




Speech By
Peter Russo

MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK

Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2016

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (3.28 pm): I rise to speak to the Finance and Administration Committee report No. 19 and to commend the report to the House. The chair of the committee at the time of the tabling of the report, Di Farmer, the member for Bulimba, stated in the chair's foreword—

The Committee resolved to formally review the Report and to consider the recommendations made and comment on other findings where appropriate. The Committee agreed with some and disagreed with other recommendations.

Although the committee made eight recommendations, in the time available to me I intend to deal with only one of the recommendations.

The Integrity Act 2009 expanded the advice that could be given in relation to ethics, integrity issues and conflicts of interest. Section 86 of the Integrity Act specifies that a strategic review of both the commissioner's function and the performance of those functions must be conducted within four years of the commencement of the position, and that was by 1 January 2014. A strategic review must also be conducted every five years thereafter. It is important to note that the act does not allow for an extension of time to be granted for the commencement of the review.

The act specifies that the strategic review must be conducted by appropriately qualified persons acting as independent officers, and to that extent Professor Peter Coaldrake, vice-chancellor and chief executive officer of the Queensland University of Technology, was engaged to conduct the strategic review. The Nous Group was also appointed as consultants to assist Professor Coaldrake with this strategic review. The terms of reference state—

In conducting the strategic review, the appointee is to have regard to the functions of the Integrity Commissioner and relevant objectives of the Act in assessing the ongoing economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. The appointee is to also have regard to the Integrity Commissioner's annual reports, the organisational structure, goals, operational conduct, internal/external policies, operational management, corporate management and service provision of the Integrity Commissioner. The review should also consider comparative models, practices and procedures used by offices in other jurisdictions equivalent to the Integrity Commissioner.

The appointee is to interview the Integrity Commissioner about the strategic review and consideration should also be given to interviewing staff of the Integrity Commissioner and the Finance and Administration Committee.

The appointee may also wish to consult with a selection of the following stakeholders, including designated persons and lobbyists from the Registrar of Lobbyists, and to gain information from sources and documents relevant to the strategic review including: Integrity Act 2009; Integrity Commissioner's website; Queensland Integrity Commissioner Annual Report 2013-14; Register of Lobbyists; Finance and Administration Committee, Integrity Commissioner; Finance and Administration Committee report No. 13, *Oversight of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner 2011*; Final Queensland Government Response report No. 13 *Oversight of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner 2011*; Finance and

Administration Committee report No. 26 Oversight of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner 2012 and Review of Lobbyists Code of Conduct, Queensland Government Response report No. 26 Oversight of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner 2012 and Review of Lobbyists Code of Conduct.

As stated in recommendation 4 of the committee's report—

The Committee recommends the Government confirm that the HP Records Manager system operated by the Department of Premier and Cabinet has appropriate security protocols in place to protect the confidentiality of the Integrity Commissioner's files stored on the system.

As stated in the Professor Coaldrake's review—

Confidentiality is the cornerstone of the Integrity Commissioner's advisory function ... "a person must not record, use or disclose information in relation to an ethics or integrity issue about another person ..."

...

Confidentiality for those contacting the Integrity Commissioner for advice is a key condition of success for the office.

I commend the report to the House.