



Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on the Integrity
Commission and Statutory Office Holders

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–24

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

Approved for publication

Report 1
11th Assembly
April 2025

About the committee

Establishing resolution

The Assembly established the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders on 3 December 2024.¹

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

Under its resolution of establishment:

(7) the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders shall:

(a) examine matters related to corruption and integrity in public administration;

(b) inquire into and report on matters referred to it by the Assembly or matters that are considered by the Committee to be of concern to the community;

(c) perform all functions required of it pursuant to the *Integrity Commission Act 2018*; and

(d) monitor, review and report on the performance of the Integrity Commission and the Inspector of the Integrity Commission or the exercise of the powers and functions of the Integrity Commission and the Inspector of the Integrity Commission, including examining the annual reports of the Integrity Commission and the Inspector of the Integrity Commission and any other reports made by the Commission;

(8) nothing in this resolution authorises the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders to investigate a matter relating to particular conduct or to reconsider a decision to investigate, not to investigate or to discontinue an investigation of a particular complaint made to the Commission, or to reconsider the findings, recommendations, determinations or other decisions of the Commission or the Inspector in relation to a particular investigation or complaint;

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

¹ ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings, No 2*, 3 December 2024, pp 12–25.

Committee members

Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA, Chair (until 12 February 2025)

Mr Ed Cocks MLA, Chair (from 12 February 2025)

Mr Andrew Braddock MLA, Deputy Chair

Mr Taimus Werner-Gibbings MLA

Secretariat

Ms Kathleen de Kleuver, Committee Secretary

Ms Alicia Coupland, Assistant Secretary (until 31 January 2025)

Ms Kate Mickelson, Assistant Secretary (from 31 January 2025)

Mr Adam Walker, Assistant Secretary (from 31 January 2025)

Mr Satyen Sharma, Administrative Officer

Contact us

Mail Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders
Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Phone (02) 6205 0524

Email LACommitteeIntegrity@parliament.act.gov.au

Website parliament.act.gov.au/parliamentary-business/in-committees

About this inquiry

The 2023–24 Annual and Financial Reports were presented in the Assembly on 3 and 5 December 2024.² Clause 4 of the establishing resolution refers all calendar and financial year annual and financial reports to the relevant standing committee for inquiry and report by 12 May of the year after the presentation of the report to the Assembly pursuant to the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*.

² ACT Legislative Assembly, *Minutes of Proceedings, No 2*, 3 December 2024, pp 27–28; *Minutes of Proceedings, No 4*, 5 December 2024, pp 53–54.

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

Acronym or Abbreviation	Long form
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
JACS	Justice and Community Safety Directorate
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
QON	Question on Notice
QTON	Question Taken on Notice

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Auditor-General provide to all Members of the Legislative Assembly its annual *Performance Audit Recommendations Observations* prior to the commencement of Annual Report hearings.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the ACT Electoral Commission review the financial relationships between political parties and associated entities, including mechanisms for transparency and compliance with the *Electoral Act 1992*, to ensure public confidence in political donations and funding disclosures.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review the application of the *Public Unleased Land (Movable Signs) Code of Practice 2023 (No 1)* to federal elections in the ACT.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government proceed with implementation of the outstanding Govey Review recommendations and provide advice on which recommendations it intends to action.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government move legislative amendments to the *Integrity Commission Act 2018* to expedite the timeframes for consideration of draft reports.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the ACT Integrity Commission make the final report on Operation Kingfisher available at the earliest opportunity following the conclusion of the procedural fairness stage.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the Office of the Legislative Assembly explore means of improving public accessibility to the Legislative Assembly's art collection through an online portal or website.

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that the Assembly examine how staffing levels for non-Executive staff could be determined in accordance with Latimer House principles.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide funding to the Office of the Legislative Assembly to support security enhancements to ensure safety of all members, staff and visitors.

