

Corruption and its harms

Corruption in the Public Sector

Undetected and unchecked corruption in the public sector can cause serious damage including:

- undermining public trust in government;
- wasting public resources and money;
- causing injustice through advantaging some at the expense of others;
- inefficiencies in operations; and,
- reputational damage which makes it difficult to recruit and retain quality staff or obtain best value in tender processes. Reputational damage may also be more difficult to attract business investment, adversely affecting prosperity.



Globally, the World Economic Forum has estimated that the cost of corruption is about US\$2.6 trillion a year . The impacts of corruption disproportionately affect the most vulnerable people in society. Widespread corruption deters investment, weakens economic growth, and undermines the rule of law.

The ACT Integrity Commission

The ACT Integrity Commission was established to investigate, expose, and prevent corruption in the ACT public sector and foster public confidence in the integrity of government. The information we garner from our investigations provides a valuable insight into the methods, motivations and actions of people engaging in corrupt conduct.

In turn, these insights are key to informing our corruption prevention and education work.

Any person can report wrongdoing by a person or organisation that is covered by the *Integrity Commission Act 2018* or the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012*.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND ENTITIES

TO FALL WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE COMMISSION, THE CONDUCT MUST INVOLVE OR AFFECT AN ACT PUBLIC OFFICIAL, FORMER PUBLIC OFFICIAL OR PUBLIC SECTOR ENTITY.

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Pursuant to the *Integrity Commission Act 2018*, corrupt conduct is conduct that could constitute a criminal or serious disciplinary offence, or constitute reasonable grounds for terminating the services of a public official, and that is also any of the following:

- conduct by a public official that constitutes the exercise of the public official's functions as a public official in a way that is not honest or is not impartial;
- conduct by a public official or former public official that constitutes a breach of public trust or the misuse of information or material acquired by the official in the course of performing their official functions, whether or not the misuse is for the benefit of the official or another person;
- conduct that adversely affects, either directly or indirectly the honest or impartial exercise of functions by a public official or a public sector entity;
- conduct that adversely affects, either directly or indirectly, the exercise of official functions by a public official or public sector entity; and,
- conduct that would constitute, if proved, an offence against a provision of the Criminal Code, chapter 3 (Theft, fraud, bribery and related offences).

Corrupt conduct is also conduct that could constitute a criminal or serious disciplinary offence, or constitute reasonable grounds for terminating the services of a public official, and that also involves any of the following:

- collusive tendering;
- fraud in relation to applications for licences, permits or other authorities under legislation designed to protect health and safety, protect the environment, or facilitate the management and commercial exploitation of resources;
- dishonestly obtaining or assisting in obtaining, or dishonestly benefiting from, the payment or application of public funds for private advantage or the disposition of public assets for private advantage;
- defrauding the public revenue; • fraudulently obtaining or retaining employment or appointment as a public official.

Disclosable conduct

Pursuant to the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012*, the Commission can receive, assess, refer, and investigate complaints regarding disclosable conduct.

Disclosable conduct involves maladministration or conduct that poses a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or the environment



The background features a large, stylized number '7' in a light grey color, set against a white background. The top of the page is a solid light grey. The bottom half of the page is a solid teal color. The '7' shape is composed of a white trapezoidal top section and a grey trapezoidal bottom section. The text 'ACT INTEGRITY COMMISSION' is centered in the white section. Below it, a teal diagonal line leads to the website information.

ACT INTEGRITY
COMMISSION

For more information
integrity.act.gov.au