



Mr David Obendorf
Tasmanians for Transparency
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28 February 2014

Dear Mr Obendorf,

**RESPONSE TO TASMANIANS FOR TRANSPARENCY FROM THE
PALMER UNITED PARTY ON THE 12 POINT PLAN FOR HONEST
GOVERNMENT IN TASMANIA**

PUP commends Tasmanians for Transparency for taking a lead role in pushing for **Honest Government** in Tasmania. A key platform for PUP in the upcoming State election is an honest and accountable Government and a fair and just society for all.

This concern for honest government was demonstrated by the attendance of 5 PUP candidates at the anti-corruption forum held by your group on 15 February 2014.

PUP is particularly interested in ensuring a fiercely independent and properly resourced, empowered and structured Anti-Corruption Authority (ACA) in Tasmania. To this end, we have prepared a concept paper for consultation and discussion with key stakeholders and the community. It is intended to release this document shortly.

We do not wish to respond to each of your survey questions at this time. We do however support the 12 point plan in principle. Some of the matters raised, such as compensation for whistleblowers, will require further research and careful consideration. Other initiatives need to be costed and considered in the context of funding available to the next Government (such as the proposed Independent Office for Witness and Whistleblower Protection and the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, Independent Police Complaints Advocate and Prison Inspector). However, it is clear from the Integrity Commission 2013 survey *Report on Ethics & Integrity in the Tasmanian Public Sector* that more needs to be done in relation to Public Interest Disclosure legislation and its utilisation within the public sector.

It is considered that some form of high level independent inquiry with appropriate terms of reference is required as soon as possible into both the Sue Neill-Fraser and Barry Greenberry matters. The results of such inquiries could well necessitate the formation of a committee or task force to implement key recommendations and any urgent reforms.



PUP is of the view that greater transparency is required in relation to Tasmania Police, including through the immediate public release of the Tasmanian Police Manual. There should also be clear policies and guidelines (as in other jurisdictions) in relation to disclosure requirements in all criminal matters.

PUP also would endorse a review of the upper levels of the State public sector including SES positions within Tasmania's oversight agencies and government departments.

The issue of mandatory publication of all reports by companies and consultants provided to government under compliance obligations etc. is another area which will require clarification and/or further research before a commitment can be made.

PUP is also of the view that there should be a review of the operation of RTI legislation to ensure that the legislation is being properly applied and that the discretionary powers provided in the Act are appropriate and being exercised in accordance with the spirit of the Act.

There also appears to be merit in ensuring the independence of both the Environment Protection Authority and Workplace Standards Tasmania but further information and expert advice will need to be sought on such matters.

In relation to ethics and responsible citizenship, it would be useful to include this in school curricula and to promote such concepts even more broadly. The issue of conflict of interest is one that should be given priority attention in a small and close-knit society like Tasmania. Nepotism and patronage were perceived as problems in some public service sectors (as outlined in the 2013 Integrity Commission survey). There is also an issue of enhanced training for public sector personnel. The 2013 Integrity Commission survey found that 17 out of 26 agencies surveyed did not provide adequate training or awareness-raising in ethics and integrity after staff induction.

Kind regards,

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