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# Police Accountability

## SUBMISSION

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# INTRODUCTION

The Law Institute of Victoria (LIV) is Victoria's peak body for lawyers with more than 19,500 people working and studying in the law in Victoria, interstate and overseas. At its core is its purpose to foster the rule of law and to promote improvements and developments in the law as it affects the public of Victoria. Accordingly the LIV has a long history of contributing to, shaping and developing effective state and federal legislation, and has undertaken extensive advocacy and education of the public and of lawyers on various law reform and policy issues.

International Human Rights Law imposes an obligation on States to 'investigate allegations of [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights] violations promptly, thoroughly and effectively through independent and impartial bodies. However, as previously raised by the LIV, 'Victoria's inadequate response to complaints of misconduct by police has been a recurring issue in Victoria for decades and is damaging to community trust in police, but also public confidence in societal institutions'.<sup>1</sup>

The LIV welcomes this opportunity to address the terms of reference to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission Committee ("IBACC") Inquiry into the External Oversight of Police Corruption and Misconduct in Victoria. A transparent and independent police accountability system is a vitally important public policy issue and is essential to the development and maintenance of public confidence in the integrity of state institutions and the protection of human rights.

## International Human Rights Law

Article 2(3) of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) places an obligation on the State to ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms are violated shall have an effective remedy. In the 2014 decision in *Horvath v Australia* ("*Horvath*"), a case involving abuse of a Victorian woman, the United Nations Human Rights Committee found that the disciplinary investigations by the Ethical Standards Department of Victoria Police and Office of Police Integrity (predecessor to IBAC) did not meet the requirements of an effective remedy under the ICCPR. Rather, an effective remedy requires each State Party to ensure that investigations of ICCPR violations are investigated promptly, thoroughly, effectively and by an independent and impartial body.<sup>2</sup>

This submission will address the terms of reference in light of these guiding principles.

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<sup>1</sup> Law Institute of Victoria et al, Joint letter to Premier Napthine, Re: United Nations Human Rights Communication No. 1885/2009 (*Horvath v Australia*), 24 July 2014, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Committee, General Comment No.31, The Nature of the General Legal Obligation Imposed on State Parties to the Covenant, 80th sess, UN Doc CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13 (29 March 2004) [15].

# THE CURRENT SYSTEM

## Independence

Pursuant to the *Victoria Police Act 2013*, Victoria Police can receive complaints about the conduct of a police officer or a protective service officer.<sup>3</sup> A complaint received by a police officer or a protective service officer must be investigated by the Chief Commissioner unless the subject-matter of the complaint could constitute a protected disclosure complaint.<sup>4</sup> The Chief Commissioner is required to provide details of the complaint and investigation to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission ('IBAC').<sup>5</sup>

All complaints received by Victoria Police are referred to the Victoria Police Professional Standards Command ('PSC') for triaging.<sup>6</sup> Complaints are categorised by PSC and then either allocated to a PSC investigation team or referred to a region, command or department for investigation.<sup>7</sup> Following investigation, the Chief Commissioner must inform the complainant of the results of the investigation and of the action taken.<sup>8</sup>

Since the matter of *Horvath*, IBAC has taken over the role of the Office of Police Integrity. The *Victoria Police Act 2013* and the *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011* ('IBAC Act') allow for complaints to be made to IBAC.<sup>9</sup> IBAC receives complaints about both public sector corruption and police misconduct, and investigates those complaints. IBAC's functions include ensuring that police officers and protective service officers have regard to human rights in the Charter.<sup>10</sup> However, IBAC must refer a complaint to Victoria Police if IBAC considers that the subject matter of the complaint is relevant to the performance of the duties and functions or the exercise of powers of the Victoria Police, and that it would be more appropriate for the complaint to be investigated by them.<sup>11</sup> In practice, approximately 90 per cent of

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<sup>3</sup> *Victoria Police Act 2013* (Vic) s 167.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid* s 169(1).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid* s 169(2), 169(3).

<sup>6</sup> Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission, *Audit of Victoria Police Complaints Handling Systems at Regional Level* (September 2016) 11.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>8</sup> *Victoria Police Act 2013* (Vic) s 172.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid* s 167.

<sup>10</sup> *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011* (Vic) s 15(3)(b)(iii).

