

**Division 34: Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission, \$753 000 —**

Mrs L.A. Munday, Chair.

Mr J.R. Quigley, Attorney General.

Ms S. Burnside, Principal Adviser to the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission.

Mr J. Deery, Chief Finance Officer, Department of Justice.

Mr J. Lee, Principal Policy Adviser.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIR:** The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard and the daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair will allow as many questions as possible. Questions and answers should be short and to the point. Consideration is restricted to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division, and members should preface their questions with those details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by noon on Friday, 2 June 2023. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system to submit their questions.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The parliamentary inspector apologises because he was on pre-booked annual leave before we got this message, and he is out of the jurisdiction.

**The CHAIR:** I give the call to the member for Central Wheatbelt.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I refer to page 492 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, and the significant issues impacting the agency. The second paragraph talks about the significant increase in the number of investigations and cases undertaken by the office. In this note, it attributes this to a greater awareness of the office. Is that the case or have there been other contributing factors?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The Corruption and Crime Commissioner has adopted a policy of advising people whose complaint to him might be rejected of the availability of the Office of the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission to review his decision. By educating complainants of the existence of the office, it might have led to the increase.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Is that a relatively new practice of the CCC to advise of the existence of the parliamentary inspector?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I think there also has been an uptick in the number of complaints going to the CCC. A lot are assessed and are told that their complaint is not within the CCC's jurisdiction and that they can go to the inspector if they want to.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Is an analysis done of the complaints that come through? Would the parliamentary inspector be able to advise whether there are any themes in terms of the types of complaints or reasons for complaints?

[5.50 pm]

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I defer to my principal adviser.

**Ms S. Burnside:** Every year in the annual report we report on the broad themes of the complaints. We will have so many complaints that are referred to us directly by the Corruption and Crime Commission or by the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission. We have some matters that are filed under "miscellaneous" because they are requests from people who have matters that do not fall within the parliamentary inspector's jurisdiction, so if they have not made a complaint to the commission first, we advise them that we cannot assess the way the commission deals with the matter until they have made a complaint. I think that last year we reported on the number and proportion of complaints that related to police, which broadly reflects the proportion of complaints that the commission receives about police as distinct from other public sector agencies.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** The first service summary under the heading "Expense" on page 493 is the evaluation of the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Corruption and Crime Commission's operations. Are there any issues that the parliamentary inspector is aware of that make it difficult for the inspector to be able to carry out that responsibility?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I defer to Ms Burnside.

**Ms S. Burnside:** No. The office has sufficient resourcing to carry out the function and the commission cooperates. Whenever the parliamentary inspector gets a complaint that requires him to assess the appropriateness of the commission's procedures, he has the right of access to all the commission's materials on the matter and they are swiftly provided.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Have there been any events when there was not an open line of communication between the CCC and the parliamentary inspector in relation to information that was required?

**Ms S. Burnside:** No.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I again refer the service summary on page 493 and note that the funding for the evaluation of the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Corruption and Crime Commission's operations has gone from \$818 000 in 2022–23 to \$895 000 in 2023–24. Can the Attorney General please explain what the increase relates to? Is it related to the number of cases or is it an additional number of staff?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I defer to Mr Deery.

**Mr J. Deery:** There is little change in the total cost of services from the 2022–23 budget, which was \$818 000. It is up by six per cent, which is \$53 000. There was a minor increase in the budget between the 2022–23 budget to \$895 000 in 2023–24 as a result of an increase because of a determination by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal. There were also additional expenses following the implementation of the new public sector wages policy, which we heard about earlier from different departments. There was also a one-off cost-of-living allowance. As the member said, it is a slight increase in cost. It also involves operating and replacing minor equipment and miscellaneous costs.

**The appropriation was recommended.**