




Speech By
Peter Russo
MEMBER FOR TOOHEY

Record of Proceedings, 17 October 2019

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (3.23 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report No. 41 titled *Oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner* tabled on 4 July 2019.

I rise to speak about the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's oversight report on the Information Commissioner and her office, with a focus on 2017-18. The committee is required to monitor and review the performance by the Information Commissioner in terms of her functions under the Right to Information Act and the Information Privacy Act. The committee is also required to annually examine reports and strategic review reports of the OIC. The committee must report to the House on any changes to the functions, structures and procedures of the OIC that the committee considers desirable.

In conducting its oversight, the committee met with the Information Commissioner, the Right to Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner at a public oversight meeting on 25 February 2019. The transcript is available on the committee's web page. The committee's oversight report examines the OIC's annual report for 2017-18, focusing on external reviews, privacy advice, complaint and mediation services, and financial performance. I also want to take this opportunity to highlight some of the key features from the public hearing that was held on 25 February 2019, and, as I have stated previously, the transcript is available on the committee's web page.

I first want to turn to the opening statement of the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner noted that the office continues to experience significant demand for its services, with increasing record demand for external reviews. The Information Commissioner noted that its support and audit roles are critical to improvements in agency practices which lead to better government and service delivery outcomes but that this then leads to downward pressure on demand for oversight, external review and privacy complaint functions. It was also noted in the public hearing that it included events which draw significant responses in relation to how agencies deal with mobile apps. The office stated in the public hearing that the privacy audit in relation to agencies' use of mobile apps made recommendations for all agencies about conducting privacy impact assessments before adopting and refreshing technology. It was also noted in the public hearing that community expectations have changed as a result and that government agencies seeking to take advantage of opportunities and challenges associated with technology must have the appropriate safeguards in place as set out in the OIC's audit reports and resources.

It should be noted that the Office of the Information Commissioner celebrates 10 years of right-to-information and privacy legislation in Queensland and, to celebrate this significant milestone, the Office of the Information Commissioner ran several campaigns and events throughout 2019 between Privacy Awareness Week in May and Right to Information Day in September. I was pleased

to attend the Office of the Information Commissioner along with other committee members for a morning tea to meet the hardworking staff of the office and celebrate this significant 10-year milestone. Congratulations!

In the time remaining I also want to speak in relation to external reviews. External reviews have had a longstanding practice of continuous improvement, and that culture put the office in good stead as the office came to terms with a 21 per cent increase in workload over 2017-18. It was noted that the three tight-knit teams, with comprehensive management, progressed 624 external review applications and finalised 595. On behalf of the committee, I thank the Information Commissioner, the Right to Information Commissioner, the Privacy Commissioner and other staff of the Information Commissioner.