

## Review of the Crime and Corruption Commission's activities

**Submission No:** 30

**Submitted by:** Australia New Zealand Lived Experience Advisory Council for Police-Related Deaths

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# AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND LIVED EXPERIENCE ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR POLICE-RELATED DEATHS

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The Honourable Mark Furner MP  
Chair  
Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee  
[pccc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:pccc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

27 October 2025

## **Re: Review of the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001***

Dear Chair and Members of the PCCC,

The Australia and New Zealand Lived Experience Advisory Council for Police-Related Deaths expresses its appreciation to Professors Lorraine Mazerolle, Janet Ransley, Elena Marchetti and Lincoln Crowley KC for their continued leadership in advancing community safety and policing accountability. Their independent 2022 review of Queensland police-related deaths and domestic and family violence deaths directly inspired the development of our bi-national, peer-led platform, and continues to inform our work in this evolving field.<sup>1 2</sup>

We endorse the intent and findings of the *2022 Mazerolle et al. Review*, particularly its recommendation that the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) independently investigate all police-related deaths. We support the urgent establishment of the Police Integrity Unit as proposed in the 2023 Richards Inquiry Report. Independent scrutiny is not a relic of bureaucracy; it is the living expression of Fitzgerald's legacy. Reform must modernise, not minimise, the reach and authority of the CCC.<sup>3</sup>

To narrow the CCC's jurisdiction would risk weakening Queensland's integrity framework at a time when public confidence depends upon its independence. The Commission's capacity to address complex, contemporary corruption risks, including conflicts of interest within representative bodies, and the misuse of union resources and influence, remains essential.

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<sup>1</sup> OPRL\_Jan  
[https://x.com/anzleac\\_prd/status/1885178331714195695?s=61](https://x.com/anzleac_prd/status/1885178331714195695?s=61)

<sup>2</sup> Final report—Independent review into the investigations of police-related deaths and domestic and family violence deaths in Queensland  
<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/edcad426-373b-4ae8-a81d-e7599094311e/resource/1bba8624-50e4-4026-8cf1-7750ac1d42f3/download/review-investigations-police-related-dfv-deaths-qld-report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The Report  
<https://www.qpsdfvinquiry.qld.gov.au/about/report.aspx>

## The Continuing Need for an Independent CCC

On 13 July, the Government announced a Commission of Inquiry into the State CFMEU. This was described as “*Labor’s Fitzgerald moment*”, with the Deputy Premier stating that “*people must be held accountable for enabling the CFMEU over the past ten years.*”<sup>4</sup>

That same commitment to integrity, transparency and accountability, so prominently invoked to restore trust in the construction sector, must extend equally to law-enforcement unions. Their influence on public policy, industrial relations, and oversight processes has been significant and enduring.

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<sup>4</sup> Commission of Inquiry into the CFMEU <https://www.cfmeuinquiry.qld.gov.au/>

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## Presumptive Whistleblower Protection for Bereaved Families

Recent developments such as the Australian Federal Police's establishment of **National Security Investigations (NSI)** teams to target groups that "erode social cohesion" highlight the growing interface between public safety, national security and citizen accountability. The challenge for integrity bodies is to ensure that enhanced security powers do not unintentionally capture, deter or intimidate legitimate voices of public interest disclosure, including families speaking out after preventable deaths involving police.<sup>7</sup>

Bereaved families perform a function that is both civic and protective. They act as **lived-experience whistleblowers**, exposing systemic gaps that have allowed preventable harm to occur. Yet their engagement with coronial, police and oversight systems often attracts stigma, reprisal or mischaracterisation as activism or threat.

This submission therefore recommends a **presumptive whistleblower status** for families who raise concerns about public safety or institutional accountability in the aftermath of police-related deaths. Such recognition is essential to safeguard against secondary victimisation and policy-induced harm.<sup>8</sup>

Amendments to legislation and intergovernmental memoranda should:

- Extend **protected disclosure provisions** to bereaved families acting in the public interest;
- Align whistleblower protections with **Work Health and Safety (WHS)** duties of care, recognising that police-related deaths constitute workplace deaths subject to preventive and investigative obligations;<sup>9 10 11 12</sup>
- Provide **trauma-informed protections** recognising the psychological vulnerability and public exposure faced by those seeking accountability from the State.



<sup>7</sup> AFP launches National Security Investigations teams to target groups causing harm to social cohesion | AFP <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-release/afp-launches-national-security-investigations-teams-target-groups-causing>

<sup>8</sup> Defending whistleblowers - Human Rights Law Centre <https://www.hrlc.org.au/projects/defending-whistleblowers/>

<sup>9</sup> Work health and safety laws | WorkSafe.qld.gov.au <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/work-health-and-safety-laws>

<sup>10</sup> Convention C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) [https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx\\_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:3999810](https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:3999810)

<sup>11</sup> Post Traumatic Stress Disorder suffered by certain employees | Comcare <https://www.comcare.gov.au/scheme-legislation/src-act/guidance/scheme-guidance-ptsd-certain-employees>

<sup>12</sup> A death in the workplace, A guide for family and friends [https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/18411/6567-a-death-in-the-workplace.pdf](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/18411/6567-a-death-in-the-workplace.pdf)

Page 4 of this submission has not been authorised for publication due to its focus on matters outside of the terms of reference of the committee's review.

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### **False and Vexatious Complaints**

The Crime and Corruption Commission has long recognised the harm that false or unfounded allegations can cause individual officers. Yet it has taken no comparable action against the Police Union’s sustained pattern of pre-emptive media commentary, statements that have repeatedly misrepresented facts, defamed the deceased, and intensified the suffering of their families. This concern has been echoed in coronial findings, including those of the Jason Protheroe inquest, and by long-standing human rights advocate Terry O’Gorman KC calls for enforceable consequences.<sup>15 16</sup>

Proposals to expand prosecutions for “false and vexatious” complaints, while disregarding this persistent union-driven distortion of public discourse, risk entrenching a serious double standard. Such measures could be misapplied to cast legitimate public criticism as malice, thereby reinforcing institutional defensiveness and undermining transparency.

When one voice is permitted to speak without restraint while another faces the threat of sanction for doing so, the outcome is not equilibrium, it is suppression. Any extension of these provisions must be firmly grounded in evidence, applied, and directed towards strengthening integrity rather than preserving institutional self-interest.

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<sup>15</sup> Police shooting of Aubrey Donahue — Queensland Council for Civil Liberties

<https://qccl.org.au/newsblog/police-shooting-of-aubrey-donahue>

<sup>16</sup> Coroner’s finding in Protheroe Inquest page 44.

[https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0012/198849/cif-protheroe-jp-20130614.pdf](https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0012/198849/cif-protheroe-jp-20130614.pdf)

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[REDACTED]

Loretta Woolston  
Administration/Research  
ANZLEAC4PRD  
[anzleac4prd@gmail.com](mailto:anzleac4prd@gmail.com)



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The remaining pages of this submission have not been authorised for publication due to their focus on matters outside the terms of reference of the committee's review.