<sup>11</sup> *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011* (Vic) s 73.

matters are referred from IBAC to Victoria Police,<sup>12</sup> making the vast majority of complaints of police misconduct, including allegations of unlawful or criminal conduct, disciplinary breaches or human rights abuses in breach of the Charter, being investigated by the police.<sup>13</sup>

To ensure integrity and compliance with international law, it is the LIV's view that all complaints of police misconduct should be investigated independently of Victoria Police. The LIV support the position put forward by the Police Accountability Project that the investigating body must not only be institutionally independent but also practically, culturally and politically independent.<sup>14</sup>

As noted in the LIV submission to the *Community Consultation on IBAC, the Victorian Ombudsman and the Auditor-General*,<sup>15</sup> there are potential issues with IBAC's current funding model of grant as it is facilitated by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.<sup>16</sup> The LIV notes that it may be more appropriate for a more independent funding model, directly through Parliament.

The LIV recognises that IBAC has similar staff capacity as the former Office of Police Integrity; however, it has a much broader jurisdiction to cover public sector corruption. Further, Victoria Police number have increased by over 1,000 full time police officers since IBAC commenced operation.<sup>17</sup> The LIV notes that the final *Report of the 2015 Review of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* includes a recommendation that the Government ensure that IBAC has capacity to investigate allegations of serious human rights abuses by police and protective services officers (Recommendation 26).<sup>18</sup>

In order to address the apparent capacity issues and to increase the independent investigation of police misconduct, the LIV suggests providing IBAC with additional resources to allow it to prioritise this function. Additional funding would need to be accompanied by cultural change, as LIV members report that the current culture at IBAC is that it is an anti-corruption body, not a complaints body, and this affects the priority IBAC places on investigating police misconduct.

Alternatively, the LIV suggests establishing a new, independent body to investigate complaints of misconduct.

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<sup>12</sup> In 2014 IBAC's Deputy Commissioner stated that approximately 90 per cent of matters were referred back to Victoria Police, leaving 10 per cent to be investigated by IBAC: 'Policing the police' (2014) 11 *Law Institute Journal* 14.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Police Accountability Project, *Independent Investigation of Complaints against the Police: Policy Briefing Paper* 11.

<sup>15</sup> Law Institute of Victoria, *Community Consultation on IBAC, the Victorian Ombudsman and the Auditor-General* (2016).

<sup>16</sup> Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee, Parliament of Victoria, *Strengthening Victoria's key anti-corruption agencies?* (2016) 83-4.

<sup>17</sup> Compare Victoria Police, Annual Report (2013) 11 and Victoria Police, Employees by Location at June 2017 <available at: [http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media\\_ID=121069](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=121069)>

<sup>18</sup> Independent Reviewer Michael Brett Young, *From Commitment to Culture: The 2015 Review of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (September 2015) 112.

## Effectiveness

A system of police oversight should allow for complaints to be effectively and thoroughly investigated. This involves the collecting of sufficient evidence to allow investigators to make fully informed findings in response to the complaint.

In 2016, IBAC's *Audit of Victoria Police complaints handling systems at regional level* ('IBAC report') found that only nine per cent of the files audited were determined to be substantiated.<sup>19</sup> The IBAC report also found that 14 per cent of total files contained recorded determinations that, in the auditors' view, were not appropriate.<sup>20</sup> According to the report, the determination category with the highest proportion of findings that were inappropriate was 'not substantiated'.<sup>21</sup> It was the view of IBAC that a number of files contained information that suggested a determination of 'substantiated' was appropriate, however the recorded finding did not reflect this.<sup>22</sup>

The percentage of files determined to be substantiated is lower than that in other jurisdictions. For example, the New South Wales Police Force reported that in 2014-15 and 2015-16 17 per cent and 16.67 per cent of complaints, respectively, were sustained.<sup>23</sup> In contrast, substantiation rates in jurisdictions that have an independent police oversight body have a higher substantiation rate. In 2016-2017 the Northern Ireland Police Ombudsman recorded a 22 per cent substantiation rate and the New York Civilian Complaints Review Board recorded 23 per cent.<sup>24</sup>

28 per cent of the complaints audited by IBAC and made by a Victoria Police employee included at least one allegation that was substantiated.<sup>25</sup> This higher rate is consistent with other regions. The IBAC report notes that this may reflect that police are more likely to report misconduct in situations where there is sufficient evidence of the wrongdoing. However, it may also reflect the possibility that investigators give greater weight to complaints made by police than by members of the public.

In addition, the IBAC report found that 17 per cent of audited files (excluding those classified as local management resolution incidents, which are incidents that involve lower level matters such as customer service issues that potentially involve minor breaches of rules and procedures) involved an apparent failure to consider relevant evidence.<sup>26</sup> Evidence most commonly not considered was CCTV footage, running

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<sup>19</sup> Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission, above n 6, 60.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid 65.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> New South Wales Police Force, *Annual Report 2014-15* (2015) 94; New South Wales Police Force, *Annual Report 2015-16* (2016) 95.

