

Public Statement

Monday 26 October 2026

Statement by Commissioner Emma Townsend Independent Commission Against Corruption

Evaluation of the Department for Infrastructure and Transport

Over the past week there has been considerable public discourse and community concern regarding the potential for corrupt activity to occur within South Australia's major infrastructure projects, including in relation to organised crime.

These concerns undermine community confidence in the integrity of public sector projects with significant public funding attached. They also exist against a backdrop of serious allegations and findings in other jurisdictions. This underscores the value of strong controls, policies and processes to protect against corruption, as well as support for individuals to report concerns and speak up.

I have determined that the Independent Commission Against Corruption (**ICAC**) will conduct an evaluation of the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, focusing on the controls and processes involved in the procurement and contract management of major infrastructure projects. This will include the frameworks and safeguards needed to protect against infiltration by organised crime, and will build upon ICAC's previous work examining corruption risks in procurement and contract management.

Evaluations are a core statutory function of ICAC under section 7 and 40 of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 2012* (**the ICAC Act**) and are conducted with a view to advancing comprehensive systems for preventing or minimising corruption in public administration. Once complete, the findings of ICAC evaluations are tabled in Parliament and made public.

I regard this evaluation as an opportunity to support the Department to identify potential corruption risks and strengthen its existing controls if necessary.

ICAC will now develop formal terms of reference for the evaluation, with careful consideration of the appropriate scale and scope. While I am unable to predict the completion date for the evaluation at present, I expect that this will be a complex piece of work that may take considerable time and resources to complete.

I acknowledge the Premier of South Australia's letter to me in relation to this matter, and the government's support of an ICAC evaluation. I am independently of the view that it is in the public interest to conduct such an evaluation. As with all of the work that ICAC undertakes, this evaluation will be conducted with independence and a high level of scrutiny.

It is important to make clear that an evaluation is different to an ICAC investigation, which is conducted in private in accordance with the ICAC Act, and which investigates specific allegations of corrupt conduct in public administration. ICAC can only undertake an investigation if it receives a referral from the Office for Public Integrity in relation to a specific allegation. Under the ICAC Act, ICAC is prohibited from making any public statement that discloses information from which a person could infer that a particular matter is being or is proposed to be investigated by ICAC.

I conclude by reminding all public officers of their obligation under law to report any conduct they suspect to be corruption in public administration to the Office for Public Integrity. This obligation extends to situations where threats are made to public officers with a view to influencing the performance of their official duties.

The message is simple - if something is not right, report it.

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