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MEDIA RELEASE

ICAC Committee Report Tabled: Review of the 2013-2014 Annual Reports of the ICAC and the Inspector of the ICAC

The review of the 2013-2014 annual reports of the ICAC and Inspector of the ICAC has been tabled today.

“The ICAC has the Committee’s full support in carrying out its vital job of eradicating corruption in NSW. However, it has been given significant powers to do this, and those powers must be used responsibly which is why thorough oversight is essential.

“We need to restore public confidence in ICAC and ensure it is performing its role of investigating serious corruption as effectively and efficiently as possible. At the moment, there appears to be a lot of pain for very little gain, and it’s not in the public interest to continue like that.” Mr Tudehope said.

In its report, the Committee acknowledges the limitations placed on it by section 64(2) of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988*, but it does not accept a narrow interpretation of that section. The Committee must be fully informed about relevant aspects of the ICAC’s operations to hold it to account. Crown Solicitor’s advice confirms the Committee can ask questions about particular conduct or investigations where they are for the purpose of reviewing the way in which the ICAC conducts its functions and its investigation and decision-making procedures.

Another of the concerns noted by the Committee is that although the ICAC Act enables the Inspector to access any of the ICAC’s materials, the Commonwealth *Telecommunications, Interception and Access Act 1979* prevents the Inspector from accessing telecommunications interception material held by the ICAC, to conduct audits.

The Committee has therefore recommended that the NSW Attorney General write to the Commonwealth seeking a legislative amendment to allow integrity agencies to access intercept material for audit purposes.

Other significant issues discussed in the report are the disclosure of confidential information obtained in the course of an ICAC investigation, and the ICAC’s relationship with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

For media comment please contact Mr Damien Tudehope MP on (02) 9877 0266.