<sup>24</sup> Northern Ireland Police Ombudsman, *Annual Report 2016-2017* (June, 2017) 4.

<sup>25</sup> Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission, above n 6, 65.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid 55.

sheets and medical records.<sup>27</sup> Further, witnesses were not contacted by investigating officers in 34% of investigations.<sup>28</sup>

The LIV is concerned that these findings reflect an inadequate approach to investigating complaints. An effective system of oversight should involve the consideration of all relevant evidence, particularly evidence that can be as persuasive as CCTV footage, and should ensure through checks and balances that the determination made is informed by the evidence available. Though determinations may ordinarily involve an aspect of subjectivity, an oversight body should guarantee that the determination made is the one that is on balance most likely.

## Promptness

Managing complaints in a prompt manner is essential for delivering effective outcomes. Failing to do so can compromise an investigator's ability to adequately manage the process of handling the complaint and to make a fully informed finding based on all of the relevant evidence.<sup>29</sup> Significant delays may also impact upon the public's confidence in Victoria Police's ability to oversee the complaints system, and may give the appearance of a reluctance to investigate.<sup>30</sup>

The LIV has concerns regarding the promptness of the handling of complaints. The IBAC report shows that 11 per cent of files took more than a month to classify into a category of complaint.<sup>31</sup> Once categorised, the investigation and resolution of many complaints took longer than the allocated timeframe (determined by the category of complaint).<sup>32</sup> Overall, 32 per cent of complaints were overdue, with 80 per cent of the overdue files being more than one week late and 68 per cent more than two weeks late.<sup>33</sup>

## Transparency

It is important that any police oversight system is transparent. Transparency ensures that the procedures and decision-making processes of the system are open to public scrutiny and therefore encourages accountability.

The IBAC report noted that 29 per cent of audited files did not include all relevant documentation.<sup>34</sup> Some of the most significant issues relating to record keeping, as found by the IBAC report, were the failure of

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> IBAC, Audit of Victoria Police complaints handling systems at regional level: summary report (2016), p 13.

<sup>29</sup> Council of Europe: Commissioner for Human Rights, *Opinion of the Commissioner for Human Rights: Concerning Independent and Effective Determination of Complaints Against the Police*, 12 March 2009, CommDH(2009)4 13.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission, above n 6, 40.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid 41.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid 43.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid 88.

investigators to include in the complaint file information such as CCTV footage, material that was referenced by determinations, and contact made with the subject officers and/or complainants.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to record keeping failures, there is little data on the complaints system that is released and available to the public. There are further problems for complainants who wish to access documents related to their complaint through the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*, when complaints are made initially to IBAC and then referred to Victoria Police. This is due to the operation of s 194 of the IBAC Act. Though LIV acknowledges that the *Freedom of Information Amendment (Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner) Bill 2016*, which has been passed and assented to, amends this section for the purpose of addressing this issue, the LIV continues to hold concerns that the amendment does not sufficiently address the problem. Particularly, the LIV is concerned that complainants may still have trouble accessing documents where their complaint has been investigated by Victoria Police but where nevertheless the investigation may still be able to be considered conducted under the IBAC Act.<sup>36</sup>

## Victim-centred Process

Involving the victim in the investigation process safeguards the true interests he or she has in the complaints system.<sup>37</sup> In order to ensure that the oversight system is serving those who are the victim of police misconduct, it is important for complainants to be properly consulted and informed of developments throughout the investigation of his or her complaint.<sup>38</sup>

The LIV has concerns regarding the level of communication between Victoria Police and complainants. IBAC's 2016 audit found that the complainant was not contacted in 16 per cent of files that involved an identifiable complainant.<sup>39</sup> The audit found that the most identifiable reasons for not contacting complainants were that contact was not considered necessary, the complainant declined to participate, and the complainant could not be located.<sup>40</sup>

The LIV hosted a Police Accountability Roundtable in July 2017 inviting various stakeholders and members of the legal sector. Attendees heard from individual complainants who expressed dissatisfaction with the system and the level of communication between investigators and complainants. One complainant informed the roundtable that there was a lack of transparency regarding the processing of her complaint as she did not receive updates regarding the progress of the complaint handling. The complainant suggested that better communication throughout the entire complaints handling process would have addressed some of the grievances she had as a result of the conduct subject to the complaint.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Law Institute of Victoria, *Amendments to s 194 Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011 by the Freedom of Information Amendment (Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner) Bill 2016* (12 August 2016)

<sup>37</sup> Council of Europe: Commissioner of Human Rights, above n 27, 14.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission, above n 6, 48.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.



