



PUBLIC TRUSTEE EVALUATION

9 March 2017

In April 2016 a report was made to the Office for Public Integrity (OPI) alleging that a public officer employed by the Public Trustee had abused her position to unlawfully benefit from one or more deceased estates.

This matter was assessed as raising a potential matter of corruption in public administration, and the Commissioner determined to conduct a joint investigation with the anti-corruption branch of SAPOL. Concurrently, the Public Trustee began an audit of all deceased estate files administered by the public officer. The audit and investigation uncovered further alleged abuse of public office and aggravated theft, resulting in additional charges being laid against the public officer.

This morning Commissioner Lander met with the Public Trustee and advised her that he will conduct an evaluation of the practices, policies and procedures of her agency to assist in preventing or minimising corruption, misconduct and maladministration in public administration. The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with section 40 of the *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012* (ICAC Act) and at the completion of the evaluation, the Commissioner will provide a report to both Houses of Parliament. “I have advised the Attorney-General of my intention to conduct the evaluation and he will provide additional resources to assist with that process,” said Mr Lander.

The evaluation of the practices, policies and procedures of the Public Trustee will commence before the end of this month and will proceed with the aim to have it completed as quickly as possible. Until that time the Commissioner does not intend to make any further comment on the particulars and progress of the evaluation.