



Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on the Integrity
Commission and Statutory Office Holders

Inquiry into the effectiveness of transparency arrangements for Members of the Legislative Assembly – Interim Report

Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory
Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders

Approved for publication

Report 2
11th Assembly
September 2025

About the committee

Establishing resolution

The Assembly established the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders on 3 December 2024.

The Committee is responsible for the following areas:

- ACT Auditor-General
- ACT Ombudsman
- Office of the Legislative Assembly
- ACT Electoral Commission
- ACT Integrity Commission
- Electoral policy

You can read the full establishing resolution [on our website](#).

Committee members

Mr Ed Cocks MLA, Chair

Mr Andrew Braddock MLA, Deputy Chair

Mr Taimus Werner-Gibbings MLA

Secretariat

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About this inquiry

At its meeting on 9 April 2025 the Assembly passed a resolution requesting the Committee to undertake an inquiry into the issues surrounding transparency arrangements for Members, including publication of travel, diaries and staffing expenditure.¹

In a statement to the Assembly pursuant to standing order 246A on 24 June 2025², the Committee advised that it had decided to undertake an inquiry with amended terms of reference and would provide an interim report by the last sitting day in September 2025. The amended terms of reference are:

The Committee has resolved to inquire into and report on the effectiveness of transparency measures for Executive and Non-Executive members of the ACT Legislative Assembly.

¹ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 15*, 9 April 2025, pp 199–202.

² ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 23*, 24 June 2025, p 312.

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

Acronym or Abbreviation	Long form
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
Cth	Commonwealth
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
NSW	New South Wales
NZ	New Zealand
QON	Question on notice
QTON	Question taken on notice
Tas	Tasmania

Findings and Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Clerk write to all entities on the ACT Register of Lobbyists, reminding them of the ACT Lobbyist Code of Conduct and Regulation Guidelines, and noting that these may differ from the Commonwealth and other state and territory requirements.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the ACT Integrity Commission, as part of its inquiry into lobbying, examine the feasibility of requiring registered lobbyists to report on their meetings with both executive and non-executive Members.

Finding 1

The Committee finds that no case has been made for the publication of non-executive Members' diaries.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government include instructions on the inclusion of ministerial staffing expenditure in the Annual Report Directions which align with those produced by the Office of the Legislative Assembly for the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Office of the Legislative Assembly examine whether it would be feasible to publish details of travel on Assembly or official business undertaken by non-executive members and their staff at least quarterly, instead of twice yearly.

1. Introduction

Conduct of the inquiry

- 1.1. The Committee called for submissions from the public and from stakeholders from 22 May 2025, with a closing date of 6 August 2025. The Committee received 12 submissions, which are listed at Appendix A.
- 1.2. The Committee also wrote to Clerks of the parliaments of Australia, New Zealand, and the other Australian states and territory, requesting information. Their responses were accepted as submissions. The text of that letter can be found at Appendix B.

Background

Assembly resolution of 9 April 2025

That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) information about non-executive entitlements are published both as disallowable instruments and in the Annual Reports of the Office of the Legislative Assembly, which is appropriate; and
 - (b) information about executive staffing entitlements are not published in the same form or to the same standard, which undermines transparency and accountability;
- (2) further notes that:
 - (c) the Assembly has called for the Integrity Commissioner to undertake an inquiry into lobbying and for the Government to ensure appropriate funding be provided for this work; and
 - (d) the Government has failed to provide the Assembly with any assurance that the funding has been or will be provided in this year's Budget;
- (3) directs the Chief Minister to:
 - (a) publish information on executive staff expenditure, in a format consistent with the Assembly's reporting of non-executive staff expenditure, in all future Annual Reports of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate;
 - (b) make a statement in the Assembly immediately after this motion, and if appropriate funding for the lobbying inquiry will be provided in this year's Budget; and