Aside from ensuring that the interests of victims are protected, an increase in communication between victims and police can also encourage the resolution of complaints at earlier stages and through alternative means. Currently, section 170(2) of the *Victoria Police Act* allows the Chief Commissioner to attempt to resolve a complaint by conciliation.<sup>41</sup> Conciliation is a constructive means of resolving disputes and provides all parties with the opportunity to voice their concerns and communicate their views.<sup>42</sup> Ideally, conciliation results in a resolution and prevents the escalation of complaints.<sup>43</sup> While there are great benefits to conciliation, the LIV is concerned that where a complaint is classified as a customer service complaint the complainant is sent for informal conciliation. It is the LIV's view that conciliation should be offered as an option for complainants provided that complainants give proper informed consent. The persistent failure of the current system to promote communication with the complainant needs to be rectified by promoting a system that is victim-centred.

The LIV notes that a complaint mechanism will never be effective if persons with grievances are unaware of the mechanism, how to make a complaint and the subsequent investigation / complaint resolution procedure. The LIV is concerned that IBAC's role in overseeing police misconduct is not well understood by members of the public. IBAC's name is also a problem- "Independent broad based anti-corruption commission" does not immediately indicate to the public that it has a role investigating police misconduct. Further, IBAC's website does not clearly identify its role as an oversight body for police misconduct. LIV submits that inadequate promotion and education of IBAC's role places an additional barrier to accessing the current police complaints system. The *United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* provides some guidance on this matter. Principle 31 states: In order to ensure their effectiveness, non-judicial grievance mechanisms, both State-based and non-State-based, should be:

- (a) Legitimate: enabling trust from the stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended, and being accountable for the fair conduct of grievance processes;
- (b) Accessible: being known to all stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended, and providing adequate assistance for those who may face particular barriers to access;
- (c) Predictable: providing a clear and known procedure with an indicative time frame for each stage, and clarity on the types of process and outcome available and means of monitoring implementation;
- (d) Equitable: seeking to ensure that aggrieved parties have reasonable access to sources of information, advice and expertise necessary to engage in a grievance process on fair, informed and respectful terms; [...]<sup>44</sup>

The LIV recommends that the current police complaint system needs to be made more accessible by requiring Victoria Police to provide adequate information about IBAC's role at the time of the initial complaint/enquiry. The LIV further recommends that information on police complaint process is clearly communicated on the IBAC website.

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<sup>41</sup> *Victoria Police Act 2013* s 170(2).

<sup>42</sup> Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission, above n 6, 58.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, Principles

# BEST PRACTICE MODELS

## Northern Ireland

The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland is headed by the Police Ombudsman who is appointed by Her Majesty and serves a period of seven years.<sup>45</sup>

Under the *Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998* all complaints about the conduct of police officers are to be made to the Ombudsman or, if made to a member of the police force, the Northern Ireland Policing Board, the Director of Justice, or the Department of Justice, are to be immediately referred to the Ombudsman.<sup>46</sup> The Office is therefore able to investigate complaints regarding the use of force by officers, allegations that officers failed to do their jobs properly, and that they were rude during the course of their duties. The Police Ombudsman also investigates all discharges of police firearms, all fatal road traffic collisions involving police officers, and any death that may have occurred as a result of the actions of a police officer. The system ensures independence as all complaints are prima facie to be dealt with by the Ombudsman, and complaints regarding less serious matters can only be referred to the police if the complainant consents.<sup>47</sup>

Once a complaint has been investigated, the Police Ombudsman may recommend that a police officer or employee be prosecuted or disciplined, or that they should receive further training.<sup>48</sup> Alternatively, the Police Ombudsman may decide that there is insufficient evidence to uphold the complaint.<sup>49</sup> All relevant parties are informed of the outcome once it is reached, and in cases of public interest a general statement about the findings of the complaint may be released.

The Office's most recent Annual Report 2016/2017 notes that public awareness of the Office was at 88 per cent for the year, and that 85 per cent of those aware of the Office were also aware of the Office's independence.<sup>50</sup> The Office maintained a level of 75 per cent of complainants who felt that they had been dealt with fairly by the Office, although only 55 per cent of complainants thought their complaint was dealt with independently.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998* (UK) sch 3 paras 1(1), 1(4).

<sup>46</sup> *Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998* (UK) s 52(1).

<sup>47</sup> The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, *Complaints* <<https://policeombudsman.org/Complaints/English>>.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, *Annual Report 2016/2017* (2017) 15.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid* 13.

