



PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA
Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee

MEDIA RELEASE

Improvements recommended for police complaints and oversight system

The Victorian Parliament's IBAC Committee has recommended significant improvements to the police complaints and oversight system in a major report tabled in Parliament today.

With responsibility for overseeing the work of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission, the Committee has made 69 recommendations to improve the transparency, impartiality, effectiveness and efficiency of the system.

The Committee's recommendations seek significant improvements in the complaints system across a wide range of functions and activities, including the receipt, handling, assessment, referral, investigation, review and oversight of complaints about police.

"The Committee considers that IBAC needs to give greater priority to its functions of handling, investigating and overseeing complaints about police," said Committee Chair Kim Wells.

"IBAC investigates only approximately 2% of the allegations it determines warrant investigation, referring the rest to Victoria Police, including a range of serious police misconduct matters," he said.

The Committee has not recommended the creation of a new independent body to receive, handle and investigate all complaints about police since it found that the system can, with improvement, meet the relevant best practice principles.

To enhance the attention IBAC gives to serious police misconduct, and police oversight generally, the Committee has recommended the establishment of an adequately staffed and empowered Police Corruption and Misconduct Division within IBAC. It has also recommended that IBAC, rather than Victoria Police, investigate serious police misconduct, unless there are exceptional circumstances. To assist IBAC in carrying out these important functions, the Committee has recommended the conferral of selected additional investigative and oversight powers on it.

"Accurate assessment of all complaints has been emphasised in the report to ensure that serious police misconduct is not wrongly classified as a customer service issue or similar lower-level concern," Mr Wells said.

"The Committee has made recommendations to ensure that complainants, especially vulnerable complainants, are better communicated with, supported and protected against reprisals throughout the process," he said.

A range of necessary improvements have been identified to ensure the impartiality and thoroughness of Victoria Police complaint investigations, particularly at the regional level. This includes better management of issues such as officer complaint histories and conflicts of interest.

The Committee also recommended that Victoria Police and IBAC make more use of conciliation as a way of effectively resolving complaints.

“While there is certainly a need for IBAC to play a stronger role within the complaints system, the Committee recognises the importance of Victoria Police continuing to play its distinctive part in taking responsibility for addressing misconduct within its ranks through upholding professional standards, handling and investigating complaints and managing discipline,” Mr Wells said.

The report is available from the Committee’s [website](#).

Media queries

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Issued: 4 September 2018