



**Troy Grant**  
Deputy Premier of NSW  
Minister for Justice and Police

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT WATCHDOG FOR NSW**

A new watchdog will streamline and strengthen oversight of the NSW Police Force and NSW Crime Commission, Deputy Premier and Minister for Justice and Police Troy Grant announced today.

Mr Grant said the NSW Government will create a new Law Enforcement Conduct Commission (LECC) after adopting recommendations from a review into police oversight by former Shadow Attorney General Andrew Tink AM.

Mr Tink has recommended replacing the Police Integrity Commission (PIC) and the Police Division of the Office of the Ombudsman (PDOO) with a single body with two clearly defined functions: detecting and investigating serious misconduct and corruption, and overseeing complaints handling.

Mr Grant thanked Mr Tink for recommending a simplified, strong, and fair system of law enforcement oversight in NSW. The NSW Government commissioned Mr Tink's review following an election commitment.

"The current oversight system has multiple agencies with overlaps and duplication of roles and functions. We need to fix it because it causes confusion and a lack of certainty for those who complain and the officials complained about," Mr Grant said.

"Our law enforcement officers perform one of the toughest jobs in the community and have to make split-second, life-or-death decisions in difficult circumstances.

"Our changes will make sure our thousands of men and women in blue who go about their jobs capably and ethically can do it with confidence and certainty.

"We remain absolutely committed to upholding the highest standards of officer integrity and conduct and we will give this new commission the powers and resources it needs to do that."

The new body will also oversee the NSW Crime Commission, which investigates serious and organised crime. Under the Government's response to Mr Tink's recommendations:

- The LECC, to be headed by a Commissioner who is a serving or retired judge, will have two divisions: Integrity and Oversight. Each division will be headed by a Deputy Commissioner;

- The Deputy Commissioner for Integrity will be responsible for the functions currently exercised by the PIC to prevent, detect and investigate serious misconduct or corruption. Covert investigation powers and public hearings will continue to be available for these investigations;
- The Deputy Commissioner for Oversight will be responsible for the functions currently exercised by the PDOO and investigate complaints received directly about officers, as well as monitor the NSW Police Force's handling of complaints;
- Critical incidents will continue to be investigated by the NSW Police Force which has the full investigative tools to do so, but these investigations will be monitored by the new LECC as part of its oversight functions;
- The NSW Police Force will continue to have primary responsibility for managing complaints about police officers under the *Police Act 1990*, however the LECC will be able to conduct its own investigations into complaints against police and will have direct access to the police complaints management system;
- The LECC will have clearly defined jurisdiction over the NSW Crime Commission, which is currently overseen by the Inspector of the NSW Crime Commission and the PIC;
- The role of Inspector of the NSW Crime Commission will cease to exist; and
- The Inspector of the PIC will be replaced by an Inspector of the LECC who will report to NSW Parliament to ensure the new LECC is accountable for its operations.

Mr Tink said he welcomed the opportunity to recommend the major reform, following detailed consultation with the affected agencies, key stakeholders and members of the public.

“The police complaints system can give an early warning of more serious patterns of misconduct, so it's logical to have one body responsible for complaints oversight and the investigation of serious misconduct,” Mr Tink said.

“This will strengthen information sharing and ultimately the accountability of law enforcement.”

Legislation to form the new commission is expected to be introduced to NSW Parliament in 2016 and it is to become operational in 2017, which will allow for a transition without affecting active investigations.

The creation of the LECC will not affect Operation Prospect which is being conducted by, and will remain in the hands of, Acting Ombudsman Professor John McMillan AO.

The full report by Mr Tink and details of the Government's response are available at [www.justice.nsw.gov.au](http://www.justice.nsw.gov.au)

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