

Public Service Oversight Bodies in the ACT

Independent oversight bodies in the ACT are an integral part of government procedures, allowing members of the community and public service to raise complaints to the relevant investigating agency. There are three key public service oversight bodies in the ACT: the ACT Integrity Commission, the ACT Auditor-General, and the ACT Ombudsman. These three bodies all investigate allegations made by ACT Government employees and members of the ACT community. However, the core functions of each are important to differentiate.

For Corruption Awareness Week 2023, the ACTIC is focusing on ‘myth-busting’ common misconceptions about the agency and its work. This resource has been developed to support understanding and differences of the three bodies.

Introducing the public service oversight bodies



1. The ACT Integrity Commission (ACTIC) is an independent statutory authority concerned with investigating **serious and systemic corruption** in the ACT public service (ACTPS).
2. The ACT Auditor-General is responsible for providing **independent assurance** to Parliament and the ACT community regarding administration in the ACT Government taking accountability for decisions and outcomes.
3. The ACT Ombudsman is another independent statutory authority that receives, assesses and investigates **complaints** made by the public regarding ACT Government agencies and ACT Policing.

About each agency

The ACT Integrity Commission

The ACTIC was established in 2019 to build public confidence in the integrity of the ACT Government by investigating, exposing and preventing corruption in the ACT. ACTIC's guiding legislation is the *Integrity Commission Act 2018* (ACTIC Act), and it also administers the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012*. ACTIC is fundamentally an anti-corruption agency - similar to the National Anti-Corruption Commission or the New South Wales ICAC.

The ACT Auditor-General

The ACT Auditor-General operates under the Auditor-General Act 1996 and is also independent of the ACT Public Service (ACTPS).

The Auditor-General examines a process to assess whether an agency has met appropriate standards of governance, whereas the ACTIC examines whether circumstances that raise the possibility of impropriety also amount to corrupt conduct. The ACT Auditor-General undertakes two types of audits: financial and performance. The Auditor-General conducts examinations of its own accord, however the ACT community can make suggestions for performance audits they reasonably if a performance audit is recommended.

The ACT Ombudsman

The ACT Ombudsman assesses and investigates complaints about ACT Government agencies, including matters such as:

- Public Trustee and Guardian caseworkers failing to stay in touch with clients,
- ACT Policing not adequately investigating a matter or,
- An ACT Government failing to respond to the reporter after a complaint is made.

The ACT Ombudsman also acts as the Commonwealth Ombudsman and the Inspector of the Integrity Commission. The Inspector oversees ACTIC and is able to investigate matters relating to ACTIC.

Jurisdiction and focus

It can be confusing to know which body to report to. Below are the agencies and entities that each oversight body has jurisdiction over in order to deliver their unique functions.

ACT Integrity Commission

Serious or systemic corruption

- The ACT Legislative Assembly, MLAs and their staff
- All ACT Government agencies, Statutory bodies,
- ACT public health services
- ACT public transport,
- ACT public schools and tertiary institutions,
- ACT fire and ambulance services,
- ACT correctional centres and places of detention,
- Some gas, electricity and water supply, and
- Territory-owned corporations.

ACT Auditor General

Independent assurance

- ACT Government agencies, directorates and authorities
- ACT transport providers
- ACT utilities
- ACT education institutions
- ACT reporting agencies

ACT Ombudsman

Complaints

- ACT Government agencies, including:
 - ACT Policing
 - ACT Integrity Commission
 - ACT Housing
 - ACT Corrective Services
 - Public Trustee and Guardian

How to make a report

If you suspect corrupt conduct or wrongdoing within the ACT Government, or alleged criminal activity, it is important that you report it.



To the ACTIC

By online webform:
integrity.act.gov.au

By calling:
6205 9899

By emailing:
complaints@integrity.act.gov.au

The ACTIC does not accept corruption reports in person.

To the ACT Auditor-General

The Auditor-General accepts suggestions for performance audits only.

You can make a suggestion by emailing:
performance-audit-program@act.gov.au

To the ACT Ombudsman

By online webform:
ombudsman.act.gov.au

By calling:
02 5117 3650