The Annual Report also noted that from October 2016 to 31 March 2017 94 per cent of all cases dealt with by the Initial Complaints and Investigations Team were completed within 90 days, which exceeded the set target of 75 per cent of complaints.<sup>52</sup> The 2015/16 Complainant Satisfaction Report showed that 48 per cent of complainants were satisfied with the overall time it took to resolve a complaint, and an additional 17 per cent neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.<sup>53</sup>

The Complainant Satisfaction Report also showed that complainants are more often than not satisfied with the quality of communication with the Ombudsman.<sup>54</sup> Sixty per cent of complainants surveyed were satisfied with how clearly the process was explained, and 57 per cent with the clarity of correspondence.<sup>55</sup> The report also noted that 47 per cent of complainants were satisfied with the frequency of updates, while a further 19 per cent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.<sup>56</sup>

While it is acknowledged that Northern Ireland's particular history of conflict was a significant factor in the establishment of an independent body monitoring police conduct,<sup>57</sup> the Office is nevertheless a leading example for other jurisdictions of an independent, prompt, transparent, and victim-centred system of police oversight. The substantive independence of the Ombudsman has promoted public confidence in the oversight system, and the Office delivers the vast majority of resolutions within the allocated timeframes. The Ombudsman encourages transparency, as it is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 2000*<sup>58</sup> and has committed to providing the public with as much information as it can,<sup>59</sup> and, given the Office annually reports on complainant satisfaction, it shows a desire to ensure that complainants are well-served by the system.

## Manitoba, Canada

The Law Enforcement Review Agency ('LERA') is an independent, non-police agency established in 1985 under the *Law Enforcement Review Act 1985*.<sup>60</sup> The Agency investigates public complaints about police,

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid 16.

<sup>53</sup> The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, *Complainant Satisfaction Report 2015/16* (2016) 6.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Committee on the Administration of Justice, *Human Rights and Dealing with Historic Cases - A Review of the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland* (June 2011) 16.

<sup>58</sup> *Freedom of Information Act 2000* (UK) pt VII.

<sup>59</sup>; The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, *Requesting Information* <<https://policeombudsman.org/About-Us/Access-to-Information/Requesting-Information-the-Freedom-of-Information>>.

<sup>60</sup> *Law Enforcement Review Act RSM 1985*.

however it only deals with complaints about municipal or local police incidents arising out of performance of police duties and does not investigate criminal matters.<sup>61</sup>

The Agency may investigate allegations that on duty municipal or local police officers have committed any of the actions under s 29 of the *Law Enforcement Review Act* ('LER Act'), including abusing authority (for example, by making an arrest without reasonable grounds or using excessive force), making a false statement, failing to exercise discretion or restraint in the use and care of firearms, and failing to help where there is a clear danger to the safety of people or property.<sup>62</sup> Any complaint of misconduct that falls outside of the LER Act is investigated by the police.

The Agency has professional investigators who interview witnesses, take statements and review reports such as official police records and medical reports. The Agency make all the inquiries they believe are necessary to uncover relevant evidence. After an investigation, the LER Act requires that the Commissioner screen the complaint to decide if any further action should be taken.<sup>63</sup> Further action will not be taken if the complaint is outside of the Agency's scope, is frivolous or vexatious, has been abandoned by the complainant, or there is not enough evidence to justify referring the complaint to a provincial judge for a public hearing.<sup>64</sup>

LER Act provides an example of an independent body with a clear and broad scope for receiving and investigating complaints of police misconduct.

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<sup>61</sup> Law Enforcement Review Agency, *Annual Report 2015* (2015) 9.

<sup>62</sup> *Law Enforcement Review Act* RSM 1985 s 29.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid* s 13(1).

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid* s 13(1).

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Having regard to international human rights law that necessitates thorough, effective, and prompt investigations of complaints, as well as best practice standards developed in Canada and Northern Ireland, the LIV recommends:

- Providing IBAC with additional resources to allow it to prioritise its function as an independent body investigating police misconduct.
- The additional resources should be invested in a new and dedicated investigations arm within IBAC. The additional resourcing must be accompanied by a cultural change from an anti-corruption investigative body to a complaints body.
- Alternatively, a new independent body should be established for the purpose of investigating complaints of police misconduct.
- The new complaints system should increase transparency by releasing more meaningful data to the public which indicates how the system is operating.
- Ensuring that investigation documents can be accessed through Freedom of Information legislation.
- Requiring greater communication between investigators and complainants. Particularly, in cases where a complainant is identifiable, requiring initial contact, a clear explanation of the process of the investigation, and regular updates.
- Utilising alternative means for resolving disputes, such as the conciliation process in section 170(2) of the *Victoria Police Act*.
- Renaming IBAC to greater reflect its role in the complaints process and raise public awareness.
- Providing IBAC with additional resources to allow it to promote and explain its role.