1. Introduction

Presentation of 2023–24 annual and financial reports

- 1.1. All annual and financial reports for the territory were tabled on 3 and 5 December 2024. A collated list of most annual and financial reports is available [online](#).
- 1.2. During its inquiry the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders was required to examine all or part of the following annual and financial reports for 2023–24:
 - ACT Audit Office;
 - ACT Electoral Commission;
 - ACT Integrity Commission;
 - Office of the Legislative Assembly;
 - ACT Ombudsman (including Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission and Principal Officer of the Judicial Council); and
 - Justice and Community Safety Directorate in relation to electoral policy.

Public Hearings

- 1.3. The Committee held public hearings on 10, 17, 19 and 20 February 2025. At the hearings the Committee heard from the Speaker, statutory office holders, the Attorney-General and each of their respective accompanying officials.
- 1.4. Footnotes in the report reference the proof transcripts of evidence. Page numbers may vary between the proofs and the final Hansard transcript.
- 1.5. Witnesses who appeared before the Committee are listed at [Appendix A](#). Transcripts of the hearings are available on the Assembly website. Footage of the hearings is available via video on demand on the Assembly website.
- 1.6. Committees began collecting information on the gender of witnesses in April 2023, in response to an audit by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The aim is to determine whether committee inquiries are meeting the needs of, and allowing the participation of, a range of genders in the community. Participation is voluntary and there are no set responses. A table showing the distribution of witness gender is in [Appendix C](#).

Questions taken on notice at hearings and questions placed on notice

- 1.7. A total of 11 questions were lodged during the inquiry: eight questions were taken on notice (QTONs) by Ministers and statutory office holders during the hearings and three

questions on notice (QONs) were submitted by Committee members and visiting MLAs following the hearings.

- 1.8. The answers to questions, and a list of questions (by subject and recipient) are available in [Appendix B](#), and on the inquiry webpage.

2. ACT Audit Office

2.1. The Auditor-General is an independent Officer of the Legislative Assembly and conducts independent financial and performance audits on ACT Government agencies and other entities which receive ACT Government funding or resources. The functions and powers of the Auditor-General are governed by the *Auditor-General Act 1996*, and the ACT Audit Office supports the Auditor-General in performing his functions.³

Matters considered

- 2.2. During the Auditor-General's appearance before the Committee on 17 February 2025 the following matters were considered:
- Topics of performance audits and balance of audits of procurement activities versus other matters;
 - Provision of *Performance Audit Recommendations Observations* reports to committees;
 - Average cost of performance audits;
 - Circulation of draft reports to auditees;
 - General observations about government responses to recommendations, and whether these had improved;
 - Performance audit of the University of Canberra;
 - Discount rates for impairment of the gas network; and
 - Performance audits of the Digital Health Record system and implementation.⁴

Key Issues

Performance Audit Recommendations Observations

- 2.3. Each year since 2022, the ACT Audit Office has provided a review of reporting on implementation of its performance audit recommendations to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts of the Tenth Assembly or the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration of the Eleventh Assembly.⁵
- 2.4. The review considers reporting on implementation of performance audit recommendations in each agency's annual report.
- 2.5. The summary report provided by the Audit Office aims to provide the committee with information on:

³ ACT Audit Office, *Annual Report 2023–24*, p 1.

⁴ *Proof Committee Hansard*, 17 February 2025, pp 10–18.

⁵ ACT Audit Office, *Performance Audit Recommendation Observations 2024 Summary Report*, 7 February 2025, p 3.

- agencies' reporting of progress in the implementation of recommendations made in performance audit reports; and
- the transparency with which this information is conveyed.⁶

2.6. The *Performance Audit Recommendation Observations 2024 Summary Report* noted the following general observations on agencies' reporting on implementation of performance audit recommendations:

- lack of specificity in the ACT Government response to recommendations;
- information on timeframes for implementation;
- non-reporting by agencies of progress implementing the recommendations;
- lack of information on action(s) taken in relation to recommendations; and
- inconsistent and unclear reporting on the implementation of recommendations.⁷

2.7. During the hearing, the Auditor-General noted that the report was not tabled in the Legislative Assembly but provided directly to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration. Because the report was prepared for the committee, it was the committee's decision to circulate it or not, and the Auditor-General had recommended that the committee do so.⁸

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Auditor-General provide to all Members of the Legislative Assembly its annual *Performance Audit Recommendations Observations* prior to the commencement of Annual Report hearings.

