



Australian Government
Australian Public Service Commission



Integrity Agencies Group Meeting – 9 August 2024

Final Agenda

Date: Friday 9 August 2024

Time: 10 am – 11.30am

Location: (Virtual) Microsoft Teams; (in person) APSC National Office, Wiradjuri Room

Agenda Item	Approximate timing	Details
1	10:00am	Welcome from Chair Minutes and action items of previous meeting Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM, APS Commissioner
2	10:05am	Standing Update: National Anti-Corruption Commission The Hon Paul Brereton AM RFD SC, Commissioner NACC
3	10.15am	Standing Update: Australian National Audit Office Ms Rona Mellor PSM, Acting Auditor General
4	10.25am	Standing Update: Australian Public Service Commission
5	10:35am	Update from: Commonwealth Ombudsman
6	10:45am	Update from: Merit Protection Commissioner
7	10:55am	Strategic Discussion (All members) Transparency of Integrity Activities
8	11:25 am	Other business
8	11:30am	Close



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Integrity Agencies Group Meeting – 12 November 2024

Agenda

Date: Tuesday 12 November 2024

Time: 2pm – 3.30pm

Location: (Virtual) Microsoft Teams; (in person) APSC National Office, Wiradjuri Room

Agenda Item	Approximate timing	Details
1	2pm	Welcome from Chair Introduction of new members Minutes and action items of previous meeting Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM, APS Commissioner
2	2.10pm	Standing Update: Australian Public Service Commission Dr Rachel Bacon, Deputy Commissioner, APSC
3	2.20pm	Standing Update: Australian National Audit Office Dr Caralee McLeish PSM, Auditor General
4	2.35pm	Standing Update: National Anti-Corruption Commission The Hon Paul Brereton AM RFD SC, NACC Commissioner
5	2.50pm	Member Update: 'Building Psychological Safety' work of Secretaries Board Capability and Workforce Committee; and Commonwealth Public Sector Integrity Strategy. Katherine Jones PSM, Secretary, AGD
6	3.10pm	Strategic Discussion (All members) Transparency of Integrity Activities
7	3.25pm	Other business
8	3.30pm	Close



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Integrity Agencies Group Meeting – 27 May 2025

Agenda

Date: Tuesday, 27 May 2025

Time: 2pm – 4pm

Location: (Virtual) Microsoft Teams; (in person) APSC National Office, Wiradjuri Room

Agenda Item	Approximate timing	Details
1	2pm	Welcome from Chair Introduction of new members Minutes and action items of previous meeting Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM, APS Commissioner
2	2.10pm	Standing Update: Australian Public Service Commission Dr Rachel Bacon, Deputy Commissioner, APSC
3	2.20pm	Standing Update: Australian National Audit Office Ms Rona Mellor PSM, Acting Auditor General
4	2.35pm	Standing Update: National Anti-Corruption Commission The Hon Paul Brereton AM RFD SC, NACC Commissioner
5	2.50pm	Presentation: Information Sharing – National Security Interest Commissioner Reece Kershaw, Australian Federal Police
6	3.05pm	Strategic Discussion (All members) Information sharing between IAG members Papers to be disseminated.
7	3.50pm	Other business

8	4pm	Close
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DRAFT MINUTES

Friday 9 August 2024 | 10:00am – 11:30am | Wiradjuri Room, Treasury Building

Attendees

<i>In person:</i>	
Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM	Australian Public Service Commissioner (Chair)
Ms Katherine Jones PSM	Secretary, Attorney-General's Department
Ms Rona Mellor PSM	Acting Auditor-General
The Hon Paul Brereton AM RFD SC	National Anti-Corruption Commissioner
Mr Iain Anderson	Commonwealth Ombudsman
Mr Reece Kershaw APM	Australian Federal Police Commissioner
Ms Nicole Pearson	Acting CEO, Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
Ms Heather Cook	CEO, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
Ms Raelene Sharp KC	Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
Mr Mark Davidson	Merit Protection Commissioner
The Hon Troy Grant	Inspector-General of Water Compliance
Ms Angelene Falk	Australian Information Commissioner
<i>Via Microsoft Teams:</i>	
Ms Ruth Owen CBE	Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman
Ms Leanne Smith	CEO, Australian Human Rights Commission

Secretariat:

Ms Clare McLean

Director, Integrity and Ethics, Australian Public Service Commission



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Service Commission

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Graduate, Integrity and Ethics, Australian Public Service Commission.

