

Community Attitudes  
to Corruption  
and the ICAC  
1996

May 1997



INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

ISSN 1324-0382

© May 1997— Copyright in this work is held by the Independent Commission Against Corruption. Division 3 of the *Commonwealth Copyright Act 1968* recognises that **limited** further use of this material can occur for the purposes of 'fair dealing', for example; study, research or criticism etc. However, if you wish to make use of this material other than as permitted by the *Copyright Act 1968*, please write to the Independent Commission Against Corruption at GPO Box 500, Sydney NSW 2001.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	i
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 How community views were obtained .....	1
1.2 Context for the 1996 survey .....	2
2. ATTITUDES TO CORRUPTION .....	3
2.1 Who is the wrongdoer in a corrupt situation? .....	3
2.2 People's perceptions of what is 'corrupt' .....	4
3. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR WORKPLACE BEHAVIOUR: COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES .....	6
3.1 Perceptions of corruption in the public and private sectors .....	6
3.2 Perceptions of differences in workplace behaviour in the public sector and in private business .....	9
4. PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION .....	14
4.1 Perceptions of the effects of specific corrupt situations .....	16
5. ATTITUDES TO REPORTING CORRUPTION .....	20
6. AWARENESS OF AND SUPPORT FOR THE ICAC .....	23
6.1 Knowledge of the ICAC .....	23
6.2 Perceptions of the success of the ICAC .....	23
6.3 Support for the work of the ICAC .....	26
7. AWARENESS OF THE ROLE OF THE ICAC .....	29
8. MEDIA REPORTS ABOUT THE ICAC .....	30
8.1 Impressions about the ICAC from media reports .....	31
Appendix 1 .....	34
Appendix 2 .....	36

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1:	Perceptions of corruption as a problem for the community . . . . .	3
Table 2:	Perceptions of who is the wrongdoer in the 'waiting list' scenario . . .	4
Table 3:	Perceptions of corruption . . . . .	5
Table 4:	Corruption versus 'smart business': Public and private sector differences . . . . .	6
Table 5:	Respondent views about whether or not differences exist between corruption in the public and private sectors . . . . .	7
Table 6:	Reasons why public sector corruption is the same as or different to corruption in private business . . . . .	8
Table 7:	Perception that corruption affects respondent or their family . . . . .	14
Table 8:	Ways in which corruption is perceived as affecting people and their families . . . . .	15
Table 9:	Perceived effects from bribing a driving test examiner . . . . .	17
Table 10:	Perceived effects of bribing a health inspector . . . . .	18
Table 11:	Perceived effects of a public servant using work time to organise a private catering business . . . . .	19
Table 12:	Attitudes to reporting corruption: 1996 data . . . . .	20
Table 13:	Attitudes to reporting corruption: Trends over time . . . . .	21
Table 14:	Comparative data over time of respondents able to correctly name the ICAC . . . . .	23
Table 15:	Perceived success of the ICAC in exposing some of the corruption in NSW . . . . .	24
Table 16:	Perceived success of the ICAC in reducing the level of corruption in NSW . . . . .	24
Table 17:	Reasons given for <i>Unsuccessful</i> or <i>Don't know</i> responses . . . . .	26
Table 18:	Support for the work of the ICAC . . . . .	26
Table 19:	Reasons why the ICAC is or is not considered to be a good thing . . .	28

Table 20:	Misconceptions of the ICAC's role . . . . .	29
Table 21:	Identified media reports about ICAC activities . . . . .	30
Table 22:	Awareness of the Glebe Morgue investigation . . . . .	31
Table 23:	Impressions of the ICAC from media reports . . . . .	33
Figure 1:	Perception that the scenario is <i>unacceptable</i> in the public sector or private business . . . . .	10
Figure 2:	Perception that the scenario is <i>corrupt</i> in the public sector or private business . . . . .	11
Figure 3:	Percentage of respondents who would be affected by a corrupt situation . . . . .	16

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1996 community attitude survey was conducted with a random sample of 511 people over the age of 18 years, from across New South Wales. The survey explored people's general attitudes to corruption, particularly in relation to public and private sector workplaces. People were asked about their attitudes to reporting corruption, their perceptions of the effects of corruption, and how big a problem corruption was for the community. Awareness of and support for the ICAC was also explored.

