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PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

Members present:

Hon. ML Furner MP—Chair
Hon. SM Fentiman MP
Mr MA Hunt MP
Mr JJ McDonald MP
Ms JC Pugh MP
Mr RA Stevens MP
Hon. AJ Stoker MP

Staff present:

Ms L Manderson—Committee Secretary
Ms M Lyons—Assistant Committee Secretary

MEETING WITH THE PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMISSIONER

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 17 February 2026

Brisbane

TUESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2026

The committee met at 9.14 am.

CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. I am Mark Furner, and I am the chair of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee. Joining me on the committee today are Amanda Stoker, the member for Oodgeroo; Marty Hunt, the member for Nicklin; Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer; Jess Pugh, the member for Mount Ommaney; Ray Stevens, the member for Mermaid Beach; and Shannon Fentiman, the member for Waterford, who is substituting today for Glenn Butcher, the member for Gladstone. I would like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we gather and their elders past, present and emerging.

The committee's proceedings are proceedings of the Queensland parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. As parliamentary proceedings, and under the standing orders, any person may be excluded from today's meeting at the discretion of the chair or by order of the committee. The proceedings are being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the parliament's website. I ask everyone participating in today's proceedings to ensure they turn their microphone on before speaking and off once they have finished to ensure they can be heard clearly and the proceedings are accurately captured for broadcast and transcript purposes.

Media may be present and will be subject to the chair's direction at all times. The media rules endorsed by the committee are available from committee staff. All those present today should note that it is possible you may be filmed or photographed by media during the proceedings, and images may also appear on the parliament's website or social media pages. Before we proceed, I ask everyone present to please turn their mobile phones off or switch them to silent mode.

The committee will begin by dealing briefly with some committee matters before commencing its public meeting with the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner. The committee will then close the public part of the meeting and continue its meeting with the parliamentary commissioner in private session. Following that, the committee will meet in public from approximately 10.30 am with the Crime and Corruption Commission before closing the public part of that meeting to continue the remainder of the proceedings with the Crime and Corruption Commission in private session. Before we proceed, are there any apologies or declarations of interest?

Mr STEVENS: I have an interest in a matter that is before the CCC [REDACTED]

CHAIR: We might do that in private. Members are to note that they have been provided with a secretariat briefing; a copy of the parliamentary commissioner's public report and appendix for the period 5 November 2025 to 27 January 2026; and the transcript of the last public meeting with the parliamentary commissioner on 25 November 2025. The proposed resolution is that the committee authorises the publication of the parliamentary commissioner's public report to the committee for the period 5 November 2025 to 27 January 2026. It being so moved, all those in favour? Carried.

I also take this opportunity to advise of a decision of the committee in response to the parliamentary commissioner's request in the public report for a direction under section 314(2) (g) of the Crime and Corruption Act to examine the adequacy of anti-corruption training for members of local government. I confirm that the committee has resolved to request that the parliamentary commissioner maintain a watching brief on this issue and report back to the committee with any preliminary views by the end of March, pursuant to that section.

KUNDE, Mr Mitchell, Principal Legal Officer, Office of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner

MORGAN, Dr Daniel, Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner

CHAIR: The committee will now commence its public discussion with the parliamentary commissioner. Welcome, Dr Morgan and Mr Kunde. Thank you for joining us today. I will start by inviting you to make an opening statement. Before I do so, I want to remind members to take care not to refer to any private matters in this public part of the meeting. Over to you, Dr Morgan.

Dr Morgan: Thank you, Chair, Deputy Chair and members. There has been significant activity since the last reporting period, notwithstanding the Christmas break. Chair, you have referred to the public report, which I have provided to the committee, dated 17 February 2026, which sets that out in some detail. It might be helpful if I speak to that by way of an overview, and I note that the specifics are contained in an appendix for the progressive work program that is attached to that report.

The significant events include a prospective amendment to the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979, which is a Commonwealth act. There is complementary state legislation which does not need to be amended. This is an issue that preceded my appointment as laying unaddressed and unresolved for about 2½ years, but it now seems to have been addressed by a request to Canberra to bring that particular provision into alignment with the other jurisdictions. My office is the only one that does not have that particular amendment. It relates to the access and permission that I would have to telephone interception material. This gap was identified some time ago. It is not a real-world issue at the moment but for one event a long time ago, I am told. It is not a current burning issue, but if there is ever a problem it is a serious problem so we need to address it in the housekeeping and hopefully it will not arise. I have no updates on how that is progressing in Canberra. That was a request by the CCC to which we agreed. Pleasingly, the actual move of the Connolly-Ryan commission of inquiry records has almost commenced.

Mr McDONALD: Almost?

Dr Morgan: Almost. It is almost ready. I have been with Mr Kunde to the archives and have satisfied and reassured myself that everything is in order. There are about 650 boxes of material. I am happy that it is going to be stored and accessed appropriately.

The actual logistics have been approved by the Clerk, and Mr Kunde has started doing that. They have to be individually indexed, identified, shifted under escort and then put into quarantine so that we do not introduce anything nasty to their nice, clean building. It is a very impressive facility. I would certainly suggest, members, you go and have a look at the facility if you have not already. There is a remarkable range of things that they store safely. The Clerk has indicated that he has approved funding for that. We will tell you when the actual move is ready, but that should not be too long now.

