



Proud to be Public
Proud to be Union

Integrity and accountability form the bedrock of effective government.

The actions of successive governments have eroded the trust the public has in the public service. It is critical the next Parliament takes action to rebuild trust and integrity in the public sector.

A plethora of inquiries across all Agencies have laid bare the consequences of austerity; cuts to 'back line' jobs and a failure to invest in people, technology, reform and skills. Most concerning is the increasing politicisation of the public sector, creating a culture that does not support or act when stakeholders or workers raise issues.

This problem is costing Tasmanians, with over \$400 million paid on inquiries, rising workers compensation costs related to bullying and harassment and many dedicated, skilled workers choosing to leave rather than stay and make change.

We need to rebuild enforcement and regulation functions to safeguard our democracy and protect the interests of Tasmanians. We need a complaints process that listens and acts on the concerns of the public and workers.

1. Increase capacity:

We need:

- a. To increase funding to all regulatory and enforcement bodies;
- b. Demand based funding and mandated staffing ratios;
- c. Permanent work to ensure employees can act without fear of losing their job; and
- d. End outsourcing of regulation of self-regulation.

This would bolster capacity, ensuring integrity, regulatory & enforcement agencies would have the necessary resources to investigate and prosecute cases of negligence, corruption, and failure to meet statutory obligations.

2. Strengthened regulatory frameworks:

Regulatory legislation and frameworks have not been reviewed and updated to ensure they respond to a rapidly changing world. We need a commitment to review and strengthen regulatory legislation and frameworks, ensuring that community expectations are supported by modern fit-for-purpose legislation. *Often what the community expects is not what statutory officer holders & regulatory officers are empowered to do under legislation. The parliament is asleep on the job with legislation often outdated and not undergoing regular review to ensure it is fit-for-purpose.*

3. Open Data:

The public has a right to know. Information should be readily available unless there are genuine reasons to keep it confidential. Live tracking of the implementation of recommendations from inquiries and significant reviews will ensure that government decisions and action/inaction are known to employees and the public. All briefs prepared for budget estimates and GBE scrutiny should be made public.

Recommendations from report after report are accepted often with little or no progress beyond that, eroding trust. The public has no clarity on what the government intends to implement and what they have rejected. Information prepared for public scrutiny is only released if the right question is asked.

4. Upholding ethical standards and maintaining separation between politics and the public service:

Urgent action needs to be taken to improved election donation disclosure laws. The practice of the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet also being the Head of the State Service should be reviewed, to minimise the conflict of interest between the dual roles.

Re-introduction of a centralised public service induction for all new employees, so they understand the obligations associated with being a public servant such as providing frank and fearless advice. Closing the legislation loophole that means Head of Agencies are exempt from action when they breach the State Service Code of Conduct.

We need political leaders who adhere to the highest ethical standards in their own conduct and take responsibility for repeated failures in their Ministries. Westminster traditions need to be re-embraced, Minister held accountable for the performance of their portfolios and taking responsibility for failures by resigning. Minister should not be able to claim they were not aware of something that their office was aware of.

5. Investment in Expertise:

We need market and industry-based pay to attract and retain the highly skilled workforce required to reduce our reliance on expensive contractors. The PWC scandal showed how easily public sector agencies can become captured and how advice is often self-serving or politically biased in order to garner more work. We need a \$10M professional development fund for the development of specialist skills and expertise.

Integrity and regulatory functions are struggling to compete for skills with the private sector and have had to move to a recruit & train model. A lack of access to specialist expertise impacts the how tough on the beat you can be.



6. Complaints processes that work:

We need a new internal complaints process and strengthened whistleblower protections, for stakeholders and employees to encourage exposure of wrongdoing without fear of retaliation.

The complaints process is broken internally in the public sector. There is no oversight on issues raised, limited reporting and a culture of ignoring problems. Without clear and robust processes, shadow processes are created that hide reality from the public leading to situations where paedophiles can be protected. This is resulting sky-rocketing workers compensations, burnout and in some parts toxic cultures rife with bullying and gaslighting of workers.


7. Track Privatisation:

We need a requirement to disclose privatisation of services and funding for industry to move to self-regulation. The broadest definition of privatisation needs to be adopted that includes the outsourcing of responsibilities to NGO players who are often now huge businesses.

Implementation of the above will ensure that any future government and parliament serves the interests of the Tasmanians with integrity and dedication. The public sector must serve the best interests of the people of Tasmania rather than the narrow political interests of the government of the day.

**Regulation and enforcement functions include but not limited to WorkSafe Child Safety Service & Advice & Referral Line, Parks and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Officers, Transport Inspectors, Children's Commission, Integrity Commission, Biosecurity Inspectors & Animal Welfare, Fisheries Inspectors, Licensing & Gaming Inspectors, Environmental Protection Agency, Equal Opportunity Tasmania, Tasmanian Industrial Commission and many more.*



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The Community & Public Sector Union has been standing up for the rights and conditions of Tasmanian public sector workers for over 125 years. stand with your colleagues by joining the CPSU today.



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