Overall, responses to the survey provide important insights into people's perceptions of corruption. This information is used to inform the ICAC's corruption prevention and education programs which are part of the statutory functions of the ICAC. What is particularly noteworthy about responses to this survey is the lack of statistical difference in the way people see things. It appears that their views are remarkably similar regardless of gender, age, employment status, or area of residence.

### Understanding corruption and its effects

There has been a reduction in the percentage of respondents who think that corruption is a *major* problem for the community (58% in 1995, 49% in 1996), and a rise in the percentage who think that corruption is a *minor* problem for the community (38% in 1995, 43% in 1996) (see Section 2). In contrast, there has been a rise in the percentage of respondents who think they and their family are affected by corruption (46% in 1994, 56% in 1996) (see Section 4).

When asked to comment about the effects of several hypothetical scenarios involving corrupt behaviour, respondents distinguished between different types of corrupt behaviour and how direct the impact of that behaviour would be on them (see Section 4). They also made clear, strong links between the corrupt acts and any likely effects they would have on them or their family.

### Acceptable workplace behaviour

One of the most revealing sets of responses to this survey concerns *differences* in perceptions about what is acceptable and/or corrupt behaviour in the public sector workplace and what is acceptable and/or corrupt behaviour in private business. When presented with three separate hypothetical scenarios about situations that could arise in many workplaces, it was evident that people do distinguish between different types of behaviour and make separate judgements about behaviour being *acceptable* or *unacceptable*, or, *corrupt* or *not corrupt*. They also make separate, considered judgements about the standards of behaviour they expect from the public sector workplace and the standards of behaviour they expect from private business. Respondents regarded workplace behaviour in the public sector more stringently than workplace behaviour in private business. In all three scenarios more people said the behaviour was *unacceptable* and *corrupt* in a public sector setting than in private business (see Section 3). This is despite other responses indicating that corruption is corruption wherever it occurs.

When asked if they thought that what is seen as "corruption" in the public sector is seen as "smart business" in the private sector, 57% disagreed (see Section 3). Sixty-eight per cent agreed that if workplace behaviour were seen as corrupt in the public sector then it would also be considered corrupt in private business. An even greater proportion (73%) thought the reverse was true: if behaviour were corrupt in private business then it would also be corrupt in the public sector (see Section 3).

In terms of general views about an activity being corrupt, respondents indicate that corruption is not mitigated by the number of people involved, or whether it involves personal gain, it is still a corrupt activity (see Section 2). Respondents' views are that corruption is corruption wherever it occurs (see Section 3).

### **Reporting corruption**

Responses to this section of the survey reveal a major contrast in people's attitudes. On the one hand, people appear to have very positive attitudes toward acceptance of their responsibilities to report corruption, while on the other hand, there appear to be several important issues likely to mitigate against people reporting corruption.

The majority of respondents have positive attitudes towards reporting corruption in the NSW public sector, feel they can do something about corruption (57%), and that something useful will be done if they do report it (60%). A very high percentage feel they have some responsibility to report corruption (90%), and that they know how serious corruption needs to be before reporting it (58%). In contrast however, half the respondents think there is only a slim chance of getting caught doing something corrupt at work (49%). Similarly, over half said they would not report corruption unless they had enough evidence to prove it (55%), and 76% think that if you do report corruption you will suffer for it (see Section 5).

### **Support for the ICAC and its work**

Respondent knowledge of and support for the ICAC remains extremely high, with 93% agreeing that having the ICAC is a good thing for the people of NSW (see Section 6). Responses from a small number of people indicate that there is some misunderstanding in the community about the roles of various state and federal government agencies and regulatory authorities, particularly in terms of anti-corruption activities. But this is perhaps less significant than their support for an anti-corruption body *per se*.