Paragraph 9 of my report talks about local government—and, through you, Chair, I thank the committee for that direction. Having read those recent cases with Carne and Sofronoff, it looks like the better approach is for us to have a direction from the committee to make sure we are covered by privilege. I do not intend to do anything that would actually need that protection, but I think it is a good practice to commence in light of those cases.

I have indicated that one of the related issues, which is a subject for Home Affairs in Canberra, is an education campaign aimed at strengthening democratic institutions from foreign influence and malign conduct. That obviously would capture those concepts—and vice versa corrupt conduct—if you are asking local government to misuse their office for those purposes. Later in the year the state and territory commissioners will meet in Canberra and Home Affairs will brief us on that topic.

I have noted the report about the Townsville City Council. Only one thing, in my view, needs to be remembered: the importance of media involvement in bringing these things to light when investigating political issues. For the benefit of everybody, I have put some research dealing with the Welsh national assembly, which I found, which has been grappling with how to implement a good idea for three years in terms of dealing with politicians who mislead the electorate. It is quite a lot more complicated in principle and in practice than simply passing an amendment, but that is not my key function here.

There is a schedule of administrative matters dealing with the key outputs in paragraph 13 of my report. I have set out the audit reports for assumed identities; surveillance device warrant records; and the intelligence data review, all of which were passed without reservation.

In relation to the member for Lockyer's question on notice about any holdings that we have or any understandings that we have about the efficacy of the CCC's controlled operations, we responded to that on 5 December 2025. I have mentioned the section 329 notifications and the assessments under section 314 of the act. Under section 314(5), I received one matter during the relevant period. I do not think anything has arisen since we prepared that report that we need to bring to the committee's attention. I do not have anything to add, apart from what is already in my report.

CHAIR: Thank you, Dr Morgan. Deputy Chair?

Mrs STOKER: Could you expand a little on the scoping work that you have been doing around education for local government officers and the opportunities to make improvements there and how that might link with the Department of Home Affairs work you have been doing?

Dr Morgan: Certainly. I have not officially raised it with Home Affairs, apart from asking for that brief on that particular topic. In another position I was involved with an education program for local government throughout the country. There were significant logistical issues, particularly in Queensland, because of the size of the state and the variations between the different local government entities. They can be large and sophisticated and have technology and resources, like the Brisbane City Council, which is probably bigger than the government of Tasmania, or it could be a tiny local government authority that is not particularly well resourced and where councillors have to travel five hours each way to go to a meeting and you need to capture their attention somehow.

The scoping that we have been doing—me in particular—is reading what is available publicly through the CCC and the CCC's website, looking at what is available on the Local Government Association's website and seeing what is also available through the parliament. Now that I am armed with that direction, I would like to talk to the Local Government Association and find out some real-world experiences and if they have any particular concerns.

My preliminary view is that it seems comprehensive, but I do not have a detailed understanding of how often that is done and whether people who are newly appointed or newly elected are inducted. I know there is often a training program, but I just do not know whether it is a 'set and forget'—once you are elected once you do not have to ever do it again if you are re-elected. I just do not have a firm grasp on that. It is going to come down to these logistics, again, of how to get time and how to get before all of these different entities. Technology is a great idea for remote communications. That is the scoping that I have done so far.

Mrs STOKER: It sounds as though it is relatively early days. What do you anticipate being the timeline for getting from this initial scoping stage to the point where we have from you a really clear picture of where to go to from here?

Dr Morgan: I think it was March this year.

Mrs STOKER: Do you think March is still realistic?

Dr Morgan: I think that was the drop date, yes. We can give this priority—well, I can, touch wood.

Mrs STOKER: Thank you.

CHAIR: Dr Morgan, I will follow on from that line of questioning because it is an important aspect. I myself have raised the need for training for local government authorities, and I am certain other members of the committee have also. Given the differences—and they are unique to Queensland—in respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, I would certainly encourage you to avail yourself of those areas and have an understanding of that. Is that something you have in mind?

Dr Morgan: Candidly, I do have that in mind. I did not expressly say that, but that is included in the variation in all of the different natures of the local government authorities.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Ms PUGH: Are you yet at the point where you have worked out how you might best direct your efforts for maximum impact? In particular, do you think it would be fair to say that the bigger the council and the bigger the budget the bigger the target in terms of some of those nefarious influences?

Dr Morgan: That is possible. A lot of the work that the Commonwealth through their website are concerned about is critical infrastructure. Counterintuitively perhaps, some of these local governments control airports, power, sewerage, water and roads, which makes them an attractive target for, I think they call it, non-kinetic effects. If you could undermine their ability to provide those critical services, then that is the attraction, but I also think there is this related stream that is concerned with political effects and public opinion effects.

I understand your point. I do not have a concluded view on that, but I am not sure it is necessarily 'the bigger the better' in terms of the target. The corollary with that, of course, is that the bigger the target the more resources they have. Sophisticated city councils should have a framework in place for governance and some stopgaps and those structures under the Local Government Act.