- (c) if no decision has been made, the Chief Minister's statement must include the day (or days) when the decision will be made and, once such a decision has been made, the Chief Minister must provide the Speaker with a statement outlining the decision and the funding to be provided, which the Speaker must make available to Members;
- (4) requests the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders to:
 - (a) undertake an inquiry into the issues surrounding transparency arrangements for Members, such as:
 - (i) the publication, each quarter, of information on Members' externally sponsored and Assembly related and funded travel;
 - (ii) the publication, each quarter, of Members' diaries setting out all reportable meetings, events and functions attended that relate to their responsibilities as Members taking into consideration the potential for:
 - (A) retrospective commencement from the start of the 11th Assembly;
 - (B) the preclusion of personal and family matters; electorate or party political matters; media interviews or recordings; any scheduled meeting or event that the Member did not actually attend; or any information which might disclose personal details about an individual, affect a court case, or disclose information about security, public safety, or law enforcement;
 - (C) appropriate protections for whistleblowers, privacy, or sensitive information; and
 - (D) implementing any findings and recommendations arising from any Integrity Commissioner's inquiry into lobbying;
 - (iii) the publication of Members' staffing expenditure; and
 - (iv) any other relevant matters; and
 - (b) provide an interim report by the last sitting day in September 2025; and
- (5) calls on the Speaker to table a breakdown of non-executive staffing expenditure for the current and last four financial years, including staffing expenditure per non-executive office (including his own), staffing expenditure per pledged resourcing arrangement, and any other staffing expenditure within 28 calendar days.³

³ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 15*, 9 April 2025, pp 199–202.

- 1.3. The Committee considered the Assembly's request and agreed to proceed with the inquiry with an amended terms of reference as above.
- 1.4. The change to the terms of reference has the main effect of broadening the terms of reference to that which was referred to the Committee by the Assembly.
- 1.5. The Committee agreed to provide an interim report to the Assembly by the last sitting day in September 2025.

2. Existing transparency arrangements

Declarations of interests

- 2.1. Continuing resolution 6 requires that all Members make a declaration of private interests of themselves and their immediate family within 28 days of taking their seat, and notify any updates to the Clerk within 28 days of an alteration occurring.⁴
- 2.2. The declarations and updates are published on the Legislative Assembly website.
- 2.3. The ACT Government noted in its submission that continuing resolution 5, *Code of conduct for all members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory*, also requires that Members should ‘actively seek to avoid or prevent any conflict of interest, or the perception of such a conflict’, including by making declarations under continuing resolution 6.⁵

Commissioner for Standards and Ethics and Integrity Adviser

- 2.4. The Commissioner for Standards is appointed by the Speaker under continuing resolution 5AA, for the term of each Assembly and six months after the election at the end of the term. Anyone can make a complaint to the Commissioner about a Member’s compliance with the Members’ Code of Conduct or the rules relating to registration and declaration of interests. The Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure inquires into and reports on all reports provided to it by the Commissioner.⁶
- 2.5. The Ethics and Integrity Adviser is appointed by the Speaker for the term of each Assembly and the six months after the election at the end of the term, pursuant to continuing resolution 6A. The role of the Adviser is to provide advice to Members at their request, on ‘ethical issues concerning the exercise of their role as a Member (including the use of entitlements and potential conflicts of interest)’.⁷

Lobbyist register and publication of diaries

- 2.6. The *ACT Register of Lobbyists* was established by a resolution of the Assembly on 25 September 2014.⁸ The register can be found on the Legislative Assembly website.

⁴ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Continuing resolution 6, Standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory*, 6 February 2025, p 116.

⁵ ACT Government, *Submission 13*, p 5.

⁶ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Continuing resolution 5AA, Standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory*, 6 February 2025, pp 112–114.

⁷ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Continuing resolution 6A, Standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory*, 6 February 2025, p 117.

⁸ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Continuing resolution 8AC, Standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory*, 6 February 2025, pp 130–137.

- 2.7. Under continuing resolution 8AC, which specifies the *ACT Lobbyist Regulation Guidelines*, a lobbyist is defined as:

Any person, company or organisation who conducts lobbying activities on behalf of a third party, or whose employees or other personnel conduct lobbying activities on behalf of a third party, where such lobbying activities are ordinarily carried out in the expectation of receiving direct or indirect financial reward or other valuable consideration whether or not the amount thereof is ascertainable at the time such activities are conducted.⁹

- 2.8. All MLAs and their staff are required by the continuing resolution not to ‘knowingly or intentionally entertain’ prohibited communication from unregistered lobbyists or registered lobbyists who have failed to comply with the *Lobbying Code of Conduct* which is specified in continuing resolution 8AB.
- 2.9. Ministerial diaries are published quarterly on the ACT Government Open Access Information webpage pursuant to the *Freedom of Information Act 2016* and include any meetings with lobbyists.¹⁰
- 2.10. Non-executive members’ diaries are currently not published.¹¹

