



PIPER GREENWICH MCGIRR

INDEPENDENT CROSS BENCH MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

21 October 2020

Premier of New South Wales  
Hon. Gladys Berejiklian

Dear Premier

The Audit Office of NSW yesterday presented its report titled "The effectiveness of the financial arrangements and management practices in four integrity agencies" which had been requested by the Hon. Don Harwin, Special Minister for State in November last year.

The report looked at financial arrangements for - the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), the NSW Electoral Commission (NSWEC), the NSW Ombudsman (NSWO) and the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission (LECC).

While the report is comprehensive and warrants consideration in its entirety, the first sentence in the conclusion is unambiguous and compelling. That is,

*"The current approach to determining annual funding for the integrity agencies presents threats to their independent status."*

That one sentence succinctly sets the challenge for your government to address what should have been the situation for funding such organisations as part of their establishment.

If nothing else, the general public could perceive that the lack of independence and surety of funding for such bodies poses an implied threat or risk to funding of the agencies.

Most notably this perception would be in relation to the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the body which most directly interacts with the political process including possibly members of the Executive Government.

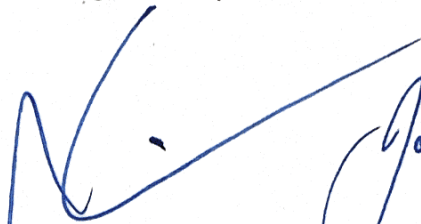
Removing any doubt about the Government's commitment to the important role of the ICAC and other oversight agencies would be in the interest of not just those bodies but also for ensuring public confidence in their work.

We request that this be addressed by changing the funding arrangements to allow for guaranteed recurrent budgets with suitable indexation to allow for actual and perceived independence from the vagaries of political considerations.

Yours sincerely



Greg Piper, MP  
**Member for Lake Macquarie**



Alex Greenwich, MP  
**Member for Sydney**



Dr Joe McGirr, MP  
**Member for Wagga Wagga**