Ms PUGH: Thank you.

Mr McDONALD: You would be aware that item 2 on the *Notice Paper* is the new bill about empowering local governments and some changes with regard to that. Would you be taking that into consideration with your watching brief?

Dr Morgan: I am certainly aware of it and certainly watching it. I am also acutely aware that it is the sort of political area that I would like to stay well out of. I think we would just like to work through those issues we have identified and present a concluded report that we have had the opportunity to consult widely on and discuss amongst ourselves.

Mr STEVENS: Dr Morgan, the previous commissioner had started work on a manual for pathways for now and for the future. Has work on that manual continued, and what stage are we up to for presentation of that manual to the committee?

Dr Morgan: It continues to be the subject of discussion, candidly, because Mr Kunde is the receptacle of all of the corporate knowledge practically, and we are acutely aware of the importance of documenting that manual. I am also mindful of your continued interest in it. In terms of the work program, it will continue. Once we work through these operational issues that we have to do as a priority, we will allocate that the time that we can. I think I speak for us both: we have discussed the contents and I have provided a draft chapter heading and we are working through the calendar in terms of what are the critical tasks. Work is proceeding.

Mr STEVENS: Do you have any idea when there might be a finalised date?

Mr Kunde: A significant part of it is done already, but this is what I propose to do this year. We have annual tasks and some twice a year. As I do each of those, I will document the processes that are involved in them and that will constitute the bulk of the manual. The next inspection we have is a telecommunications interception warrants inspection and I will document each step for that. It is mainly an idea of succession planning. For investigations, it will be extremely hard to document how you would do that. For inspections and audits, every process can be documented and we will be doing that as we do each process this year.

Mr STEVENS: Thank you.

Ms FENTIMAN: Dr Morgan, yesterday we had the Queensland Police Union and the Centre for Public Integrity talk to their submissions as part of the five-year review. Obviously, your officers put in a submission. I was wondering if anything came up yesterday, or is there anything in any of the other submissions that you would like to talk to us about?

Dr Morgan: We did listen to those submissions and we did discuss them. I do not know that there is anything that we need to comment to the committee about.

Mr HUNT: I draw you to the final page of your report, page 5, and the last line of that report which says, 'Options to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of operations are being pursued.' Could you unpack those options for us?

Dr Morgan: My one staff member works conscientiously and has systems in place which capture the important operational aspects and administrative aspects. If I may say, respectfully, they are of the highest quality in terms of work outputs that he has done. He has been there in the position for 25 years and worked through a succession of commissioners.

The efficiencies that we put in place, under my watch at least, are making sure that we are using IT efficiently and that the IT options that are available are taken up by us. There are some transitions which mean that just takes a bit of time to work through. We also have some air-gapped information that does not sit well on the corporate system, so we have engaged with IT to make sure we have options with Teams, with the Microsoft suite, and also that the equipment that is being used to operate the air-gapped material is not going to die and we lose the data in such a way that it is unrecoverable because it is so old.

We also work through each response to the 329s in terms of how that is dealt with internally. It is important that both of us turn our minds to it, but there is also a standard way that has been developed which makes sure there are no gaps through which things can slip. Also, every time we do an inspection we see if that is the best way to do things. If there are more efficient ways to undertake that work and also capture the information, that is identified during those inspections.

Mr Kunde reminds me that I bring my own methods to the way that things have been done. The intelligence data review, for instance, was done in a different way this year, which we have explained previously.

Throughout all of that, we are mindful of time limits but also that the quality of the work has to be of the highest possible nature. We also have to make sure that the confidentiality and integrity of the process is maintained.

Mr HUNT: You mentioned the 329s. Is there anything you want to share with the committee publicly about those?

Dr Morgan: No, I think it is just a style issue.

Ms PUGH: I may be exposing my ignorance here, but what is an air gap?

Dr Morgan: That is what IT people say to say that it is not connected to anything. If it is not connected to anything then people cannot access the information, apart from physically being at the computer.

Ms PUGH: Thanks. I will go to my actual question. You are talking about your efficiencies and things like that and you referred to the Microsoft suite. I was wondering if you had started to dabble with AI at all, or do you feel like it is still too early to be able to use it appropriately?

Dr Morgan: I will not speak for Mr Kunde, but I am confident that I am the one who is dabbling in AI. Professionally, we are under a lot of pressure to use a lot of the AI products that are provided to lawyers, but at the same time we are regularly receiving emails from the professional bodies and the courts saying, 'This isn't to be relied on and if anything goes wrong it's your certificate.' I try to keep modern and I try to keep aware of how these things work. From my private use at the bar, I cannot rely on it. It is okay to do some things, but in terms of the hallucinations—when they just make case names up—it is an inefficiency to rely on these things and then have to go back and check it manually; it is double handling. It is not something that has been deployed in our office and I cannot immediately think of any process that would be expedited by doing that.

Ms PUGH: Thank you. It is just good to understand how your processes work.

CHAIR: That brings us to the close of this session. Thank you, Dr Morgan and Mr Kunde. I now declare the public session closed.

The committee adjourned at 9.43 am.