

Good afternoon,

I consent to this being published on the A-G's website.

The proposed Commonwealth Integrity Commission does nothing to allay my concerns, as a private citizen, about corruption in the public sector.

You can't hold private hearings and expect us to trust that everything is being handled above-board. The public, including the media which holds politicians accountable, needs to be able to scrutinise the operations of the CIC.

The threshold for investigating members of parliament is ridiculously high. Corrupt conduct is broader than what is currently defined as criminal. Preventing the CIC from investigating MPs unless they come across criminal conduct during the course of another criminal investigation casts a pathetically small net. The avenues for referring a parliamentarian are suspiciously narrow. I understand that taking public referrals would create a lot of noise, but the Commission shouldn't be barred by law from doing so. Let them assess complaints on their merit and choose whether to investigate.

The CIC should have the power to commence its own investigations without referral, to guard against cases where the official(s) responsible for referring matters to the CIC are for some reason unmotivated to do so. It appears that this is the case in the consultation paper - good.

The Commission's funding and leadership should be protected from the government of the day, with an independent expert panel being appointed to determine an appropriate budget and decide on candidates for executive roles. As we've seen with the ABC, you can't be truly independent if you rely on the government's goodwill to stay running.

Overall, in my view, this is a pissweak attempt at making the issue go away without actually solving the issue of corruption. I look forward to a better model, built by better people, later this year.

Kind regards,
Bryce Carr,