Apologies:

Mr Martin Hehir PSM

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Dr Rachel Bacon

Deputy Commissioner, Integrity, Reform and Enabling Services, Australian Public Service Commission

Item 1 – Welcome from Chair, and minutes and action items from previous meeting

- 1.1 The Chair provided an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed members to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair recognised that Ms Falk's term as Australian Information Commissioner was concluding; noted her achievements in the role, and expressed thanks for her contribution to IAG.
- 1.3 The Chair recognised and thanked Ms Mellor as outgoing acting Auditor General.
- 1.4 The Chair noted first meeting for Ms Sharp as Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.
- 1.5 Members introduced themselves and the Chair noted the apologies.
- 1.6 Members endorsed the IAG Meeting minutes from 2 May 2024.

Item 2 – Update: National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)

- 2.1 Commissioner Brereton presented an overview of the operations of the NACC since the last IAG meeting, including an update on its previous action item - the integrity data project.
- 2.2 Commissioner Brereton reflected on the recent Australian Public Service Anti-Corruption Conference, and confirmed that NACC will host the 2026 conference in Canberra.
- 2.3 The Group discussed Commissioner Brereton's presentation, including the details of the Commonwealth Integrity Survey 2024 and complaints handling.



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Item 3 – Update: Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)

- 3.1 Ms Mellor noted that new Auditor General, Dr Caralee McLeish, will commence her term in November 2024.
- 3.2 Ms Mellor shared recent areas of attention for the ANAO and recent audit findings.
- 3.3 Group members discussed Ms Mellor's presentation, particularly in regards to uplifting procurement and contract management in agencies. The Chair noted that the procurement profession is currently being established.

Item 4– Update: Commonwealth Ombudsman (agenda change)

- 4.1 Mr Anderson presented an overview of recent observations and insights of the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman including the risks associated with agencies not adequately reflecting changes to the law in their decision-making procedures or responding effectively to tribunal and court decisions concerning the operation of their programs.
- 4.2 Group members discussed Mr Anderson's presentation. Secretary Jones noted that the new Administrative Review Tribunal framework will seek to address agency responsiveness to tribunal and court decisions.

Item 5 – Update: Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)

- 5.1 Ms McLean gave an overview of the APSC's program of work in the areas of integrity and APS reform. Members discussed this program of work, particularly the introduction of Stewardship as a new APS value.
- 5.2 The Chair invited IAG members to engage with forthcoming APS Reform Office issues paper on the extension of APS Values to all entities subject to the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Item 6 – Update: Merit Protection Commission

- 6.1 Mr Davidson presented an overview of the operations of the Office of the Merit Protection Commissioner and recent observations and insights including the current themes of merit reviews, the use of external investigators for Code inquiries and the MPC's educative focus on good decision-making.
- 6.2 Group members discussed Mr Davidson's presentation and acknowledged the shortage of suitably skilled in-house code of conduct investigators across the APS.

Item 7 – Strategic Discussion: Transparency of Integrity Activities

- 7.1 The Chair noted that time constraints would not allow for this discussion to occur at the August meeting.



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Item 8 – Other Business

- 8.1 Secretary Jones gave an overview, as chair of the Capability and Workforce sub-committee of Secretaries Board, of its current policy development work on building psychological safety in the workplace. Secretary Jones indicated further engagement with IAG members on this work will be critical and undertook to provide a summary of the outcomes of the sub-committee's presentation on this work to Secretaries Board.



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Appendix 1

ACTIONS

Item	Action	Members(s)	Completed
1	Invite ANAO and NACC to future SES professional stream working group meeting/s to share relevant observations	APSC	Ongoing
2	Secretary Jones to update IAG members on 'building psychological safety' work of Capability and Workforce sub-committee of Secretaries Board	AGD	Item scheduled for 12 Nov meeting
3	Defer Strategic Discussion (Item 7) 'Transparency of Integrity Activities' to next IAG meeting	APSC	Item scheduled for 12 Nov meeting



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Appendix 2

Meeting summary for publication on APSC website

Meeting date: 9 August 2024

At the 9 August 2024 Integrity Agencies Group meeting, the Group discussed:

- An update from the National Anti-Corruption Commissioner on the Commission's operations.
- Updates from the Acting Auditor-General, Commonwealth Ombudsman and the Acting Merit Protection Commissioner on their agencies' recent findings regarding integrity in Commonwealth agencies



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DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, 12 November 2024 | 2:00pm – 3:30pm | Wiradjuri Room, Treasury Building

Attendees

In person:

Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM	Australian Public Service Commissioner (Chair)
Dr Rachel Bacon	Deputy Commissioner, Australian Public Service Commission
Ms Katherine Jones PSM	Secretary, Attorney-General's Department
Dr Caralee McLeish PSM	Auditor-General
The Hon Paul Brereton AM RFD SC	National Anti-Corruption Commissioner
Mr Martin Hehir	Deputy Secretary, Prime Minister and Cabinet
Ms Angela Barrett	COO, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
Ms Nicole Pearson	A/g CEO, Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
Ms Jamie Lowe	Merit Protection Commissioner
Mr Chris Jessup	Inspector-General Intel and Security
Mr Ian McCartney	Acting Australian Federal Police Commissioner

