




Speech By
Natalie Marr

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Record of Proceedings, 20 November 2025

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE; REPORT

Motion to Take Note; Report No. 17

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (3.38 pm): I rise today as a member of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to speak of our report No. 17, tabled in this House, on the oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner for the 2023-24 financial year. Integrity is crucial for effective governance, embodying unwavering honesty, ethical conduct and accountability that fosters public trust and ensures decisions serve the collective good rather than personal gain. In government, where power is wielded on behalf of the people, a lack of integrity can erode democratic institutions, breed corruption and undermine policy outcomes. This report defines the vital role that independent integrity bodies play in upholding the trust and accountability that Queenslanders rightly expect from their government.

As the member for Thuringowa, I know firsthand how important these processes are to communities across our state where people demand transparency in decision-making and ethical conduct from those who serve them. The committee's oversight process, as detailed in the report, involved a thorough examination of the Integrity Commissioner's annual report for 2023-24, which was tabled last September, and a public hearing on 21 May this year with Integrity Commissioner Linda Waugh, Deputy Commissioner Paxton Booth and Manager of Corporate Services Krystal Petersen.

I commend Commissioner Waugh and her team for their dedication during what was undoubtedly a demanding year. The office transition to a statutory body navigated significant amendments to the Integrity Act 2009 and ramped up education and training efforts, all while handling a surge in workload. Let me highlight some key achievements from the report. The office received 122 formal advice requests on ethics, integrity and interests issues—a 56 per cent increase from the previous year. Some of the demand would suggest the high number of new MPs who were ensuring they fulfilled their role with genuine integrity is a clear sign of growing awareness and reliance on this independent service. Ministers, statutory office holders, directors-general and advisors turned to the commissioner for guidance, with 85 per cent of requests focusing on conflicts of interest, particularly personal ones. Impressively, 77 per cent of these were finalised within 10 business days, although the report notes that complex cases and resource pressures, especially during the May 2024 lobbying reforms, extended some timelines. The office's proactive approach to streamlining processes is a positive step forward.

On lobbying regulation, the office managed 104 entities and 254 individuals on the register, recording 928 activities. Amendments to chapter 4 of the Integrity Act introduced mandatory training for lobbyists and new reporting requirements which the office implemented swiftly through webinars and resources. Feedback was encouraging, with 95 per cent of participants rating the content and delivery as good or excellent. During the hearing we covered instances of noncompliance with lobbyists and the commissioner explained common pitfalls like failing to log activities or confusion over what constitutes lobbying such as pro bono work or incidental meetings. Importantly, many alleged breaches did not meet the legal threshold but this highlights the need for clearer guidance.

We delved into enforcement, education, resourcing and comparisons. The commissioner's education-first approach is spot-on. With powers only a year old, prioritising training before escalation makes sense. She is reviewing the 2013 lobbying code of conduct, aiming to refocus it on values rather than procedures and clarifying the lobbying definition to reduce confusion.

Stakeholder engagement was robust with 152 meetings. The office delivered 33 presentations on topics like conflict management and public integrity, reaching public and private sectors alike.

Confidentiality remains a cornerstone, encouraging advice seeking without fear, although recipients can disclose fully if they choose. The commissioner wisely opposes her own disclosure powers, preserving trust. In Thuringowa and across our state integrity is not optional; it is essential. Let us ensure our institutions reflect that. I commend the report to the House.