⁶ ACT Audit Office, *Performance Audit Recommendation Observations 2024 Summary Report*, 7 February 2025, p 4.

⁷ ACT Audit Office, *Performance Audit Recommendation Observations 2024 Summary Report*, 7 February 2025, p 6.

⁸ Mr Michael Harris, Auditor-General, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 17 February 2025, p 12.

3. ACT Electoral Commission

- 3.1. The ACT Electoral Commission is an independent statutory authority responsible for conducting elections and referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly and providing electoral advice and services. It administers the ACT election funding, expenditure and disclosure scheme. The Commission is established under the *Electoral Act 1992*.⁹

Matters considered

- 3.2. During the Electoral Commissioner's appearance before the Committee on 19 February 2025 the following matters were considered:
- Prohibited political donors;
 - Definition of electoral material;
 - Conduct of the 2024 election;
 - Limits on electoral road signs;
 - Time taken to announce election results;
 - Audit of vulnerabilities in the electronic voting system; and
 - Real-time reporting of political donations.¹⁰

Key Issues

Financial relationships between political parties and associated entities

- 3.3. In answer to a Question Taken on Notice (QTON) regarding prohibited donors such as property developers and their close associates, the Electoral Commissioner advised the Committee that entities earning rental income or proceeds from the sale of investment properties might not necessarily meet the definition of a property developer or a close associate of a property developer under the *Electoral Act 1992*.¹¹
- 3.4. The Commissioner noted that an associated entity of a political party had made 'payments' to the party which were disclosed in that party's annual return. The Commissioner advised that such payments were not covered by prohibited donor provisions of the Electoral Act because they were not 'a gift'.¹²

⁹ Elections ACT, *Annual Report 2023–2024*, p 8.

¹⁰ *Proof Committee Hansard*, 19 February 2025, pp 20–28.

¹¹ Damian Cantwell AM CSC, ACT Electoral Commissioner, *Answer to QTON 004*, 27 February 2025.

¹² Damian Cantwell AM CSC, ACT Electoral Commissioner, *Answer to QTON 004*, 27 February 2025.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the ACT Electoral Commission review the financial relationships between political parties and associated entities, including mechanisms for transparency and compliance with the *Electoral Act 1992*, to ensure public confidence in political donations and funding disclosures.

4. Justice and Community Safety Directorate

- 4.1. The Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS) comprises two primary programs of responsibility: Justice and Community Safety. The Legislation Policy and Programs business unit within the Justice program has responsibility for electoral policy.¹³

Matters considered

- 4.2. During the Attorney-General's appearance before the Committee on 20 February 2025 the following matters were considered:
- Electorate sizes and voting rates;
 - Compatibility of ACT electoral legislation with federal legislation; and
 - Restriction on corflute numbers.¹⁴

Key Issues

Application of *Public Unleased Land (Movable Signs) Code of Practice 2023 (No 1)* to federal elections

- 4.3. The *Public Unleased Land (Movable Signs) Code of Practice 2023 (No 1)* is a disallowable instrument (DI2023—244) made under section 27 of the *Public Unleased Land Act 2023*.¹⁵
- 4.4. For Territory and Commonwealth elections, the Code of Practice limits electoral advertising signs on unleased Territory land to no more than 250 per individual and entity, where:
- (i) “individual” means a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), candidate or prospective candidate; and
 - (ii) “entity” means a political party or third-party campaigner (e.g., lobby group).¹⁶
- 4.5. For example, a political party with five candidates in each of five electorates could place up to 6,500 signs, where each of the 25 candidates authorised 250 signs and the party authorised another 250.¹⁷
- 4.6. In response to a question taken on notice (QTON), the Attorney-General advised that electoral advertising signs could be displayed for a maximum of six weeks and had to be removed within 48 hours of the close of polling booths. The Attorney-General directed the

¹³ Justice and Community Safety Directorate, *Annual Report 2023–24*, pp 17, 27.

¹⁴ *Proof Committee Hansard*, 20 February 2025, pp 30–33.

