

## What is a special report?

Special Reports are an important output for investigating, educating, and preventing corruption in the ACT. As of 4 December 2023, the ACT Integrity Commission (ACTIC) has released four Special Reports detailing allegations of corrupt conduct in which no corruption findings were made but that the ACTIC considered to be in the public interest. Some of these reports also outline identified corruption risks or recommend prevention strategies.

For Corruption Awareness Week 2023, the ACTIC is focusing on ‘myth-busting’ common misconceptions about the agency and its work to assist the ACT community to better understand its functions and how they are delivered. This resource has been developed to provide guidance on why Special Reports are an important external product and support understanding of ACTIC operations.

## What is a Special Report?

A Special Report is a report prepared by the ACT Integrity Commissioner on any matter relating to the exercise of the ACTIC’s functions, including administrative and general policy matters. Under Section 206 of the *Integrity Commission Act 2018*, the Commissioner may prepare a Special Report for the Legislative Assembly at any time.

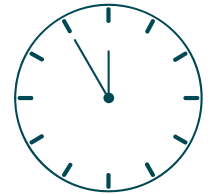
The four Special Reports released by the Commissioner to date relate to matters the ACTIC considered following a referral of a potential corruption matter to the Commission.

For example - in 2022, the Commissioner released the ‘Suburban Land Agency Land Sales’ Special Report. In this case, the Commission received and assessed corruption complaints and notifications relating to the ‘book-to-buy process for the sale of land in Whitlam and Throsby. The complaints broadly alleged that the process was “rigged” to give an advantage to certain registered applicants.

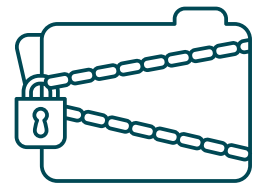
The ACTIC assessed these complaints and ultimately dismissed them as there was no reasonable suspicion corruption had occurred, However, the assessment identified a number of vulnerabilities that posed potential corruption risks, including the potential for the process to be exploited with adverse consequences for genuine participants.

Given this, the Commissioner exercised his ability to prepare a special report. Following this report, the Suburban Land Agency made improvements to their processes to mitigate the identified risks.

## Why are they important?



The nature of integrity bodies require the majority of investigative work to be completed secretly, creating commentary that the ACTIC is 'too slow' or 'too quiet.' Special Reports serve as a channel for the ACTIC to release important and relevant information whilst maintaining the confidentiality of its work where required.



The ACTIC understands there is discourse around the agency's lack of public investigations and findings, which is why Special Reports are an invaluable tool not only to identify and publish corruption risks, but also to inform and educate the ACT public sector and community about the work ACTIC does.

The release of Special Reports contributes to public confidence that the ACTIC is actively looking for corruption and seriously considering all allegations to ensure corruption does not go undetected.

## What can not be included in a Special Report?

Under Sections 207 to 211 of the *Integrity Commission Act 2018*, there are several topics that are prohibited from being included in Special Reports. These include:

- Any findings of guilt or recommendations about prosecution,
- Any findings of corrupt conduct, unless serious or systemic,
- Any information that may prejudice proceedings (including criminal or other legal proceedings),
- Any information identifying a person who is not the subject of an adverse comment or opinion, and
- Any information contrary to the public interest.

These sections of the Act prohibit the ACTIC from publishing information in a Special Report that may damage a person or entity's reputation, procedural fairness or legal proceedings.



## **Where can I read the ACTIC's special reports?**

All Special Reports released by the ACTIC can be found on the agency website, at [www.integrity.act.gov.au/publications](http://www.integrity.act.gov.au/publications).