Non-executive Members’ staffing

- 2.11. As noted in paragraph (1) of the Assembly resolution of 9 April 2025, information about non-executive Members’ staffing is published in a disallowable instrument. The current instrument is DI2025-90, *Legislative Assembly (Members’ Staff) Members’ Salary Cap Determination 2025 (No 1)*. This instrument is made under sections 10 and 20 of the *Legislative Assembly (Members’ Staff) Act 1989* and determines the conditions under which a non-executive Member may employ staff, contractors or consultants on behalf of the Territory.¹²
- 2.12. The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly noted that the Office of the Legislative Assembly’s Annual Report, which is tabled in the Assembly, contains data on non-executive Members’ staffing contracts and expenditure:

In the annual report there is a table listing the number of staff contracts entered into for each financial year, as well as a listing of the classification of non-executive Members staff engaged each financial year. Also listed is the use of staff allocations (determined by the Chief Minister) and engagement of contractors. This listing includes the amount of staffing dollars allocated to each non-executive MLA, any pledges to other MLAs, and the amount expended at the end of the financial year.¹³

⁹ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Continuing resolution 8AC, Standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory*, 6 February 2025, p 130.

¹⁰ ACT Government, [Ministerial Diaries Disclosure - Open Access Information](#) (accessed 18 July 2025)

¹¹ Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, *Submission 10*, p 3.

¹² DI2025-90 [Legislative Assembly \(Members’ Staff\) Members’ Salary Cap Determination 2025 \(No 1\) | HTML view](#)

¹³ Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, *Submission 10*, p 4.

- 2.13. In relation to paragraph (5) of the resolution, which called on the Speaker to table a breakdown of non-executive staffing expenditure for the current and last four financial years, the Acting Speaker tabled a response on 10 April 2025.¹⁴

Travel

- 2.14. Since 2010, the Assembly's website has been updated twice each year to show all travel on Assembly or official business undertaken by non-executive Members and their staff.¹⁵
- 2.15. Ministerial travel reports were recorded on the Assembly website until 2017; since then, pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2016, reports have been available on the ACT Government Open Access website and are currently published quarterly.¹⁶
- 2.16. The ACT Government noted that the entitlements of Members travelling on Assembly business, as well as of Ministers or the Speaker travelling on official business, are determined by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal, and determinations are published on the tribunal's website.¹⁷

¹⁴ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 16*, 10 April 2025, p 209.

¹⁵ ACT Legislative Assembly, [Members' ethics and accountability - ACT Legislative Assembly](#) (accessed 18 July 2025).

¹⁶ ACT Legislative Assembly, [Members' ethics and accountability - ACT Legislative Assembly](#) (accessed 18 July 2025).

¹⁷ ACT Government, *Submission 13*, p 5.

3. Arrangements in other jurisdictions

- 3.1. The Committee sought information from the Clerks of other jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand on transparency arrangements for their members.

Commonwealth

- 3.2. The Clerk of the Australian Senate advised the Committee that the ‘primary transparency measure’ for senators was the Register of Senators’ Interests, which is published online and tabled in the Senate.¹⁸
- 3.3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives also described the register of Members’ interests as the main transparency requirement for that House. Members must notify of any amendment to the register within 28 days of a change in circumstances. Registered interests include assets, liabilities, substantial sources of income, certain gifts, sponsored travel or hospitality over \$300, and memberships which could foreseeably lead to a conflict of interest. The register is published on the Parliament’s website.¹⁹
- 3.4. For both Houses, the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority monitors and reports on expenses incurred by current and former parliamentarians, and the Attorney-General’s Department administers a Register of Lobbyists.²⁰
- 3.5. The Clerk of the House of Representatives further noted that parliamentarians and their staff are considered public officials under the *National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022* (Cth) and therefore can be investigated by the National Anti-Corruption Commission for potential serious or systemic corrupt conduct.²¹

New South Wales

- 3.6. Members of the New South Wales (NSW) Legislative Council are required to make regular declarations of their pecuniary and other interests. The register of interests is tabled and available online. Members’ entitlements are determined by the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal and determinations including electoral allowances, travel allowances and expenses, committee allowances and electoral staff and office costs are tabled in both Houses of the NSW Parliament and published on the tribunal’s website. The NSW Audit Office conducts an annual audit of compliance with the tribunal’s determination.²²
- 3.7. The NSW Cabinet Office records and publishes on its website information about ministerial activities, including quarterly publication of ministerial diaries and summary reports of ministers’ overseas travel.²³

¹⁸ Department of the Senate, *Submission 1*, pp 1–2.

