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Mr Philip Donato MP  
Chair  
Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct  
Commission and Crime Commission  
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Dear Mr Donato

Thank you for the supplementary questions, following the Public Service Commission's (PSC) appearance at the public hearing on 2 May 2024. The PSC's responses are as follows:

#### Question 1

You noted that the Commission provides agency-specific data from the People Matter Employee Survey results (Transcript, p10). Do agencies provide feedback as to how they have used this data to develop action plans in response to results?

#### Answer

Agencies are not required to formally share their action plans with us. Agencies may share informal feedback in cross-sector forums and we consult agencies on the People Matter Employee Survey (PMES) design to ensure it responds to agency needs.

We encourage PMES action planning and offer guidance, templates, and regular meetings with portfolio Diversity and Inclusion leads. Our Belonging and Inclusion Library showcases case studies and resources for agency PMES action planning.

#### Question 2

What is the Commission doing to ensure the public sector workforce is ready to respond to the rising frequency of major events? (Transcript, p11)

#### Answer

We are developing a Strategic Workforce Plan for the NSW government sector. The plan will highlight key megatrends affecting the NSW Government and their implications for our workforce. It will also consider the sector's response to climate change and the associated rise in major events.

The PSC runs the NSW Leadership Academy. Leadership Academy programs are designed to build the capabilities of current and emerging public sector leaders. There is a focus on building the capabilities of leaders to navigate change, solve complex problems, and to

develop connected cohorts to foster cross-sector collaboration.

### Question 3

What were the most significant feedback or concerns received during the review process for the Codes of Ethics and Conduct, particularly from integrity agencies? (Transcript, p11)

#### Answer

The PSC received overwhelmingly positive feedback when we circulated a draft Code for consultation. Some agencies suggested minor amendments, which have been adopted and improve the overall quality of the Code. The more significant issues raised include:

- That the Commissioner is only empowered to mandate application of the Code to government sector employees as defined at s.8A of the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* (GSE Act). Consequently, coverage of the Code is unable to be extended to statutory office holders. We have addressed this by inviting those officers to accept coverage voluntarily.
- That the Code does not extend to volunteers, given that volunteers are not government sector employees under the GSE Act. In this situation, agency heads have the discretion to extend coverage to volunteers working in their agency.
- That there are variances across the sector relating to policy settings around gifts, benefits and hospitality. While the Commissioner has issued a set of minimum standards that agencies are required to comply with, the divergence in practice led to feedback on this topic. The PSC notes that it is not necessarily inappropriate for there to be variances across the sector, given agencies are managing different risks. However, we will consider whether further work is required in this area.

### Question 4

How does the Commission ensure that the number of graduates allocated to agencies aligns with broader workforce planning and skill gaps? How do you determine the rotations of graduates between departments? (Transcript, p12)

#### Answer

The PSC seeks an annual commitment from agencies to employ graduates in the NSW Government Graduate Program. Agencies provide information about the number and nature of roles, including qualifications, occupation area and location. Program commitment is based on agencies' workforce planning outcomes.

The graduate program has five streams: primary, social work, engineering, digital and legal. The primary stream has the largest intake and is open to all degrees and disciplines. This allows the PSC to meet agencies' different requirements across their business. The other streams are specific to occupational areas. They were added based on agency demand to attract entry-level talent and build a talent pipeline in these critical occupations

The PSC coordinates the placement and rotation of graduates in collaboration with agencies. The aim is to give graduates exposure to working in different areas of government. The process involves matching graduate's qualification, location preferences and areas of interest with agency requirements.

The Department of Communities and Justice manage the rotation of graduates in the social work stream, as the only participating agency in this stream.

### Question 5

Can you provide specific examples of partnerships or initiatives where the Commission has

empowered Aboriginal organisations with decision-making authority? (Transcript, p13)

- (a) What is the impact this shift is having on creating more inclusive workplace cultures in the sector?

**Answer**

The PSC works with Aboriginal organisations and the Council of Aboriginal Peak Organisations to inform the [Aboriginal Employment Strategy](#) and Closing the Gap commitments. These engagements improve our deliverables that enable government transformation and increase cultural capability.

For details on partnerships with employer Aboriginal organisations with decision making authority, I refer you to [Aboriginal Affairs NSW](#).

**Question 6**

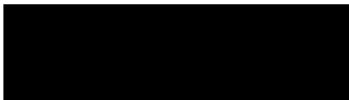
Can you provide more information as to how the Commission is monitoring workplace occupancy in government offices and how floor space utilisation is being managed by agencies post-COVID? (Transcript, p14)

- (a) Are there any plans to consolidate or share facilities across departments to enhance efficiency and reduce unnecessary expenses?

**Answer**

This is not a PSC function. I suggest the Committee refer this question to the Hon Paul Scully MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.

Yours sincerely



**Kathrina Lo**  
Public Service Commissioner  
Date: 30 May 2024