In terms of the success of the ICAC in exposing and reducing corruption in the NSW public sector, there was a mixed response. An increasingly high percentage of respondents (82%) thought the ICAC had been successful in *exposing* some of the corruption in NSW, and just over half (53%) thought the ICAC had been successful in *reducing* the level of corruption (see Section 6). A substantial minority responded that ICAC has been either *unsuccessful* (25%) or they are unsure whether the ICAC has been successful or not (22%) in reducing corruption. The main reasons given were that corruption was still evident in the NSW public sector therefore it had not been reduced, or, people did not know how much corruption there was in the first place, so they could not say whether it had been reduced (see Section 6).

The issues raised by these respondents, both for *reducing* and *exposing* corruption, are part of dilemma the ICAC faces in carrying out its statutory functions. For example, as the organisation continues to expose corruption in the NSW public sector, and people are more prepared to report corruption than previously was the case, members of the community may interpret this an indication that corruption is increasing, or not being reduced.

Media reports are the most common sources of information for people about the activities of the ICAC (1994 survey). As two 1996 ICAC inquiries had received a high level of coverage in the months prior to the survey (Glebe Morgue inquiry, and the inquiry into the downgrading of the position of Director-General in the Department of Community Services - the Semple matter), respondents were asked if they could remember any media stories related to the ICAC and what they had been about. Of those who could remember, most mentioned stories about the police. Thirty per cent of respondents were unable to name any media stories related to the ICAC (see Section 8). These results indicate that incidental media stories are not an effective method for providing information about the ICAC's activities to members of the public. This corroborates a similar finding in a previous survey (1994 survey).

In terms of respondent knowledge about the role of the ICAC, there are clearly a number of basic misunderstandings and misconceptions about the jurisdiction and powers of the ICAC (see Section 7). For example, nearly two-thirds of respondents are under the impression that the ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption in the private sector, even when the corruption has nothing to do with the public sector. Further, 59% of respondents think that the ICAC has the power to prosecute people, when in fact, it does not have this power. Other misunderstandings include people thinking that the ICAC is the anti-corruption body for the whole of Australia, or that it *cannot* investigate allegations of corruption against judges, magistrates, local government officials, or politicians.

The ICAC maintains a prominent profile in the media. It is likely that public opinion of the ICAC varies, influenced by media coverage at the time. In this survey, respondents expressed a reasonably positive opinion of the ICAC.



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) was established in March 1989 to expose and prevent corruption in the NSW public sector. The ICAC has three main functions: investigation, corruption prevention and education.

Since 1993, the ICAC has conducted annual community attitude surveys to explore community perceptions about a range of issues, including support for and awareness of the role of the ICAC. Information is collected through a telephone survey of members of the public. The results from the surveys are used to inform ICAC education and corruption prevention work. The 1996 survey sought information about community:

- attitudes to corruption;
- attitudes to workplace behaviour in the public and private sectors;
- perceptions of the effects of corruption;
- attitudes to reporting corruption;
- awareness of and support for the existence of the ICAC;
- awareness of the ICAC's role;
- awareness of media reports about ICAC activities and perceptions of the ICAC as a result of media reports.

### **1.1 How community views were obtained**

The 1996 survey was conducted between 15 and 30 October, with a representative sample of the NSW adult population (aged 18 years and over). A total of 511 people were interviewed. For a profile of those who were interviewed refer to Appendix 1.

The interview schedule was designed by the ICAC Research Section. (Refer to Appendix 2 for a copy of the questions asked and summary of the responses given.) The ICAC engaged Taverner Research Company to pilot and conduct the survey on its behalf. The survey was administered as a stand alone (rather than as part of a larger, omnibus) survey. The results were analysed and this report was prepared by the ICAC Research Section.

Responses to the survey questions are summarised in the following tables. Some of the comments made by respondents are quoted to further illustrate the results. Responses were also examined to ascertain whether those with different demographic characteristics (gender, location of residence, employment status, sector of employment and age) differed in their opinions. Any statistically significant differences identified have been detailed in footnotes.

