

Public Hearings of the NSW Government - Inquiry into NSW Government's use and management of consulting services

The NSW Government Committee held hearings in June, July and August 2023. Future hearings are scheduled for September 2023.

The table below sets out information on the Committee's public hearings held to date. Links to the transcripts are provided for information purposes only.

Public Hearing Date	Witnesses (organisation)	Transcript
15 June 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditor-General for NSW • NSW Health • NSW Procurement • NSW Treasury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discussion focused on the costs of consulting spending and the processes undertaken by departments in procuring consultants. • Some discussion on whether ex-Big 4 partners and staff are on government-related Boards or work for government departments or agencies. This questioning aimed to determine if there were potential conflicts of interest or bias in selecting consultants to use. • Page 27, para 1-3 – discussion on perceptions of independence and conflicts of interest based on the example of Kristen Stubbins (PwC) being on a local health district board that awarded work to PwC. The discussion did not confirm a conflict but rather the perception that there could be. • NSW Procurement (pages 36 -37) outlined three actions regarding Govt dealings with PwC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All PwC Staff on any new engagement must be cleared from being implicated or involved in the Commonwealth matter. Report to NSW procurement once a month to reconfirm the staff status. ○ Review internal performance and management services schemes that all suppliers must abide by. ○ Provision of tax services by PwC is to be suspended for 3 months pending further review & outcomes of other inquiries. • Comment by the Chair (4th para on page 37) about the PwC situation, "...that you can put all of the provisions in place that you like, but you can't actually stop people from doing the wrong thing without more structural measures." • Page 40 – Discussion on the need for monitoring and enforcement (especially the first para attributed to the Chair) and whether that happens with the NSW Procurement Board. <p>Full details in this link: 15 June 2023 Uncorrected transcript</p>

<p>26 June 23</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Eastern Sydney Local Health District Board (SESLHDB) • Western Sydney Local Health District Board • PwC Australia • Sydney Local Health District • Adjunct Professor Mary Foley AM (Former Secretary & director-general of NSW Health) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with SESLHDB initially focused on Kristin Stubbins's role on the Board while she was still working at PwC (pages 2-7) and then on how items were recorded in minutes about the conflicts (12-16) <p>Discussion with organisations focused on the process of appointing consultants and the related policies and procedures, and the conflicts of interest governance processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opening statement by Kristen Stubbins (page 25) contains the announcement of the new CEO and divesting of Federal and State Government consulting businesses. • A question was asked of PwC whether other firms should follow the model of diverging Govt consulting businesses (page 27 – 11th para) – the response was no comment. The large focus of the discussion was on the new entity taking on PwC's Govt consulting business. • A question was asked about PwC Practices for confidentiality arrangements and codes of conduct (bottom of pages 34 – 35). The response noted the Code of conduct, training & confirmations from partners & staff. <p>Full details in this link: 26 June 2023 Uncorrected Transcript</p>
<p>30 June 23</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) • NSW Ambulance • Health Infrastructure • eHealth/NSW Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAC's opening statement notes that the government has a supplier code of conduct, but awareness and enforcement should be a focus (page 2, para 6). Paras 6, 7 & 8 (which continue onto page 3) set out ICAC views on controls that should be in place when using consultants and penalties that could be imposed for unethical behaviour. • NSW Ambulance talked about the use of consultants and why it was cost-effective for the organisation to use the knowledge and expertise of consultants rather than employ staff. • Health Infrastructure discussed their use of consultants and how knowledge was transferred from consultants to staff (e.g., upskilling). • eHealth talked about the process for assessing consultants' work and the level of consultants they use. <p>Full details in this link: 30 June 2023 Uncorrected Transcript</p>

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28 July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academics from Macquarie University & the University of Wollongong • CA ANZ • Australia Institute • Per Capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Analysis to be provided to Board in due course.] • Full details in this link: 28 July 2023 Uncorrected Transcript
8 August 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Public Integrity • University of Sydney • Representatives from the Treasury and a range of NSW procurement Boards • APA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Analysis to be provided to Board in due course.] • Full details in this link: 8 August 2023 Uncorrected Transcript
9 August 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Analysis to be provided to Board in due course.] • Full details in this link: 9 August 2023 Uncorrected Transcript

APESB Technical Staff will provide updates on the July, August and September 2023 public hearings in due course.