

Thursday 23 February 2017

## **Investigation into the conduct of a Casino Boolangle Local Aboriginal Land Council CEO and administrative officer**

### **ICAC FINDINGS**

The ICAC found that, from about late 2010 to about September 2012, Linda Stewart engaged in serious corrupt conduct by dishonestly exercising her official functions as Casino Boolangle Local Aboriginal Land Council (CBLALC) chief executive officer (CEO) to deceive CBLALC board members to sign cheques on the basis that they were for legitimate CBLALC purposes, which she then cashed to obtain money from the CBLALC for herself and CBLALC administrative officer Veronica Skinner, to which she knew neither she nor Ms Skinner were entitled.

The Commission also found that, from about late 2010 to about October 2011, Ms Skinner engaged in serious corrupt conduct by dishonestly exercising her official functions as a CBLALC employee to deceive CBLALC board members to sign cheques on the basis that they were for legitimate CBLALC purposes, which she then cashed to obtain money from the CBLALC for herself and Ms Stewart, to which she knew neither she nor Ms Stewart were entitled.

### **ICAC RECOMMENDATIONS**

The ICAC is of the opinion that the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions should be obtained with respect to the prosecution of Ms Stewart and Ms Skinner for offences of fraud pursuant to section 192E of the *Crimes Act 1900* or, in the alternative, for offences of larceny by a servant pursuant to section 156 of the *Crimes Act*.

### **CORRUPTION PREVENTION**

The Commission has not made any corruption prevention recommendations in this report. The evidence obtained during the course of this investigation will help to inform the ICAC's forthcoming report on the governance of Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Commission's investigation began after it received a report from the NSW Police Force in August 2014 notifying it of suspected corrupt conduct involving Ms Stewart and Ms Skinner. The police report attached a letter from the auditors engaged by the CBLALC, which noted that in the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012, a number of cheques totalling over \$77,000 had been drawn and cashed without supporting documentation such as an invoice. There was also some evidence that false invoices had been created to provide justification for drawing some of the cheques.

The Commission held a public inquiry, as part of the investigation, on 4 and 5 May 2016. Former Commissioner the Hon Megan Latham presided at the public inquiry, at which four witnesses gave evidence and a number of witness statements were tendered as evidence. The report is available on the ICAC website at [www.icac.nsw.gov.au](http://www.icac.nsw.gov.au).

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