¹⁵ *Public Unleased Land (Movable Signs) Code of Practice 2023 (No 1)* – Explanatory Statement, [Public Unleased Land \(Movable Signs\) Code of Practice 2023 \(No 1\) | Disallowable instruments](#), accessed 12 March 2025.

¹⁶ *Public Unleased Land (Movable Signs) Code of Practice 2023 (No 1)*, [Public Unleased Land \(Movable Signs\) Code of Practice 2023 \(No 1\) | Disallowable instruments](#), sch 1 item 6(4)(a), accessed 12 March 2025.

¹⁷ *Public Unleased Land (Movable Signs) Code of Practice 2023 (No 1)* – Explanatory Statement, [Public Unleased Land \(Movable Signs\) Code of Practice 2023 \(No 1\) | Disallowable instruments](#), accessed 12 March 2025.

Committee's attention to the Code of Practice, noting that it also detailed restrictions on the placement of electoral signs on public unleased land.¹⁸

- 4.7. During the public hearing the Committee noted that Commonwealth electorates are geographically larger than Territory electorates, and that Senate candidates in particular would be required to cover the whole Territory within the limit of 250 signs per candidate and entity.¹⁹

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review the application of the *Public Unleased Land (Movable Signs) Code of Practice 2023 (No 1)* to federal elections in the ACT.

¹⁸ Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Attorney-General, *Answer to QTON 006*, 6 March 2025.

¹⁹ Mr Taimus Werner-Gibbings MLA, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 20 February 2025, p 31.

5. ACT Integrity Commission

- 5.1. The ACT Integrity Commission and the Integrity Commissioner are established under the *Integrity Commission Act 2018*. The Commission's purpose is to strengthen public confidence in the integrity of the ACT Government by preventing, investigating and exposing corruption.²⁰

Matters considered

- 5.2. During the Integrity Commission's appearance before the Committee on 20 February 2025 the following matters were considered:
- Resourcing of the ACT Integrity Commission;
 - Health and well-being of witnesses, and scope of findings when a witness does not attend a hearing;
 - The timeline for reporting on Operation Kingfisher;
 - Findings when conduct is considered corrupt but does not meet the threshold of serious corrupt conduct;
 - Potential legislative barriers to an investigation into lobbying; and
 - Legal action against the Commission and potential parliamentary privilege implications.²¹

Key Issues

Govey review recommendations

- 5.3. A formal review of the *Integrity Commission Act 2018* was conducted in 2023 by Mr Ian Govey AM (the Govey review). This review was required by section 303 of the Act.²²
- 5.4. The Govey review made 66 recommendations covering matters to be dealt with by the Commission, the Commission's composition and powers, production of materials, witness entitlements and wellbeing, oversight and accountability, and broader reform matters.²³
- 5.5. In its response to the Govey review, the ACT Government indicated that it would introduce a tranche of 'quick-win' amendments to the Act during the Tenth Assembly. However, implementation of several other recommendations would require 'significant legislative amendments and consideration of the budgetary implications of any response' and the ACT Government was of the view that this work should be undertaken during the Eleventh Assembly.²⁴

²⁰ ACT Integrity Commission, *Annual Report 2023–24*, p 8.

²¹ *Proof Committee Hansard*, 20 February 2025, pp 42–50.

²² Ian Govey AM, *Report of the Independent Statutory Review of the ACT's Integrity Commission Act 2018*, p 7.

²³ Ian Govey AM, *Report of the Independent Statutory Review of the ACT's Integrity Commission Act 2018*, pp 11–39.

²⁴ ACT Government, *Response to the review of the Integrity Commission Act 2018*, 3 June 2024, p 1.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government proceed with implementation of the outstanding Govey Review recommendations and provide advice on which recommendations it intends to action.