Via Microsoft Teams:

Mr Hugh De Krester	President, Australian Human Rights Commission
Ms Sarah Bendall	Acting Commonwealth Ombudsman
Ms Raelene Sharp	Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
Mr Troy Grant	Inspector-General of Water Compliance
Ms Ruth Owen	Inspector General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman
Ms Elizabeth Tydd	Australian Information Commissioner



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Secretariat:

Ms Kylie Barber

Assistant Commissioner, Integrity Performance and
Employment Policy, Australian Public Service Commission

Ms Clare McLean

Director, Integrity and Ethics, Australian Public Service
Commission

Item 1 – Welcome from Chair, and minutes and action items from previous meeting

- 1.1 The Chair provided an Acknowledgement of Country.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed members, new members and first-time attendees to the group and the Chair **noted** the apologies.
- 1.3 Members endorsed the IAG Meeting minutes from 9 August 2024 meeting with no changes.

Item 2 – Update: Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)

- 2.1 Dr Bacon updated members on progress of APS Stage 2 reforms, including public consultations on integrity initiatives.
- 2.2 Dr Bacon also shared reflections from her recent attendance at an OECD forum, including observations from international colleagues of the common tension of heightened community expectations of public services, including integrity matters, with budget constraints and increased external scrutiny.
- 2.3 The APSC has launched a major project to optimise its statutory role by strengthening the promotion, assurance and monitoring of its policy frameworks to enhance support for agency heads as employers, through increasing focus on upstream preventative work.
- 2.4 Ms Barber also sought the interest of members in a small working group to explore synergies in integrity education priorities and identifying potential collaborative efforts.

Item 3 – Update: Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)

- 3.1 Ms Caralee McLeish introduced herself and shared her priorities as the new Auditor-General of Australia, including upholding Commonwealth integrity through governance and methodological advancements.
- 3.2 Ms McLeish indicated upcoming audit program for 2025, including



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recommendations to foster behavioural improvements.

- 3.3 Ms McLeish also noted recent thematic and specific observations from individual ANAO reports including poor procurement practices in the Australian Passport Office.

Item 4 – Update: National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)

- 4.1 Commissioner Brereton provided updates on the NACC's current program of work, noting data of recent referrals and investigations, and outlined forthcoming guidance products including corruption risks in election activities, conflict of interest and ethical decision-making.
- 4.2 Commissioner Brereton outlined plans for Anti-Corruption Day (9 December 2024), including a seminar and public messaging.
- 4.3 Commissioner Brereton also referred to the NACC Inspector-General's recent report findings on the NACC's response to referrals from the Robodebt inquiry and provided an update on the NACC's response.
- 4.4 Commissioner Brereton also canvassed early insights from the inaugural Commonwealth Integrity Survey.

Item 5 – Attorney-General's Department (AGD)

- 5.1 Secretary Jones provided an update on the current work of the Capability and Workforce Committee in building psychological safety in the APS workforce.
- 5.2 This work responds to recommendations of the Louder than Words Action Plan to address agency capability with regard to 'speak-up' culture, and includes developing materials to support agency-level awareness, communication, and monitoring.
- 5.3 Secretary Jones also indicated the development of a Commonwealth Integrity Strategy is ongoing and foreshadowed that AGD will consult with integrity agencies on the draft strategy at relevant stages as it progresses.

Item 6 – Group Discussion: Transparency and Accountability

- 6.1 The Chair facilitated an open discussion on strategies for transparency of integrity agency functions in an environment of heightened public scrutiny.
- 6.2 Members shared their experiences with discretionary public disclosure and balancing transparency with maintaining necessary confidentiality to ensure operational integrity.
- 6.3 Members discussed tension between fostering public trust and confidence while safeguarding employee privacy and wellbeing, and the need for tailored



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transparency approaches based on specific statutory requirements.

Item 7 – Other Business

No additional business was raised.



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Appendix 1

ACTIONS

Item	Action	Members(s)	Status
2	Australian Public Service Commission to convene education priorities/activities working group	APSC	Outstanding
4	National Anti-Corruption Commission to share Anti-Corruption Day materials with members	NACC	Outstanding
5	AGD to consult on draft integrity strategy content with Member agencies at the appropriate time	AGD	Outstanding



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Appendix 2

Meeting summary for publication on APSC website

Meeting date: 12 November 2024

At the 12 November 2024 Integrity Agencies Group meeting, the Group discussed:

- Updates on APS integrity reforms, education initiatives, and upstream preventative efforts.
- Recent audit findings and their implications for Commonwealth integrity.
- NACC investigations and strategies for promoting ethical decision-making.
- Challenges and strategies for ensuring transparency amidst heightened scrutiny.