¹⁹ Clerk of the House of Representatives, *Submission 7*, pp 1–2.

²⁰ Department of the Senate, *Submission 1*, p 2 and Clerk of the House of Representatives, *Submission 7*, p 1.

²¹ Clerk of the House of Representatives, *Submission 7*, p 3.

²² Clerk of the Parliaments of New South Wales, *Submission 5*, pp 1–3.

²³ Clerk of the Parliaments of New South Wales, *Submission 5*, p 3.

- 3.8. The NSW Lobbyists Code of Conduct is set in regulations and the NSW Electoral Commission maintains a register of third-party lobbyists which is available on its website.²⁴

Victoria

- 3.9. In Victoria, all members must make a declaration to the Register of Members' Interests twice a year. Declarations include: sources of income; interests in land, corporations, partnerships or trusts; personal debts; and memberships of political organisations or where a conflict of interest might be seen to arise.²⁵
- 3.10. Pursuant to statute, members' allowances and expense claims – including electorate allowances, travel and transport allowances, staff expenses and total budget – are published quarterly on the Parliament of Victoria website.²⁶
- 3.11. Ministerial diaries are published quarterly by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and include links to the lobbyist register maintained by the Victorian Public Sector Commission when a minister has met with a lobbyist.²⁷

Queensland

- 3.12. The Parliament of Queensland maintains a Register of Members' Interests and a Register of Related Persons' Interests, which members are required to keep up to date.²⁸
- 3.13. All members' travel is reported annually in a document tabled in the Parliament. A summary report of expenditure by each member of their Electorate and Communication Allowance is also tabled each year.²⁹
- 3.14. Ministers' diaries are published monthly on the Cabinet website, and chiefs of staff are required to proactively disclose portfolio-related meetings with external parties each month.³⁰
- 3.15. Diary entries of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, shadow ministers and the Leader of the Opposition's Chief of Staff are also required to be published monthly on the Parliament website.³¹
- 3.16. For both government and non-government published diaries, entries on meetings with lobbyists must include details about all attendees and a short description of the subject matter of the meeting.³²

²⁴ Clerk of the Parliaments of New South Wales, *Submission 5*, p 3.

²⁵ Parliament of Victoria, *Submission 6*, p 2.

²⁶ Parliament of Victoria, *Submission 6*, p 2.

²⁷ Parliament of Victoria, *Submission 6*, pp 2–4.

²⁸ Clerk of the Queensland Parliament, *Submission 12*, p 1.

²⁹ Clerk of the Queensland Parliament, *Submission 12*, p 1.

³⁰ Clerk of the Queensland Parliament, *Submission 12*, pp 1–2.

³¹ Clerk of the Queensland Parliament, *Submission 12*, p 2.

³² Clerk of the Queensland Parliament, *Submission 12*, p 2.

- 3.17. The Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner maintains the Queensland lobbyist register, which is available online.³³

Tasmania

- 3.18. The Parliament of Tasmania maintains a register of interests of all members, which is published online and tabled in the relevant House. Members lodge annual returns.³⁴
- 3.19. There are no legislative requirements for the publication of diaries, staffing expenditure or travel, but the Department of Premier and Cabinet often publishes this information for ministers under the *Right to Information Act 2009 (Tas)*.³⁵
- 3.20. A register of lobbyists is maintained by the Integrity Commission of Tasmania.³⁶

Western Australia

- 3.21. Each House of the Western Australian parliament has a register of Members' financial interests, with Members required to lodge annual returns. The register is tabled annually, and the Legislative Assembly's register is available on the parliament's website.³⁷
- 3.22. The President of the Legislative Council tables a report on interstate and overseas business travel by Members and Officers of the Council every six months. As a tabled paper, this report is available online.³⁸
- 3.23. In the Legislative Assembly, travel for committee work is published in an annual report for each committee, while other interstate and international travel is published in the Department of the Legislative Assembly's annual report.³⁹
- 3.24. The Western Australian Register of Lobbyists is maintained by Western Australia's Public Sector Commission.⁴⁰

Northern Territory

- 3.25. The Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory publishes a Register of Members' Interests on its website each year in March. The register is tabled in the Assembly and is available to view in hard copy by appointment.⁴¹
- 3.26. Intrastate and international Ministerial travel is reported quarterly on the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet's website.⁴²

³³ Clerk of the Queensland Parliament, *Submission 12*, p 2.

