

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Question Taken on Notice

Question Number: 1-3

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Date: 9/06/2026

From: J Davis

To: Hon Lia Finocchiaro

Portfolio: Chief Minister

Agency: Office of the Integrity and Ethics Commissioner

Subject: Operation Banksia

QUESTION:

Did the ICAC review, Operation Banksia, include an investigation into the appointment of the current CEO?

ANSWER:

Section 23 of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (ICAC Act) provides that the ICAC may:

At any time, evaluate or review the practices, policies or procedures of a public body or public officer to identify whether improper conduct has occurred, is occurring or is at risk of occurring.

A review of the kind contemplated by section 23 is not to be equated with an investigation of the kind ordinarily associated with the ICAC. A review is focused upon practices, policies and procedures. An investigation is focused upon particular events or conduct. That is not to say that overlap will not arise. Where alleged improper conduct is identified during the course of a review, that conduct is dealt with separately and in accordance with the ICAC Act.

A review of practices, policies and procedures is, as the phrase suggests, a structured and careful appraisal of the processes in place (whether documented or undocumented) that underpin the operations of a public body. That appraisal is intended to inform and assist the public body to identify risks of improper conduct and establish appropriate controls to minimise the risk of such conduct occurring.

Operation Banksia was a section 23 review conducted on the recruitment and selection practices, policies and procedures of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. The review focussed on analysis of a random selection of 10 advertised and 10 non-advertised recruitment and selection processes, which occurred during the period 1 February 2025 to 31 August 2025. The appointment of the current Chief Executive Officer, Ms Amelia Vellar was made outside of the review period and was not within the scope of the review.