team lawyer to submit claims as soon as possible. Progress or part claims may be necessary in lengthy matters or where the witness's circumstances justify doing so.

Because the policy is based on actual expenses incurred, there is no need for a system or scale for the calculation of expenses to be paid. Expenses are claimed and, if fair and reasonable, paid.

All claims must be:

- signed by the witness, certifying the accuracy and truthfulness of a claim; and
- certified as properly incurred by the lawyer who arranged for the witness to be called.

If the team lawyer or accounts services staff doubt that a claim is genuine, a statutory declaration or other documentary evidence may be required before a claim can be paid. A request by accounts/services staff for further evidence should only be made after consulting the team lawyer for the matter to which the claim relates, the Commission Secretary or the Director of Administration.

A ceiling of \$500 per day applies to claims for loss of income. This is a figure that should rarely be reached. Claims for loss of income should be checked closely by both the person who certifies the expenses as properly incurred (usually the team lawyer) and by accounts staff. Where a reasonable doubt exists as to the validity of a claim for loss of income, it may be necessary to verify the claim by telephoning or writing to the witness's employer. Contacting a witnesses employer must be approved by the team lawyer, the Commission Secretary or the Director of Administration.

ADVISING WITNESSES OF ENTITLEMENTS

To ensure witnesses are aware of their entitlements, information about entitlements and a claim form are to be provided when a person is asked or summonsed to attend. An information form and a claim form are attached. Further copies may be obtained from the accounts section.



INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

NEW SOUTH WALES

All correspondence to:

Commission Secretary Box 500, GPO SYDNEY 2001 Cnr. Cleveland & George Streets REDFERN NSW 2016

Telephone: (02) 319 0900 Facsimile: (02) 699 8067

INFORMATION FOR WITNESSES

As a witness before the ICAC you are entitled to payment or reimbursement of expenses.

LOSS OF INCOME

Witnesses may claim reimbursement for the loss of wages, salary or income for the time spent in conferences or at the ICAC. The claim form must be signed by your employer when you claim reimbursement of wages or salary. Self employed or professional people must provide details of the methods used to calculate loss of income and may be required to provide evidence of the actual loss. A maximum daily rate, which will be revised from time to time, applies to all claims for loss of income.

<u>Please note:</u> If payment is made to you by the ICAC you must include the amount in your next tax return.

FARES

The ICAC will pay for the cost of getting to and from the ICAC on days that you are asked or required to attend to be interviewed or to give evidence. This includes bus, train, ferry or taxi fares, as well as an allowance for kilometres travelled if your private vehicle is used. The ICAC will pay for travel by taxi in the inner metropolitan area (within a 10 kilometre radius of the GPO) and for travel by a combination of train/bus/ferry and taxi for the outer metropolitan area. Receipts must be submitted for taxi fares claimed.

For country and interstate witnesses, travel by air is the normal means of transport. This can be arranged for you by the services section of the ICAC on the above telephone number. Transport to and from the airport and between accommodation and the ICAC is the same as for local travel.

MEALS

Breakfast and evening meals taken at the accommodation provided and included in the motel bill will be paid directly by the ICAC. Reasonable costs may be reimbursed for meals taken elsewhere, subject to production of receipts.

Witnesses are eligible to be reimbursed for reasonable costs of lunch if the appearance at the ICAC or related travel extends beyond the lunch period. Other meals may be reimbursed if the circumstances prevent the witness having the meal at home or making normal arrangements for such meals. The ICAC will not pay for alcohol, either with meals or purchased separately.

ACCOMMODATION

The services section of the ICAC will arrange accommodation for country or interstate witnesses if an overnight stay is necessary. If you choose to make other arrangements, reimbursement will not exceed normal accommodation costs, and the production of receipts will be necessary.

SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS

Claim should be made on the attached form and forwarded to:

Independent Commission Against Corruption GPO Box 500 SYDNEY NSW 2001.

CLAIM FOR WITNESS EXPENSES

To: Independent Commission Against Corruption

191 Cleveland Street

Signature of Employer

Postal Address

SYDNEY NSW 2001

Date

GPO Box 500

REDFERN NSW 2016 Telephone: 319 0900 Name of Claimant: Address: Attendance at ICAC: Date(s): Time Arrived: Time Departed: LOSS OF INCOME - EMPLOYED PERSONS Name of Employer: Address of Employer: Total Loss of Wages Claimed: \$ Income (Gross) per annum: \$ Payment direct to my employer is/is not * authorised (* delete as appropriate). Employer's Certificate I certify that ___ (name of witness) (* Delete as appropriate) will have wages/salary deducted for the time s/he is absent by reason of being a witness for the ICAC for the periods indicated above. <u>OR</u> will be paid wages/salary for the time s/he is absent by reason of being a witness for the ICAC for the periods indicated above.

Name and Title

LOSS OF INCOME - SELF EMPLOYED/PROFESSIONAL PERSONS

ncome amounting to \$ This amount is calculated	as follov	in o	conne	ection with
			GRO	OSS AMOUNT
Daily Rate \$ Hourly Rate \$	x x	days hours	= =	\$ \$
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Please note:

If payment is made direct to you for loss of income, this amount must be included in your next income tax return.

Secretariat 121 Macquarie St Sydney NSW 2000 Tel (02) 287 6780 or (02) 287 6624 Fax 287 6625

COMMITTEE ON THE ICAC

13 August 1990

Mr Ian Temby QC Commissioner Independent Commission Against Corruption GPO Box 500 SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Temby

Thank you for your letter of 17 July providing further information about witnesses before the Commission. The Committee considered this material at its meeting on 8 August.

The Committee resolved that, due to the significant degree of public interest in the issues dealt with in your letter, this material would be tabled in Parliament during the forthcoming sitting.

I am writing to advise you of the Committee's intention in this matter and to request your advice as to whether you would like to adjust the format of this material before it is tabled. Your early advice would be appreciated as the Committee is keen to see this material placed on the public record as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Paleolo len

M J Kerr MP Chairman



INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

16 August 1990

Mr M J Kerr MP Chairman Committee on the ICAC 121 Macquarie Street SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Kerr

The Commissioner has asked me to realy to your letter dated 13 August 1990 advising that the Committee has resolved that the Commissioner's letter dated 17 July 1990 relating to witnesses before the Commission be tabled in Parliament. You asked whether the Commission desired to adjust the format of the material contained in this letter.

The Commissioner recognises that, the Commission having furnished the information to the Committee, it is ultimately up to the Committee whether it reports that information to the Houses of Parliament. Since the Committee has made that decision, the Commissioner sees no utility in reformatting the material. He is grateful, however, for the opportunity to consider the matter.

The Commission requests that the attachments to the letter of 17 July 1990 be included in the material tabled. It also considers that Mr Kerr's letter dated 12 June 1990, to which the Commissioner replied in his letter of 17 July 1990, should be tabled, for the sake of completeness.

It would be appreciated if a Committee officer could inform the Commission when it is intended the material be tabled.

Yours faithfully

David Catt Commission Secretary 16 AUG 1990

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: COMMISSION SECRETARY BOX 500 GPO SYDNEY 2001, DX 557 CNR CLEVELAND & GEORGE STREETS REDFERN NSW 2016 TELEPHONE (02) 319 0900 FACSIMILE (02) 699 8067