Consideration of draft reports

5.6. The Commissioner told the Committee that, after a report is completed, there is a period of at least six weeks allowed for anyone with a direct interest in the report to provide written comments to the Commission for consideration.²⁵

5.7. Furthermore, the Commissioner observed that if such comments reflected upon another person or entity, that party must also be allowed to make comment, which could prolong the process:

... it would not surprise me if that moves to two months in the circumstances, because of the difficulty in scope of the investigation.²⁶

5.8. Recommendation 41 of the Govey review proposed that the Act be amended to require that reports be provided only to persons or public entities named or identifiable in the report, and to reduce the minimum consideration period for those people and entities from six weeks to four weeks:

The Review recommends that the *Integrity Commission Act 2018* be amended to:

- a. require a reporting entity to provide a proposed report only to persons and public sector entities named or otherwise identifiable in the report
- b. reduce the minimum period in which a person or public sector entity must be provided with a proposed report from six to four weeks
- c. allow an interested person to seek an extension from the reporting entity, which may be provided at that entity's discretion
- d. require that the Commission include in its monthly report to the Inspector details of each time it has denied an extension of time to respond to a proposed report
- e. require that the Inspector include in its annual report the details of each time the Commission has denied an extension of time to respond to a proposed report, and

²⁵ Hon Michael Adams KC, Integrity Commissioner, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 20 February 2025, p 47; *Integrity Commission Act 2018*, ss 188, 188A.

²⁶ Hon Michael Adams KC, Integrity Commissioner, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 20 February 2025, p 47.

f. require the Inspector and a special investigator to disclose in a published report where it has denied a request for an extension of time to respond to the report.²⁷

- 5.9. The ACT Government indicated in its response to the Govey report that it would consult with the Integrity Commission, the Inspector of the Integrity Commission and the ACT Public Service before implementing the recommendation.²⁸

Committee comment

- 5.10. The Committee is of the view that, while procedural fairness must be observed, the timeframe for interested parties to review and comment on Integrity Commission reports is generous and in many cases may prolong an already lengthy reporting process.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government move legislative amendments to the *Integrity Commission Act 2018* to expedite the timeframes for consideration of draft reports.

Operation Kingfisher

- 5.11. Operation Kingfisher is the Integrity Commission's investigation into whether public officials within the ACT Education Directorate failed to exercise their official functions honestly and/or impartially when making recommendations and decisions regarding the Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project between 2019 and 2020.²⁹
- 5.12. The Integrity Commission had issued a call for reports of suspected misconduct in ACT Government procurement on 22 February 2022, following publication of the Auditor-General's *Performance Audit Report No. 13/2021 – Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project Procurement* on 22 December 2021.³⁰
- 5.13. The Commissioner told the Committee that he expected to complete his report before the end of the financial year, after which the procedural fairness requirements would take at least six weeks and he was aiming to 'have the entire process finished by midyear':

But there is hope that it might be sooner. Obviously, it is an urgent matter. There is a lot hanging on it, and I am devoting as much time as I can, amongst the other matters, to resolving it.³¹

²⁷ Ian Govey AM, *Report of the Independent Statutory Review of the ACT's Integrity Commission Act 2018*, p 29.

²⁸ ACT Government, *Response to the review of the Integrity Commission Act 2018*, 3 June 2024, p 17.

²⁹ ACT Integrity Commission, *Media Release – ACT Integrity Commission to hold inaugural public examinations*, 2 August 2023.

³⁰ ACT Integrity Commission, *Media Release – Call for public to report suspected misconduct in ACT Government procurement*, 22 February 2022; ACT Audit Office, *Media Release – Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project Procurement*, 22 December 2021.

³¹ Hon Michael Adams KC, Integrity Commissioner, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 20 February 2025, pp 47–48.

Committee comment

- 5.14. The Committee is of the view that the Integrity Commissioner's findings in this matter should be published as soon as available, in the public interest.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the ACT Integrity Commission make the final report on Operation Kingfisher available at the earliest opportunity following the conclusion of the procedural fairness stage.

