



Integrity Commission confirms investigation into CIT consultancy contracts

23 June 2022

The ACT Integrity Commission has decided to investigate the circumstances surrounding the awarding of over \$8.5 million worth of consultancy contracts by the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) to ThinkGarden and Redrouge Nominees Pty Ltd.

The Commission's functions include (but are not limited to) the investigation of suspected corrupt conduct involving the ACT public sector. The Commission must prioritise the investigation of matters which are suspected to be serious and/or systemic corrupt conduct.

This is the first time since its inception that the Commission has publicly confirmed a decision to investigate a matter. However, the Integrity Commissioner, the Hon Michael F Adams QC, made it clear this would not become standard practice:

“Commission investigations are almost always conducted covertly, particularly in their early stages. This minimises the risk of the investigation, or indeed the safety and reputation of witnesses and other persons of interest, being compromised. Public announcements about investigations will only be made where there are substantial countervailing reasons for doing so. This remains the Commission's policy.”

The Commissioner went on to explain why he had decided to publicly acknowledge the Commission's investigation on this occasion:

“Recent public discourse in the media and in the ACT Legislative Assembly, which clearly pointed to the high likelihood that an investigation by the Commission would occur, and the need to take steps to ensure the integrity of this process, has made this announcement desirable. It also provides an opportunity to request any person or entity with information pertaining to the Commission's investigation report to provide their information to the Commission as soon as possible.”

The Commissioner also said that public acknowledgement of this investigation did not relieve witnesses of their secrecy obligations, which include not disclosing that they have been called as a witness or required to produce documents or any information or evidence they have provided:

“I want to make it very clear to any persons who have received, or do receive, a summons to appear before the Commission and/or provide information as part of this investigation, that they must at all times adhere to the conditions of their summons, including any confidentiality requirements.

Failure to act in accordance with the conditions of a summons is a criminal offence and may result in a period of imprisonment.”

As the investigation is ongoing, the Commission will not be making any further public comments at this time.

The process for making reports to the Commission is explained on the Commission's website:
integrity.act.gov.au.

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