

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION**

*Fourth Report — “The timeliness of misconduct investigations undertaken or overseen by the CCC:  
An interim report” — Tabling*

**MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro)** [10.55 am]: I present for tabling the fourth report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission entitled “The timeliness of misconduct investigations undertaken or overseen by the CCC: An interim report”.

[See paper 657.]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** This report comes as a result of an action by the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission in the previous Parliament. During a hearing in November 2012 it came to the attention of the then Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission that there were no guidelines about time frames for CCC investigations. That concerned the committee. Although there was an impending election and the proroguing of Parliament was approaching, the committee saw it of such import that it referred the matter to the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission and requested that he conduct an inquiry. His initial report is also tabled as part of this report today. I will explain shortly why the committee’s report is only interim.

The parliamentary inspector’s inquiry revealed that 13 investigations in recent times by the CCC had extended for at least 15 months. Of very great concern was the fact that one of those investigations into a Department of Corrective Services matter had extended for three years, which also concerned the parliamentary inspector. It was also acknowledged immediately—I must say commendably—by the Corruption and Crime Commissioner, Mr Macknay, that that was unacceptable. In response to becoming aware of those matters, he said that he —

... forthrightly accepted that the failures on the part of the Commission ... were unacceptable by its own standards, and cannot be justified.”

It has become apparent that other jurisdictions’ CCC equivalents have confined their investigations to a shorter time frame or to as short a time frame as possible. The acting chairperson and chief executive officer of Queensland’s Crime and Misconduct Commission, Dr Ken Levy, recently told the Queensland Parliament that —

... long and sensitive hearings should have some oversight at a number of stages so they are met within a reasonable time.

We are aware that the Independent Commission Against Corruption in New South Wales imposes a 12-month deadline on conducting a standard investigation. Commissioner Macknay, again to his credit, reported to the parliamentary inspector and to the standing committee that he has imposed four measures to attempt to make the process more succinct. The objective is to monitor the extent and duration of inquiries with the hope of ensuring that inquiries delayed beyond 12 months are reduced. When the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission looked at those measures, it became aware that the vast majority of CCC inquiries are very short anyway. The measures that the commissioner imposed related to the percentage of inquiries that extended beyond 12 months being reduced to a lower level. We noted that the commissioner is probably already meeting that measure. There is a necessity to adjust the measures that have been imposed by Mr Macknay in an effort to ensure that the number of inquiries that extend beyond that period is reduced. If we were to impose just a percentage limitation or threshold of no more than one per cent—I cannot recall the level that was proposed—the commissioner would be currently meeting that threshold. Only a very small number of referred matters go to inquiry and, of those, the vast majority are resolved in a short time frame. What we want is for some measure to be imposed on the commission that ensures that the time frame for inquiries is reduced and that the number of inquiries extending beyond 12 months is reduced from the current level. That is what we have said to the Corruption and Crime Commissioner and we are waiting for his response to that proposal.

Another thing that was highlighted by the inquiry of the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission and is of concern is that in the course of his inquiry he gave a copy of his draft report to both the CCC and WA Police. In their responses to that draft report, both agencies blamed the other for delays in completing investigations. That was of concern to us. In particular, there was reference to a problem with the CCC remotely accessing WA Police’s electronic systems and databases—the complaints and investigations management system. That matter is still being addressed by the parliamentary inspector, and as a result, the report we are tabling today is only an interim one. The parliamentary inspector will continue his inquiries into that matter. We will provide a subsequent report with the final report of the parliamentary inspector later in 2013.

Just prior to concluding, I would like to acknowledge the work done not only on this report but also on a regular basis by our staff—the committee secretariat of Dr David Worth and Ms Jovita Hogan, who are both here today.

I also acknowledge the efforts of my colleagues on the joint standing committee. It is proving to be a fruitful collaboration. As I indicated in a speech last night, we are embarking on an inquiry into the Integrity Coordinating Group and its impact on the CCC and other matters. We are active. We see our committee as making a valuable and important contribution, and I look forward to participating in further matters with the committee. I commend the report to the house.