6. Office of the Legislative Assembly

6.1. The Office of the Legislative Assembly is an independent statutory authority established under the *Legislative Assembly (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Act 2012*. It is headed by the Clerk and its function is to give impartial advice and support to the Assembly, its committees and members.³²

Matters considered

6.2. During the Speaker's appearance before the Committee on 10 February 2025 the following matters were considered:

- Accessibility of the Legislative Assembly;
- Staffing and salary allocations made by the Chief Minister and compliance with Latimer House principles;
- Renovation of the Legislative Assembly entrance;
- Building maintenance;
- IT security for MLAs;
- Education programs; and
- Art acquisition and storage.³³

Key Issues

Art collection

6.3. The Committee heard that the Legislative Assembly's art collection is very large, with an estimated current value of \$900,000 and annual capital expenditure of \$30,000. The collection aimed for a 'good representation of local and regional artists'.³⁴

6.4. While some of the art collection was available for public view along the London Circuit corridor, in committee rooms and other public areas, a large component of the collection was in members' offices and non-public corridors. A new art storage facility would allow pieces to be rested, especially those susceptible to UV damage.³⁵

Committee comment

6.5. The Committee is of the view that the Assembly's art collection should be made as accessible as possible to the public, for example in an online gallery.

³² Office of the Legislative Assembly, *Annual Report 2023–2024*, p 7.

³³ *Proof Committee Hansard*, 10 February 2025, pp 1–8.

³⁴ Mr David Skinner, Senior Director, Office of the Clerk, Office of the Legislative Assembly, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 10 February 2025, pp 7–8.

³⁵ Mr David Skinner, Senior Director, Office of the Clerk, Office of the Legislative Assembly, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 10 February 2025, p 7.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the Office of the Legislative Assembly explore means of improving public accessibility to the Legislative Assembly's art collection through an online portal or website.

Increased staffing levels

- 6.6. In response to a question about the application of Latimer House principles to salary allocations made by the Chief Minister for executive and non-executive parliamentary staff, the Clerk advised the Committee that the *Legislative Assembly (Members' Staff) Act 1989* gave the Chief Minister the power to determine staffing allocations.³⁶
- 6.7. The Office of the Legislative Assembly further noted that section 65 of the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* (Cth) required that only a minister could propose or increase an appropriation of funding. This meant that it was not possible for a committee such as recommended in Latimer House principles to decide on an appropriation.³⁷

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that the Assembly examine how staffing levels for non-Executive staff could be determined in accordance with Latimer House principles.

Security enhancements

- 6.8. The Office of the Legislative Assembly told the Committee that a proposed redesign of the main entrance to the Assembly building would improve accessibility and security, with the current layout posing a risk of unauthorised access:

We do have potential issues with tailgating. If staff are talking to each other and they come through the building, someone could get through behind them, when it is busy.³⁸

- 6.9. The Committee noted that some members had difficulty accessing the building after hours due to security equipment not functioning as expected.³⁹ The Office of the Legislative Assembly advised that, while costly decisions relating to the x-ray machine at the entrance would be deferred until the outcome of the redesign proposal was known, security access was due to be addressed:

³⁶ Mr Tom Duncan, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the ACT, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 10 February 2025, pp 2–3.

³⁷ Mr David Skinner, Senior Director, Office of the Clerk, Office of the Legislative Assembly, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 10 February 2025, p 3.

³⁸ Ms Rachel Turner, Executive Manager, Business Support Branch, Office of the Legislative Assembly, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 10 February 2025, p 4.

³⁹ Ms Leanne Castley MLA and Mr Mark Parton MLA, Speaker, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 10 February 2025, p 5.

Yes, we would be delaying making any costly decisions in relation to that machine until we know where we are at with the entrance. We do have a budget allocation to spend on the building. It is very minimal, but it is there. Security access is one of the things that we plan to do in 2025-26—later this calendar year.⁴⁰

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide funding to the Office of the Legislative Assembly to support security enhancements to ensure safety of all members, staff and visitors.

⁴⁰ Ms Rachel Turner, Executive Manager, Business Support Branch, Office of the Legislative Assembly, *Proof Committee Hansard*, 10 February 2025, p 5.

