

Office of the Independent Assessor

Strategic Plan 2023-27

The Office of the Independent Assessor contributes to the Queensland Government's objectives for the community:

 **Growing our regions**
Help Queensland's regions grow by attracting people, talent and investment, and driving sustainable economic prosperity

 **Building Queensland**
Drive investment in infrastructure that supports our recovery, resilience and future prosperity

OUR VISION *To strengthen the community's trust in councillors and the local government sector*

HUMAN RIGHTS *We will respect, protect and promote human rights in our decision-making and actions*

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES *We are committed to reframing the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through greater inclusion, cultural competency, respect, enhanced relationships and increasing economic participation in the Queensland economy*

OUR PURPOSE

Hold councillors accountable to the communities they serve

Enhance the integrity of local governments as part of the councillor conduct complaints system

Objectives

Deliver a disciplinary framework that is balanced, timely and effective
Help local governments to be accountable, effective and efficient in driving sustainable economic prosperity

Support and foster a culture of accountability and ethical practice in local government

Drive prosperity by ensuring that decision-making is transparent and in the public interest

Performance indicators

90 per cent clearance rate where complaints are resolved at assessment, investigation, natural justice or referred to the Councillor Conduct Tribunal (CCT) or to other agencies

Percentage of assessments completed within target timeframes

Percentage of investigations/natural justice completed within target timeframes

Number of matters referred to the CCT and/or to the courts to decide

The number of complaints notified by local government officials under mandatory reporting requirements

The number of referrals to the department responsible for local government to undertake targeted training interventions and capacity building based on information arising out of councillor conduct complaints

The number of councillors who self-refer their own conduct

Frivolous and vexatious complaints are dealt with quickly and effectively

Strategies

Undertake quality and timely investigations into councillor conduct
Effectively progress disciplinary matters to, and before, the CCT and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT)

Maintain a workforce culture that fosters professional excellence and innovation

Respond to changes in the environment and jurisdiction arising out of law reform from the parliamentary oversight committee's Inquiry into the Independent Assessor and councillor conduct complaints system (State Development and Regional Industries Committee, October 2022 report)

Utilise complaints data to identify opportunities to strengthen accountabilities and ethical practice

Engage through the department and/or the Tripartite Forum to communicate strategic training and law reform issues

Report to parliamentary oversight committee on areas of the councillor conduct framework which need improvement to function effectively and efficiently

OUR OPPORTUNITIES ARE:

- Support councillors focused on strong and resilient communities and economic prosperity to make ethical decisions in the public interest
- Support councillors to adjust to changing ethical expectations and cultural change
- Support an engaged workforce by valuing knowledge, capability and diversity and recognising and encouraging innovation

WE STRIVE TO MANAGE RISK BY:

- Seeking the FTE and budget support necessary to sustainably meet enhanced target timeframes for a large volume of complaints
- Use systems and resources as efficiently and effectively as possible
- Timely reporting of strategic issues impacting on the councillor conduct framework to the Minister, the department responsible for local government

OUR VALUES



Respectful



Courageous



Connected



Transparent



Balanced