



MEDIA RELEASE

REPORT TABLED: NSW GOVERNMENT'S USE AND MANAGEMENT OF CONSULTING SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

29 May 2024

The NSW Legislative Council's Public Accountability and Works Committee today tabled its report into the NSW Government's use and management of consulting services.

Committee Chair, Ms Abigail Boyd MLC, said: "This inquiry was a timely opportunity to examine how the NSW Government engages with consulting services. The committee found that NSW Government agencies have demonstrated an undue and excessive reliance on the use of external consulting firms, and that this reliance on consultancies has occurred alongside and resulted in a reduction in public sector skill and capacity. The committee has made a suite of recommendations to address these concerns, including incorporating skills transfer requirements into consulting engagements."

The Chair continued: "It is of primary importance that there is greater transparency and accountability around the engagement of consulting services. A number of the committee's recommendations seek to improve the collection of data on consultant and contractor spend, ensure that post-engagement evaluations are completed, and require greater openness as to which consultancies are used and the amounts they have been paid."

Ms Boyd stated: "The report also seeks to prevent and address unethical behaviour associated with consulting engagements, particularly the 'tick and forget' culture that has developed around the management of conflicts of interest. The committee has recommended that there be a far more expansive view of what constitutes a potential conflict of interest. It also recommended that the NSW Government should be responsible for determining whether a conflict of interest exists, rather than leave this as a matter for the consultancies."

The Chair concluded: "Years of poorly managed relationships and excessive use of consultants has resulted in a weakened public sector. Beyond merely reducing our contracting of external consultants, it will take some time to rectify this degradation of public sector capacity. This work must begin now, and I am hopeful that this inquiry will have made a meaningful contribution towards the restoration of the NSW public sector."

The committee's report and other inquiry documents can be found on the committee's [webpage](#).

For further information please contact Committee Chair, Ms Abigail Boyd MLC on (02) 9230 3676

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