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MEDIA RELEASE

ICAC Committee report released: Review of the 2016-2017 Annual Reports of the ICAC and Inspector of the ICAC

The ICAC Committee's report reviewing the 2016-2017 annual reports of the ICAC and its Inspector has been tabled today in State Parliament said Committee Chair, Mr Damien Tudehope MP.

The Committee's report details a recent funding increase to the ICAC of \$3.6 Million on a recurrent basis. "The recent funding boost provides the ICAC with greater capacity to perform its important work" said Mr Tudehope. "It has strengthened capabilities across its various divisions, allowing it to conduct concurrent public inquiries whilst still keeping abreast of its investigative caseload".

In particular, increased funding has allowed the ICAC to progress its plans to develop a more proactive approach to the way in which it assesses corruption risks and pursues its investigative functions. "Following budget increases, the ICAC has been able to establish a Strategic Intelligence Research Unit and employ two specialist data analysts" said Mr Tudehope. "It will also be able to replace information, communication and technological equipment in its move to a more proactive approach".

While the Committee welcomes these developments, proper oversight of the proactive approach is critical, and the Committee has therefore recommended that the ICAC publish various details on an ongoing basis. These include the high level details of the methodologies, systems and processes used by the ICAC in the exercise of its proactive jurisdiction; and any areas of emerging and potential public sector corruption risk identified as a result of it exercising its proactive jurisdiction.

In reviewing the ICAC Inspector's annual report, the Committee was also pleased to find the Inspector's resourcing remains appropriate to carry out his oversight functions; and that processes are in place to promote a productive working relationship between the Inspector and the ICAC.

In addition, the Committee noted the importance of the Inspector's audit function for the effective oversight of the ICAC. It was therefore concerned that the Commonwealth's *Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979* continues to partially prevent the Inspector from accessing telecommunications interception material held by the ICAC. The Inspector can access such material to carry out a targeted inspection, but not to conduct a general audit.

"The Inspector must have access to all material to thoroughly oversight the exercise by the ICAC of its extraordinary powers" said Mr Tudehope. "The Committee has therefore recommended that the NSW Attorney General raise with the Commonwealth the continuing issues around the Inspector's access to telecommunications intercept material".

For media comment, please contact Damien Tudehope MP on (02) 9877 0266. The report is available at: <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2485>.