³⁴ Parliament of Tasmania, *Submission 3*, p 1.

³⁵ Parliament of Tasmania, *Submission 3*, p 1.

³⁶ Parliament of Tasmania, *Submission 3*, p 2.

³⁷ Clerks of the Parliament of Western Australian, *Submission 8*, p 1.

³⁸ Clerks of the Parliament of Western Australian, *Submission 8*, p 2.

³⁹ Clerks of the Parliament of Western Australian, *Submission 8*, p 2.

⁴⁰ Clerks of the Parliament of Western Australian, *Submission 8*, p 2.

⁴¹ Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory, [Members' Registrable Interests – Northern Territory Government – Legislative Assembly](#) (accessed 20 August 2025).

⁴² Northern Territory Government, Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, [Ministerial travel | Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet](#) (accessed 20 August 2025).

- 3.27. The Northern Territory Lobbyist Register is maintained by the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet. Anyone or any organisation conducting lobbying activities for a third-party client is considered a lobbyist.⁴³

South Australia

- 3.28. In South Australia, the Lobbyist Register is maintained by the Attorney-General's Department. It is available online, and any individual or organisation undertaking lobbying activities in South Australia must be on the register.⁴⁴
- 3.29. Travel and other expenditure by the Premier and by the Minister for Tourism and Minister for Multicultural Affairs is published on the Department of Premier and Cabinet webpages, which notes that the department proactively discloses information that is frequently requested under Freedom of Information.⁴⁵

New Zealand

- 3.30. In New Zealand, there is no register of lobbyists. The New Zealand Ministry of Justice is developing policy for regulation of lobbyist activities and a voluntary code of conduct for lobbyists.⁴⁶
- 3.31. The Register of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests is maintained by an independent registrar appointed by the Clerk, and members make an annual return. Members must also declare to the House or relevant committee when they or an immediate family member have a financial interest in a matter of parliamentary business.⁴⁷
- 3.32. Travel and accommodation expenses are published quarterly on the Parliament website. Other expenditure about members' spending cannot be shared without their consent, subject to the *Protocol for the release of information from the parliamentary information, communication, and security systems*.⁴⁸
- 3.33. Ministers are subject to additional requirements which 'reflect the influence and power that Ministers exercise and the information they have access to'. They are subject to the Official Information Act 1982 (NZ) and must release information relating to their ministerial role on request, subject to statutory exceptions.⁴⁹

⁴³ Northern Territory Government, Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, [Northern Territory Register of Lobbyists | Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet](#) (accessed 20 August 2025).

⁴⁴ Government of South Australia, Attorney-General's Department, [Lobbyist registration | Attorney-General's Department](#) (accessed 20 August 2025).

⁴⁵ Government of South Australia, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, [Premier and office staff disclosures | Department of the Premier and Cabinet](#) (accessed 20 August 2025); [Minister for Tourism and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, and staff expenditure | Department of the Premier and Cabinet](#) (accessed 20 August 2025).

⁴⁶ Clerk of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, *Submission 4*, p 4.

⁴⁷ Clerk of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, *Submission 4*, pp 1–2.

⁴⁸ Clerk of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, *Submission 4*, p 3.

⁴⁹ Clerk of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, *Submission 4*, p 3.

3.34. New Zealand Governments have also proactively released some ministerial information including credit card statements, diaries, cabinet papers, and titles of departmental documents provided to ministers.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Clerk of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, *Submission 4*, pp 3–4.