7. ACT Ombudsman, Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission and Principal Officer of the Judicial Council

- 7.1. The ACT Ombudsman considers complaints about the actions of the ACT Government and ACT Policing. By arrangement with the Australian Government and under the *ACT Self-Government (Consequential Provisions) Amendment Act 1989* (Cth), the Commonwealth Ombudsman is also the ACT Ombudsman.⁴¹
- 7.2. The ACT Ombudsman performs the role of Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission unless an Inspector is appointed under section 229 of the *Integrity Commission Act 2018*. The Inspector's role is to provide assurance that the ACT Integrity Commission operates within its legislative powers.⁴²

Matters considered

- 7.3. During the ACT Ombudsman's appearance before the Committee on 20 February 2025 the following matters were considered:
- The role of the ACT Ombudsman, workload management, and whether the model of one officer being both Commonwealth and ACT Ombudsman could be adopted by other agencies with a similar degree of overlap;
 - Refusals of freedom of information requests on the basis of it being cabinet information;
 - Trends in complaint numbers;
 - Suitability of performance measures;
 - Witness health and well-being for the Integrity Commission;
 - Willingness of the Commonwealth Ombudsman to continue as ACT Ombudsman;
 - Funding of the Ombudsman's office; and
 - Complaints about historic debt recovery.⁴³

⁴¹ ACT Ombudsman, *Annual Report 2023–24*, p 10.

⁴² Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission, *Annual Report 2023–24*, p 9.

⁴³ *Proof Committee Hansard*, 20 February 2025, pp 34– 42.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. The Committee would like to thank the Minister, statutory officers and directorate staff who participated in this inquiry.
- 8.2. The Committee makes 9 recommendations.



Mr Ed Cocks MLA
Chair, Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders
25 March 2025

Appendix A: Witnesses

Monday, 10 February 2025

Mr Mark Parton MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT

Office of the Legislative Assembly

- **Mr Tom Duncan**, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT
- **Ms Rachel Turner**, Executive Manager, Business Support Branch
- **Mr David Skinner**, Senior Director, Office of the Clerk

Monday, 17 February 2025

ACT Audit Office

- **Mr Michael Harris**, Auditor-General

Wednesday, 19 February 2025

ACT Electoral Commission

- **Mr Damien Cantwell AM CSC**, Electoral Commissioner

Thursday, 20 February 2025

Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Attorney-General

Justice and Community Safety Directorate

- **Mr Daniel Ng**, Acting Executive Group Manager, Legislation, Policy and Programs

ACT Ombudsman

- **Mr Ian Anderson**, ACT Ombudsman, Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission and Principal Officer of the Judicial Council
- **Mr David Fintan**, Senior Assistant Ombudsman, Defence, Investigations, ACT & Legal Branch
- **Ms Georgia Ramsay**, Director ACT Strategy & Inspector, Defence, Investigations, ACT & Legal Branch

ACT Integrity Commission

- **Hon Michael Adams KC**, Integrity Commissioner
- **Ms Judy Lind**, Chief Executive Officer, ACT Integrity Commission

Appendix B: Questions on Notice and Questions Taken on Notice

Questions on Notice

No.	Date	Asked of	Subject	Response received
1	20/02/25	ACT Electoral Commissioner	Civics education outcomes	25/02/2025
2	20/02/25	Auditor-General	Accountability Indicators – Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	24/02/2025
3	20/02/25	Auditor-General	Accountability Indicators – Community Services Directorate	24/02/2025

Questions Taken on Notice

No.	Date	Asked of	Subject	Response received
1	10/02/2025	Office of the Legislative Assembly	IT Security for members	18/02/2025
2	17/02/2025	Auditor-General	Provision of draft reports	24/02/2025
3	17/02/2025	Auditor-General	Performance audit of University of Canberra	24/02/2025
4	19/02/2025	Electoral Commissioner	Prohibited electoral donors	27/02/2025
5	19/02/2025	Electoral Commissioner	Definition of electoral material	27/02/2025
6	20/02/2025	Attorney-General	Electoral advertising	17/03/2025
7	20/02/2025	Ombudsman	Freedom of information requests for cabinet information	28/02/2025
8	20/02/2025	Ombudsman	Complaints about historic debt recovery	28/02/2025

Appendix C: Gender distribution of witnesses

Beginning in April 2023, in response to an audit by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Committees are collecting information on the gender of witnesses. The aim is to determine whether committee inquiries are meeting the needs, and allowing the participation of, a range of genders in the community. Participation is voluntary and there are no set responses.

Gender indication	Total
Female	4
Male	9