



SENATOR THE HON JAMES MCGRATH
ASSISTANT MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER

Reference: MC16-071156

Mayor Troy Pickard
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

ALGA MAIL
ITEM No:
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FILE No:

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your letter dated 29 August 2016 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP regarding the views of the Australian Local Government Association on the establishment of a federal integrity body. I have been asked to respond on behalf of the Prime Minister.

I note your advice that the National General Assembly of Local Government has passed a resolution in support of a federal anti-corruption agency.

The Commonwealth Government takes a multi-faceted, multi-agency approach to combating corruption, under which a range of agencies play a role in preventing, detecting and responding to corruption. This distribution of responsibility is a great strength in Australia's approach to corruption, as it creates a strong system of checks and balances and avoids vesting power in a single agency.

Under this approach, a number of agencies have specific oversight functions, including the Attorney-General's Department, which oversees criminal legislation and corruption policy, and the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office, which handles complaints against public officials and carries out specialised oversight tasks.

Agencies with detection and investigation functions include the Australian Federal Police (AFP), which investigates serious and complex crimes against Australian laws including fraud and corruption, and the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, which detects, disrupts and deters corrupt conduct in Australian law enforcement agencies.

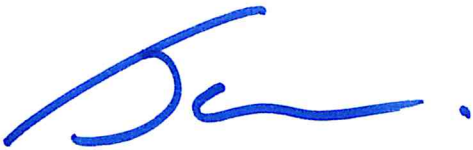
In July 2014, the Government established the Fraud and Anti-Corruption Centre within the AFP. The Centre brings together a range of Commonwealth agencies to assess, prioritise and respond to serious fraud and corruption matters.

In April 2016, the Government provided an additional \$15 million to the Centre to enhance its capacity to detect and investigate corruption, bribery and serious economic crime.

The Government does not plan to create a single federal anti-corruption agency. The Government instead continues to look at options for strengthening our existing multi-agency anti-corruption framework. Many countries identified as some of the least corrupt in the world do not have national anti-corruption commissions.

Combatting corruption is a priority for the Government and Australia is consistently ranked by the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index as one of the least corrupt countries in the world.

Yours sincerely



JAMES MCGRATH

10 / 11 / 2016