One would not necessarily expect considered responses from respondents in a telephone survey. 'Off the top of the head' responses are more likely. Considering this, the rich responses given to the questions provide an encouraging picture of community understanding of corruption and their views about the ICAC.

## **1.2 Context for the 1996 survey**

A number of factors may influence people's responses to the survey, including what is conveyed through the media about corruption and about the ICAC: For example, there had been media reporting of the ICAC inquiry into the regrading of the position of Director-General of the Department of Community Services, held at the time by Des Semples. The investigation into the conduct of staff at the Glebe Morgue had also received considerable publicity several months prior to the survey. Relevant events and news coverage, occurring in 1996 up to the date of the survey included:

- ▶ public hearings into the State Rail Authority's payment of \$3.8 million to a Sydney-based train cleaning company (media coverage January to March);
- ▶ ICAC report finds two former executives of Southern Mitchell Electricity corrupt in arranging their termination payouts (report released 17 January);
- ▶ public hearings into the removal of Des Semples as Director-General of NSW Department of Community Services (media coverage May to September);
- ▶ public hearings into the conduct of staff at Glebe Morgue (media coverage June to July);
- ▶ ICAC report clears Chief NSW Harness Racing Steward of corruption claims (report released 28 August);
- ▶ NSW Government departments fail to support whistleblowers according to ICAC study (media briefing 24 September, re Review of Protected Disclosures Act implementation Phase I and Phase II reports);
- ▶ ICAC Commissioner appeared before Parliamentary Joint Committee (24 October);
- ▶ police sergeant and charter plane boss found corrupt in aircraft hire to the NSW Police Service (report released 30 October).

In addition, it was a period in which the Royal Commission into the New South Wales Police Service's public hearings received much publicity, further raising community awareness about public sector corruption.

## 2. ATTITUDES TO CORRUPTION

Since 1994, the ICAC Community Attitude Survey has asked respondents whether or not they perceive public sector corruption to be a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem for the community. As the results indicate, 92% of respondents believe corruption is a problem for the community. Half of the respondents (49%) thinking that corruption is a *major problem* for the community. Table 1 shows these responses.

Table 1: Perceptions of corruption as a problem for the community

Type of problem	1994 (n=402) %	1995 (n=515) %	1996 (n=511) %
A major problem	44	58	49
A minor problem	47	38	43
Not a problem	4	1	4
Don't know	5	3	4

It is interesting to note the decrease, since the 1995 survey, in the percentage of respondents who think that corruption is a *major problem* for the community. In the 1996<sup>1</sup> survey, 49% of respondents thought this, compared to 58% in 1995. The reason for these differences is not known. One possible explanation for the 1995 result could be the publicity accorded the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service. However, this is unlikely to account for the decrease in 1996, given the continuing publicity of the Royal Commission, and the publicity accorded some of the ICAC's public inquiries in the weeks and months preceding the 1996 survey.

There is now much less difference between the percentage of people who think corruption is a *major problem* and the percentage of people who think corruption is a *minor problem* for the community (a difference of 6% in 1996 compared to 20% in 1995). The percentage of respondents who think corruption is *not a problem* for the community is small, but has remained relatively stable since 1994.

### 2.1 Who is the wrongdoer in a corrupt situation?

In further exploring attitudes to corruption, the ICAC was interested to know whom respondents might consider at fault in a corrupt situation. Members of the community are an important source of information about corruption, and so exploring people's perceptions of who is at 'fault' in a corrupt situation is of interest to the ICAC. In recently commissioned ICAC research, a series of focus groups were conducted where the impact of cultural background on the judgements people made when apportioning blame in a corrupt situation was highlighted. What emerged from that research was that, when presented with several scenarios about corrupt payments, or bribes, people participating in the focus groups, thought

---

<sup>1</sup> Significantly *fewer* employed people (43%) than people not in paid employment (58%) thought that corruption was a 'major' problem for the NSW community. Significantly *more* females (54%) than males (43%) thought that corruption was a 'major' problem.

was highlighted. What emerged from that research was that, when presented with several scenarios about corrupt payments, or bribes, people participating in the focus groups, thought that the person in the position of power receiving or suggesting a payment was the person at fault, not the person offering the money. Those participating in the focus groups were from five different non-English speaking cultures.

