

## Media release

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# Corruption experts call to close “cavernous loophole” in lobbying register

Leading anti-corruption experts say that the lack of proper regulation of lobbying is a major corruption risk. They called on whoever forms government in Queensland to ensure that all lobbyists are included in the lobbying register, and for full disclosure of lobbying meetings.

Corruption fighting heavyweight, former ICAC Commissioner the Hon David Ipp AO QC, and former Queensland Integrity Commissioner Dr David Solomon made the comments at the [\*Accountability and the Law: Safeguarding Against Corruption in Queensland\*](#) conference in Brisbane today.

The majority of lobbyists are not covered by Queensland's lobbying register. The register does not cover directors, managers or employees of corporations, lobbying on behalf of their own firms or the most powerful industry lobby groups including the Property Council or the Queensland Resources Council.

Lobbying meeting disclosure rules are routinely circumvented by ministers and senior bureaucrats meeting at social and sporting events.

“The lack of transparency in a lobbying regulatory system is a major corruption risk”, Says former ICAC Commissioner David Ipp.

“The public is entitled to know that lobbying is occurring, to ascertain who is involved, and, in the absence of any overriding public interest against disclosure, to know what occurred during the lobbying.

“Those who wish to lobby secretly, simply do the lobbying themselves instead of using professional lobbyists. This has a significant potential to conceal corrupt behaviour. It is difficult to understand why no government has been prepared to adopt this recommendation.

“One is driven to the inference that they wish to leave open this cavernous loophole” said Ipp.

“The Government has refused to extend lobbying rules to cover this kind of lobbying, rejecting a number of submissions by me, and a unanimous recommendation of an all-party parliamentary committee”, says former QLD Integrity Commissioner David Solomon.

“There can be no more excuses. The time to act is now,” Mr Solomon said.

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