4. Suggested changes to transparency arrangements

Lobbying

- 4.1. In a written submission, Elaine Abery from Unravelling Red Tape described to the Committee some difficulty with maintaining lobbyist registration across multiple jurisdictions, saying that it required 16 separate declarations accompanied by statutory declarations every three to six months.⁵¹
- 4.2. Noting that the current definition of lobbyist under continuing resolution 8AC is restricted to third-party lobbyists, another firm on the ACT Lobbyist Register, Hawker Britton, argued in its submission that the definition should be expanded to include ‘in-house’ lobbyists. It further considered that the activities and services of professionals such as lawyers and planners offering government relations services were similar to those of third-party and in-house lobbyists and should also be considered lobbying.⁵²
- 4.3. Hawker Britton also suggested that the definition of ‘Government representatives’ should be broadened so that lobbyist engagement with all Members of the Legislative Assembly would be subject to the *Lobbying Code of Conduct*.⁵³
- 4.4. The ACT *Lobbying Code of Conduct* (continuing resolution 8AB) does not define ‘Government representatives’. Lobbyist guidelines are given in continuing resolution 8AC, which includes all Members in its definition of ‘public official’. In the ACT, and lobbying activities are defined as ‘communication with a public official to influence legislation or policy, regulatory or administrative decisions’.⁵⁴
- 4.5. By contrast, the Australian Government *Lobbying Code of Conduct* defines lobbying activities as ‘communications with a Government representative in an effort to influence Government decision making’, where ‘Government representative’ includes Ministers but not other Members of Parliament.⁵⁵
- 4.6. Hawker Britton called for the prohibition of ‘success fees’, suggesting an approach similar to those in New South Wales and Queensland, where such fees are prohibited by legislation.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Elaine Abery, *Submission 2*, p 1.

⁵² Hawker Britton, *Submission 11*, p 4.

⁵³ Hawker Britton, *Submission 11*, p 5.

⁵⁴ ACT Legislative Assembly, Continuing Resolution 8AC, *Standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory as at 6 February 2025*, p 130.

⁵⁵ Attorney-General’s Department of the Australian Government, Definitions, *Lobbying Code of Conduct*, [Lobbying Code of Conduct | Attorney-General's Department](#), 29 February 2022 (accessed 8 August 2025).

⁵⁶ Hawker Britton, *Submission 11*, p 6; see also *Lobbying of Government Officials Act 2011 No 5* (NSW), Part 5; *Integrity Act 2009* (Qld), section 66P.

- 4.7. In general, Hawker Britton advocated for a legislative framework with a formalised reporting system for lobbying activities, in the interest of greater consistency and transparency.⁵⁷

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Clerk write to all entities on the ACT Register of Lobbyists, reminding them of the ACT Lobbyist Code of Conduct and Regulation Guidelines, and noting that these may differ from the Commonwealth and other state and territory requirements.

Lobbying inquiry by the ACT Integrity Commission

- 4.8. In relation to paragraphs (2) and (3)(b) and (c) of the Assembly resolution of 9 April 2025, the Chief Minister advised during debate that a funding proposal from the ACT Integrity Commission would be considered by the Expenditure Review Committee and a decision would be publicly announced as part of the budget on 24 June 2025.⁵⁸
- 4.9. According to budget papers published on 24 June 2025, one of the ACT Integrity Commission's priorities in the 2025–26 financial year was to:
- Commence a review of existing frameworks relating to lobbying of government and public officials to address and mitigate corruption risks associated with lobbying.⁵⁹
- 4.10. The ACT Budget Outlook identifies additional funds for the ACT Integrity Commission to initiate this inquiry as well as to increase the commission's capacity.⁶⁰
- 4.11. The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly suggested that greater transparency of lobbying activities in the ACT could be achieved by an amendment to continuing resolution 8AC requiring lobbyists to declare in their annual return 'whether they have lobbied a member (whether a minister or non-executive MLA), the date the meeting occurred and the subject matter of the meeting'.⁶¹

Committee comment

- 4.12. The Committee notes that the ACT Integrity Commission has indicated that it will undertake an inquiry into lobbying in the ACT,⁶² and considers that it would be beneficial to defer any action on amending continuing resolution 8AC until the Commission has published its findings.

⁵⁷ Hawker Britton, *Submission 11*, pp 6–7.

⁵⁸ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Proof Debate Hansard*, 9 April 2025, p 1013.

⁵⁹ ACT Government, *Budget 2025–26, Budget Statements A*, June 2025, p 22.

⁶⁰ ACT Government, *ACT Budget 2025–26, Budget Outlook*, June 2025, p 64.

⁶¹ Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, *Submission 10*, p 5.

⁶² The Hon Michael Adams, ACT Integrity Commissioner, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 28 July 2025, pp 495–497.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the ACT Integrity Commission, as part of its inquiry into lobbying, examine the feasibility of requiring registered lobbyists to report on their meetings with both executive and non-executive Members.