Having regard to this, the community attitude survey asked respondents about the following scenario:

*Imagine that a NSW public sector employee is offered \$100 by a member of the community to move his name to the top of a waiting list, and the public sector employee accepts the money. Who, if anyone, has done anything wrong?*

As Table 2 indicates, 98% of respondents thought that at least one of the people involved in the situation had done something wrong, with almost two-thirds (65%) saying that *both* the member of the community *and* the public sector employee had done something wrong. Just over one-quarter of respondents (28%) thought that the public sector employee was the only one who had done something wrong in accepting the money. Having access to this type of information is very important for the ICAC, as it provides some insight into the types of behaviour the community perceives as acceptable for themselves and acceptable for public servants. Education and corruption prevention strategies can then be structured to inform people about standards of behaviour that are expected from members of the community and from public servants.

**Table 2: Perceptions of who is the wrongdoer in the ‘waiting list’ scenario**

People perceived as having done something wrong	(n=511) %
Both the member of the community and the public sector employee	65
The public sector employee for accepting the money	28
The member of the community for offering the money	5
The government for allowing such things to happen	1
No one	1
Don't know/other	1

## **2.2 People's perceptions of what is ‘corrupt’**

In order to further explore community attitudes to corruption, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with two separate attitude statements concerning the circumstances under which something is considered to be corrupt. These questions had each been asked in a previous community attitude survey. Table 3 provides the current and previous responses.

**Table 3: Perceptions of corruption**

Statement	Disagree/strongly disagree		
	1993 (n=502) %	1994 (n=402) %	1996 (n=511) %
You can't call something corrupt if everybody does it.	89	*	86
Something is corrupt <i>only if those involved personally benefit from it.</i>	*	51	73

\* Item not used with this group

In the 1996 survey, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement *You can't call something corrupt if everybody does it.* As can be seen in Table 3, a large majority of respondents (86%) said they disagreed.

In terms of the other statement, *Something is corrupt only if those involved personally benefit from it,* there has been a major shift in perceptions since 1994 when just over half (51%) disagreed, and 1996 when almost three-quarters of respondents (73%) disagreed with it.

The 1996 responses to these two statements suggest two things. First, respondents' perceptions are that no matter how many people might do something, it can still be considered corrupt. Second, respondents perceive that it is the actual activity that indicates corruption, not whether people gain from it personally.

**3. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR WORKPLACE BEHAVIOUR: COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES**

With the advent of such processes as corporatisation, and the contracting out of a wide range of public sector services and activities, the distinction between the public and private sectors has become less clear cut than was previously the case. There is now a much greater interface between the two sectors, with the private sector having a greater capacity to influence the public sector than ever before. It is for this reason that the ICAC was interested to explore people’s perceptions about differences in the types of behaviour that people might consider corrupt in the public sector and the types of behaviour that people might consider corrupt in private business. Accordingly, several questions were asked that directly addressed this issue.

The first of these asked whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement: *What is seen as "corruption" in the public sector, is seen as smart business in the private sector*<sup>2</sup>. As Table 4 indicates, over half of the respondents (57%) disagreed with this statement, while a substantial minority, over one-third (37%), agreed with it.

**Table 4: Corruption versus ‘smart business’: Public and private sector differences**

Statement	Agree/strongly agree	Disagree/strongly disagree	Don't know
	(n=511) %		
What is seen as "corruption" in the public sector, is seen as smart business in the private sector.	37	57	6

**3.1 Perceptions of corruption in the public and private sectors**

Continuing to probe the issue of any perceived differences in public sector/private sector corruption, respondents were given an opportunity to provide more specific responses about whether or not they thought behaviour might be considered corrupt in one sector but not in the other. Tables 5 and 6 provide these data.

