

ACT Electoral Commissioner's response to a recommendation of the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders

Recommendation

The Committee recommended (recommendation 2) in its report on the Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023-2024 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.

Response

The ACT Electoral Commission acknowledges the Committee's recommendation.

The Commission routinely conducts compliance reviews of the financial records of registered political parties, associated entities, Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), non-party candidates, and third-party campaigners. These reviews are conducted under the authority of sections 237 and 237A of the Electoral Act 1992, and are a key component of the Commission's integrity assurance framework in delivering trusted, transparent, secure and accessible electoral services.

The purpose of these reviews is to:

- identify any instances of failure to comply with the requirements of the Electoral Act
- maintain the integrity of the funding and disclosure regime
- further increase transparency of funding and disclosure by key stakeholders
- assess the accuracy, completeness and reliability of information disclosures in a timely manner
- ensure that administrative funding payments are not misused
- detect and prevent breaches of restrictions on anonymous gifts and gifts from prohibited donors
- identify issues experienced by electoral participants which are able to be used by Elections ACT to provide targeted guidance to entities
- identify issues experienced by electoral participants which are able to be used for legislative review and change.

The Commission publishes a **Compliance Review Schedule** to provide transparency and predictability to political entities. This schedule outlines the timing and focus of reviews, including attention to payments between associated entities and political parties.

In addition, the Commission publishes the **results of compliance reviews** on its website, including findings related to late or incomplete disclosures and any enforcement actions taken. These reports are publicly accessible and contribute to maintaining public confidence in the electoral funding and disclosure regime, and trust in the integrity of the political process.

The Commission remains committed to continuous improvement and transparency. It will continue to monitor and assess financial relationships between political entities and associated entities, and will consider any further enhancements to its compliance framework that may strengthen transparency and public trust in the ACT's electoral processes.

Damian Cantwell AM CSC
Electoral Commissioner

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