

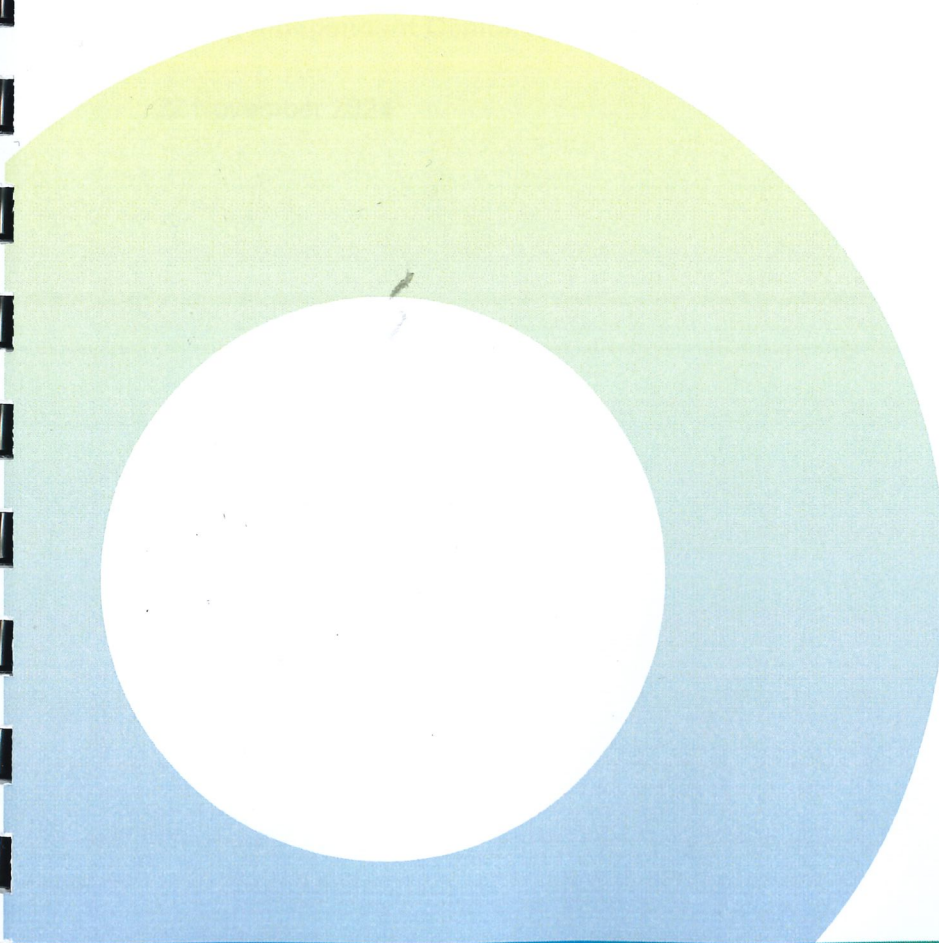
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ORIGINAL PAPER
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General Report

Section 48 – Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017



Office of the
Independent
Commissioner
Against
Corruption NT



Letter of Transmittal

The Honourable Robyn Lambley MLA
Speaker
Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory

Dear Speaker

I submit a report in accordance with section 48 of the *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017* (NT) (ICAC Act).

In accordance with section 49(3) of the ICAC Act I recommend that this report be made public immediately. If you do not accept the recommendation, then I note section 49(2) of the ICAC Act requires you to table the report in the Legislative Assembly within 6 sitting days after you have received it.

Yours sincerely



Naomi Loudon
Acting Independent Commissioner Against Corruption

22 November 2024

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Introduction

Since the last General Report in May 2024, the Office of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption (ICAC) Northern Territory (NT) has undertaken significant prevention and engagement activities.

Of particular importance, ICAC NT hosted the Australian Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference (APSACC) on Tuesday 30 and Wednesday 31 July 2024 at the Darwin Convention Centre, Darwin Waterfront Precinct.

The conference was preceded by a day of workshops, including full and half-day sessions aligned with the conference theme of **Meeting the integrity challenge: the power of innovation, diversity and collaboration**. The workshops looked at a range of topics including conducting internal investigations, corruption prevention in grant-making and maintaining a culture of ethics and integrity.

A highlight was the full-day workshop on sharing best practice in corruption prevention, detection and investigation presented by the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) and representatives from anti-corruption agencies across Australia and the Pacific.

APSACC 2024

The biennial APSACC is a joint initiative of Australia's anti-corruption and integrity agencies. The inaugural APSACC was hosted by the New South Wales Independent Commission Against Corruption (NSW ICAC) and Queensland's Crime and Misconduct Commission in Sydney in 2007.¹ Since then the conference has continued to grow and attract thought leaders, practitioners and experts from across the public and private sector.

The Office of the ICAC NT recognised that hosting this major anti-corruption event in the NT would provide the opportunity for many public officers to participate in the conference, as well as promoting the NT to national and international participants.

With a theme of **Meeting the integrity challenge: the power of innovation, diversity and collaboration**, Australia's leading anti-corruption event brought together Australian and international anti-corruption experts to speak on risk identification and management, emerging trends, and innovative approaches to combat corruption risks in the public sector. APSACC 2024 provided opportunities for discussions on exploring multifaceted approaches to addressing integrity challenges and developing professional networks across jurisdictions and expertise.