Publication of non-executive Member diaries

- 4.13. The Assembly resolution of 9 April 2025 called on the Committee to consider:
- (ii) the publication, each quarter, of Members' diaries setting out all reportable meetings, events and functions attended that relate to their responsibilities as Members taking into consideration the potential for:

[...]
 - (D) implementing any findings and recommendations arising from any Integrity Commissioner's inquiry into lobbying.⁶³
- 4.14. As noted in Chapter 2, non-executive Members' diaries are not currently published.
- 4.15. The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly noted that no Australian parliament had advised that they required publication of non-executive members' diaries, although the Queensland parliament had a sessional order requiring shadow ministers to publish diary information relating to their shadow portfolios including meetings with lobbyists.⁶⁴
- 4.16. ACT Greens observed that publication of ministerial diaries occurred in several jurisdictions throughout Australia, and was a common call by transparency advocacy groups, whereas they were unaware of any similar call for publication of non-executive members' diaries.⁶⁵
- 4.17. The Clerk cautioned that publication of non-executive Members' diaries could have a 'chilling effect' on their ability to undertake their roles of scrutinising legislation and holding the government to account.⁶⁶
- 4.18. The Clerk observed that Ministers had responsibility for significant expenditure, while non-Executive Members scrutinised that expenditure:
- Whilst Ministers do publish their diaries, it should be noted that Ministers oversee the expenditure of \$9 billion of taxpayers/ratepayers money, whereas non-Executive members are responsible for scrutinising how that money is spent.⁶⁷

⁶³ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 15*, 9 April 2025, p 201.

⁶⁴ Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, *Submission 10*, pp 4–5; see also Clerk of the Queensland Parliament, *Submission 12*, pp 1–2.

⁶⁵ ACT Greens, *Submission 9*, p 4.

⁶⁶ Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, *Submission 10*, p 5.

⁶⁷ Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, *Submission 10*, p 5.

- 4.19. ACT Greens agreed, citing the Australian House of Representatives *Powers, practice and procedure* saying that the existing standards for publication of Ministers' diaries was based on the principle of 'individual ministerial responsibility'.⁶⁸

Finding 1

The Committee finds that no case has been made for the publication of non-executive Members' diaries.

Executive Members' staffing

- 4.20. Paragraph (3)(a) of the Assembly resolution of 9 April 2025 required the Chief Minister to publish information on executive Members' staffing expenditure in the annual report of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.
- 4.21. The ACT Government submission states that the Chief Minister agreed to publish executive Members' staffing arrangements in all future annual reports.⁶⁹
- 4.22. Annual Report Directions are published on the ACT Legislation Register in a Notifiable Instrument. The current instrument is NI2025-240 *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Directions 2025 (No 1)*, effective from 9 May 2025. Ministerial staffing expenditure is not mentioned in the current instrument.⁷⁰
- 4.23. Annual reports for the 2024–25 financial year are to be presented to the Assembly by 10 October 2025.
- 4.24. The ACT Government expressed the opinion that the current disclosure requirements on the ACT Government executive promoted transparency and supported good governance, and were similar to those placed on the executive branches of comparable jurisdictions in New South Wales and Tasmania.⁷¹
- 4.25. ACT Greens expressed strong support for consistent transparency arrangements for staffing expenditure between executive and non-executive offices, and recommended aligning reporting practice for executive staffing to that for non-executive staffing.⁷²
- 4.26. ACT Greens noted that the differences in reporting had arising from differing funding sources, with executive Members' staff funded from the ACT Executive budget and resources managed by the Chief Minister's office. Non-executive Members' staff were funded from and received human resources support through the Office of the Legislative Assembly, with pledges of funding were made between Members' offices to share some staff.⁷³

⁶⁸ ACT Greens, *Submission 9*, p 3.

⁶⁹ ACT Government, *Submission 13*, p 6.

⁷⁰ NI2025-240 [Annual Reports \(Government Agencies\) Directions 2025 \(No 1\) | HTML view](#)

⁷¹ ACT Government, *Submission 13*, pp 10–11.

⁷² ACT Greens, *Submission 9*, p 5.

⁷³ ACT Greens, *Submission 9*, pp 5–6.

