

Circular to Councils

| Subject | ICAC guidance for councillors on corruption risks associated with overseas travel |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Circular Details | 24-11 / 14 June 2024 / A902181 |
| Previous Circular | Not applicable |
| Who should read this | Councillors / General Managers / Council Governance Staff |
| Contact | Council Governance/ (02) 4428 4100 / olg@olg.nsw.gov.au |
| Action required | Council to Implement |

What's new or changing?

- The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has issued Guidance for councillors on corruption risks associated with overseas travel (ICAC's Guidance). This can be accessed on the Office of Local Government's website [here](#) and on ICAC's website.
- ICAC's Guidance provides information to help councils understand the corruption, integrity and security risks posed by overseas travel by councillors and to mitigate those risks.
- Among other things, ICAC's Guidance provides information on:
 - existing statutory and other requirements relevant to overseas travel by councillors,
 - security risks for councillors when travelling overseas,
 - promoting council projects when overseas,
 - the potential for blackmail, and
 - the potential for corrupt conduct.
- ICAC's Guidance has been adopted by the Office of Local Government as a guideline under section 23A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

What will this mean for council?

- Councils are required under section 23A of the Act to consider ICAC's Guidance when exercising their functions.

Key points

- ICAC's Operation Galley demonstrated that overseas travel poses corruption risks for councillors. These risks include:
 - creating perceptions that development proposals have government backing,
 - misrepresenting or misunderstanding a councillor's ability to influence development outcomes,
 - taking advantage of a lack of detailed understanding about NSW planning processes among foreign parties,
 - being placed in situations that are personally compromising or likely to lead to conflicts of interest,
 - being offered gifts, benefits and hospitality, with an expectation of reciprocity,
 - making inappropriate commitments regarding developments or being perceived as having made promises, and
 - harming Australia's reputation as a reliable trading and investment partner.

Where to go for further information

- ICAC's Guidance for councillors on corruption risks associated with overseas travel is available on OLG's website [here](#) and on ICAC's website.
- For further information please contact the Council Governance Team on 02 4482 4100 or by email at olg@olg.nsw.gov.au.
- For further information on managing corruption risks or to report corrupt conduct, contact ICAC at 02 8281 5999 or toll free on 1800 463 909 (for callers outside Sydney), by email at advice@icac.nsw.gov.au for advice, or via ICAC's [website](#) to report corrupt conduct.

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