Through APSACC 2024, ICAC NT hosted 511 delegates, 91% of whom joined in person, with 9% attending the conference sessions virtually. Of the 511 delegates, 422 were from across Australia, including 100 from the NT, while 43 delegates attended from across 15 countries, with another 46 attending online.

The event hosted 86 national and international speakers and presenters who shared their knowledge and expertise across 5 keynote speeches, 7 workshops and 30 presentations.

In a recent report tabled in Parliament, the Inspector of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption, Mr Bruce McClintock SC states 'There is no doubt that it [APSACC 2024] was an outstanding success, in my opinion, the best of the APSACC Conferences [sic] that I have attended'.²

¹ The Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission is now the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission. This changed in 2014 as a result of Queensland Parliament passing the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014.

² Paper 116, Special Report of Inspector Pursuant to Section 140 of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 and Evaluation of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption, September 2024

The 2 international keynote speakers were a major highlight of the conference.

Baroness Louise Casey of Blackstock (Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire) from the UK is an independent advisor for social welfare, crime, housing and homelessness, social cohesion, inclusion and diversity.

The Baroness spoke about what we can all learn from the 2023 independent review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the British Metropolitan Police Service. The review made 8 overarching conclusions with 16 recommendations. The recommendations focused on increasing public trust in the service. The recommendations were focused on cleaning up the Metropolitan Police, improving the protection and support for women and children, building trust with the community, resourcing front line police, listening to the community, new leadership, management, oversight and accountability as well as monitoring the reform over the years.

Also from the United Kingdom was Professor Paul Heywood who currently leads the Governance and Integrity Anti-Corruption Evidence research program at the Centre for the Study of Corruption, University of Sussex. Professor Heywood spoke on the topic 'Public integrity: from rhetoric to reality'. His speech described a program designed to identify new initiatives that can help developing countries tackle the scourge of corruption and the negative impact it has on people's lives.

Other keynote speakers addressed current and emerging national and international anti-corruption issues, how data-driven approaches are integral in combating corruption and the benefits of partnerships and effective collaboration.

APSACC 2024 also offered participants the opportunity to engage in a number of workshops and presentations. A range of national and international presenters delivered sessions across a broad range of topics from ethical culture and how to build it, lobbying, probity in procurement and grants, dealing with conflicts of interest, protection of whistleblowers, conducting internal investigations, and sharing best practice in preventing, detecting and investigating corruption.

Speakers shared their knowledge and experience through sessions on these topics:

- Working with vulnerable communities
- Psycho-social safety and integrity
- The effective use of technology
- Data science and artificial intelligence in preventing and dealing with corruption
- Protecting whistle blowers
- Systemic issues in policing in First Nation communities
- Political donation reforms
- Conflicts of Interest
- Local government conduct framework
- Why good people do bad things.

The success of APSACC 2024 relied on collaboration with Australian anti-corruption and integrity commissions to ensure the program content was thought provoking, engaging, interesting and provided for a broad range of different interests.

The Office of the ICAC NT procured a professional conference organiser to assist with the logistics of planning such a large event and to be responsible for the day-to-day management of the planning, development and delivery of APSACC 2024.

An event coordinator was also recruited to project-manage APSACC 2024 within the office and worked with the professional conference organiser.

Attracting 365 interstate and international delegates to Darwin for the 2-day conference and preceding day of workshops would have injected funding into the local economy through accommodation, entertainment and tourism. The conference used local suppliers for the events, including the venue hire, catering, hospitality, venue decoration and entertainment for opening and closing events, including the official conference dinner.

Local businesses were also hired to provide printing of signage, event merchandise, programs, conference passes and menus.

The office successfully applied for a grant of \$5,000 through the NT Business Events unit to assist in the promotion of APSACC to national and international delegates. The grant was used for paid marketing activities, including industry publication advertising and social media.

Office of the ICAC NT is grateful for all the support from our national and international colleagues and those within the NTPS who attended the conference and spoke at it contributing to the success of the conference and the continuing education of public officers in the NT.

The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) will host APSACC 2026, to be held in Canberra. ICAC NT has commenced working with NACC to assist them in the successful hosting of the event.

APSACC 2024 did not require any direct NT Government funding as the conference was funded from own-sourced revenue through the collection of ticket sales. The conference resulted in a surplus of about \$230,000 for the office and will be retained within the office's cash reserves. This surplus can be collected by Department of Treasury and Finance to be used for other NT Government initiatives.

Table 1: Summary of income and expenditure for APSACC 2024

INCOME	FROM 2023 TO 2024 (ACROSS 2 FINANCIAL YEARS)
	\$
Conference tickets	786,408
Accommodation income	151,521
Grant	5,000
Total income	942,929
Expenses	
Venue hire	254,983
Accommodation expense	150,100
Professional conference organiser	77,551
Hospitality expense	52,383
Speakers' fees and travel costs	33,869
Marketing and promotion	26,601
All other costs	115,213
Total expenses	710,700
Surplus from conference	232,229

Contact the ICAC

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