- 4.27. ACT Greens argued that the Chief Minister had control over both executive Members' resources, via the Appropriation Bill, and non-executive Members' resources, via staff allocations made by disallowable instruments under the *Legislative Assembly (Members' Staff) Act 1989*.⁷⁴
- 4.28. To avoid this 'perceived and actual conflict of interest', ACT Greens proposed that an independent tribunal such as the ACT Remuneration Tribunal could recommend or set all Members' staffing allocations in a similar manner to the determination of Members' salaries.⁷⁵

Committee comment

- 4.29. The Committee will continue to examine this topic ahead of the final report.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government include instructions in the Annual Report Directions for the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate to ensure inclusion of ministerial staffing expenditure, in line with staffing expenditure reporting by the Office of the Legislative Assembly in its Annual Reports.

Travel

- 4.30. The Assembly resolution of 9 April 2025 asked the Committee to consider quarterly publication of information on Members' 'externally sponsored and Assembly related and funded travel'.⁷⁶
- 4.31. Current arrangements, as noted in Chapter 2, are for six-monthly reports for non-executive Members to be published on the Legislative Assembly's website and quarterly Ministerial reports to be published on the ACT Government Open Access website.
- 4.32. ACT Greens noted in their submission that the current reports 'are comprehensive, but may not be considered sufficiently timely'. They further noted that externally sponsored travel and airline memberships are required to be declared within seven days to Elections ACT, but that lower-cost travel events may fall below the threshold for such reporting.⁷⁷
- 4.33. While Members are also required to disclose all free or concessional travel for themselves and their immediate families in their declarations of interests to the Assembly, ACT Greens observed that there was no independent oversight of such declarations and they were only tested when challenged in the Assembly.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ ACT Greens, *Submission 9*, p 6.

⁷⁵ ACT Greens, *Submission 9*, pp 6–7.

⁷⁶ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings No 15*, 9 April 2025, p 201.

⁷⁷ ACT Greens, *Submission 9*, p 2.

⁷⁸ ACT Greens, *Submission 9*, p 2.

- 4.34. As noted in Chapter 3, ministerial travel is reported quarterly in New South Wales; all members' travel is reported quarterly in Victoria and New Zealand; all members' travel is reported annually in Queensland; and in Western Australia, Legislative Council members' travel is reported six-monthly while Legislative Assembly members' travel is reported annually.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Office of the Legislative Assembly examine whether it would be feasible to publish details of travel on Assembly or official business undertaken by non-executive members and their staff at least quarterly, instead of twice yearly.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The Committee would like to thank all submitters for contributing their views and expertise to this inquiry.
- 5.2. The Committee makes one finding and four recommendations.
- 5.3. The Committee will monitor the outcomes of an inquiry into lobbying by the ACT Integrity Commission.
- 5.4. The Committee will issue a final report addressing outstanding issues raised in submissions, in due course.

Mr Ed Cocks MLA

Chair, Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders

9 September 2025

Appendix A: Submissions

No.	Submission by	Received	Published
1	Department of the Senate of Australia	06/06/26	17/06/25
2	Elaine Abery	13/06/25	01/07/25
3	Parliament of Tasmania	30/06/25	15/07/25
4	Clerk of the House of Representatives of New Zealand	22/07/25	12/08/25
5	Clerk of the Parliaments and Legislative Council of New South Wales	22/07/25	12/08/25
6	Clerk of the Parliaments of Victoria	29/07/25	12/08/25
7	Clerk of the House of Representatives of Australia	29/07/25	12/08/25
8	Clerks of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council of Western Australia	31/07/25	12/08/25
9	ACT Greens	06/08/25	12/08/25
10	Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory	06/08/25	12/08/25
11	Hawker Britton	06/08/25	12/08/25
12	Clerk of the Queensland Parliament	11/08/25	12/08/25
13	ACT Government	19/08/25	26/08/25

Appendix B: Text of letter to other jurisdictions

I write on behalf of the ACT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders, which is inquiring into the effectiveness of transparency arrangements for Members of the Legislative Assembly. The terms of reference of the inquiry are attached.

As part of its inquiry, the Committee would like to compare the arrangements in the ACT with those of other jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand. We would appreciate any information you can provide on transparency arrangements in your jurisdiction, including:

- What transparency arrangements are in place for Members? (these may include publication of diaries, staffing expenditure, travel, a register of interests, or any other measures)
- Are arrangements different for executive and non-executive Members?
- Does your jurisdiction have a register of lobbyists?
- Is information publicly available, on a website or on request?
- Is there a record of how any transparency arrangements were decided on?

Please note that any information you provide may be published as part of this inquiry.

The Committee would be grateful if you could provide a response by 31 July 2025.