



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

ADVISORY GROUP ON BULLYING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

D24/035768

Hon Stephen Lawrence MLC

Chair

Privileges Committee

Via email: privilege@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Chair

PAG views on the Independent Complaints Officer, Members' training and Member Codes of Conduct

On behalf of the Parliamentary Advisory Group on Bullying, Sexual Harassment and Serious Misconduct (PAG), thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Review of the Independent Complaints Officer as well as the PAG's view on members' training and Codes of Conduct.

1. Independent Complaints Officer

Please find attached the PAG's submission to the Review of the Independent Complaints Officer.

If it would assist, the PAG would welcome the opportunity for representatives to speak to the Committee at its next meeting about the submission and answer any questions.

2. Members' training

In order to substantially improve member take-up of training, and thereby take greater steps to build a respectful culture across Parliament, the PAG is of the view that:

- a) RISE 1 and 2 training should be mandatory for all who work at Parliament, including members.
- b) RISE 1 and 2 training should be mandatory for new members within six months of their commencement at Parliament. Additionally, we strongly recommend that members complete the training every two years reflecting the importance of role modelling to the community and the severity of the consequences if inappropriate conduct occurs.
- c) The PEG should investigate, and seek to remedy, the statutory barriers to mandating training for all Members of Parliament. This could include consideration of mechanisms used in other jurisdictions.



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- d) It would be incumbent on political parties to inform new members, if they are successfully elected, of the requirement to attend RISE training within six months of their commencement at Parliament.
- e) Records of training completed should be included within ordinary returns/disclosure forms completed by members each financial year, in accordance with the *Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983*.

More broadly, we note that we intend to provide advice to the Parliamentary Executive Group regarding RISE 1 and 2 training, including that an abridged version be introduced, which is specifically designed for members.

3. Members' Codes of Conduct

The PAG also considered the Code of Conduct for members of both the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, and noted that there was a lack of specific reference to bullying and harassment and respectful behaviour in that of the Legislative Assembly. The PAG is of the view that there is a need for consistency and that both Codes of Conduct should explicitly refer to bullying and harassment and respect in the same way, with the Legislative Council Code of Conduct as the appropriate standard.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide input. If you have any questions, please contact the secretariat on harassmentfree@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Dr Juliet Bourke
Chair

Parliamentary Advisory Group on Bullying, Sexual Harassment and Serious Misconduct