<sup>2</sup> Those employed in the private sector (65%) were more likely to *disagree* with this statement than those employed in the public sector (48%). It is interesting to note that respondents employed in the public sector (43%) were more likely to *agree* with the statement than respondents employed in the private sector (29%).

**Table 5: Respondent views about whether or not differences exist between corrupt behaviour in the public and private sectors**

Questions	Yes	No	Don't know/ not sure
	(n=511) %		
1. Are there any workplace behaviours that you see as being corrupt in the public sector that you would consider not corrupt in private business?	16	68	16
2. Are there any workplace behaviours that you see as being corrupt in the private sector that you would consider not corrupt in the public sector?	7	73	19

As can be noted from Table 5, over two-thirds of respondents (68%) thought that if behaviour was corrupt in the public sector then they would also consider it corrupt in the private sector. In response to the other question, which was the obverse of the first, almost three-quarters of respondents (73%) said that if the behaviour was corrupt in the private sector then it would also be corrupt in the public sector. These data suggest that, for the majority of respondents, behaviour is considered to be "corrupt" whether it occurs in the public or private sector. This is a similar to a result in the 1995 community attitude survey when almost two-thirds of respondents thought that standards of honesty should be the *same* in both sectors (see Table 1, 1995 survey).

After each of these questions respondents were asked why they held these views. As Table 6 shows, the type of response given most often was that people thought there was no difference between the public and private sectors as far as corrupt behaviour was concerned.

**Table 6: Reasons given why public sector corruption is the same as or different to corruption in private business**

Reasons given	Question 1#	Question 2#
	(n=511) %*	
<i>There is no difference</i>		
Corruption is corruption wherever it occurs	50	54
Corruption occurs in both the public and private sectors	4	1
The definition of corruption in the public sector is broader than the private sector definition: something which is corrupt in the private sector would always be corrupt in the public sector	-	9
Can't think of any examples	6	9
Other comments	11	10
<i>There is a difference</i>		
The public sector is/needs to be more accountable (than the private sector)	4	**
Corruption in the public sector affects everyone/corruption in the private sector only affects business/there are fewer consequences from corruption in the private sector	4	-
Public sector and private sector have different goals. Public sector is not in competition/ the private sector is motivated by profit	2	-
Specific examples given of behaviours which would be corrupt in one sector but not in the other	3	2
Can't think of any examples	2	2
Other comments	5	4
<i>Don't know/not sure</i>		
I have not seen any corruption/don't see corruption anywhere	**	2
I think the public sector is corrupt	2	-
I think the private sector is corrupt	1	-
Can't think of any examples/don't know	9	16
Other	3	2
No comment	3	1

# Questions shown in Table 5.

\* Figures listed may total more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one reason.

\*\* Less than 1%

It is interesting to note that, for both questions, at least half of the respondents very clearly expressed the view that corruption is corruption no matter where it occurs. Some examples of these comments include:

Corruption is wrong wherever it happens. (Case 17);

Public sector corruption rips off the public and private sector corruption rips off yourself, the boss and everyone else. It is exactly the same thing, everyone misses out. (Case 79);

Corruption is corruption - bribes in the government - pay-offs in the private sector, so it's the same thing really. Nepotism in private. (Respondent 268);

I think the standards should be the same. The private side might be able to get away with it more because they're not as exposed, but that doesn't make it right. (Case 399).



Some people considered there was a difference. For example, some respondents gave examples of behaviours which they thought would be corrupt in the public sector but not in private business:

In the public sector you can't negotiate benefits for yourself, but you can in the private sector. (Case 142);

In the private sector you can take people out to dinner and cultivate them which would not be acceptable in most of the public sector. (Case 326).

Other respondents thought that there was a difference because the public sector was, and should be, more accountable than the private sector. Examples of such comments include:

Because there is greater accountability and probity with spending public money. (Case 55);

The public sector has its own rules and regulations that they have to abide by, and the private sector don't seem to have any rules, it seems every man for themselves. (Case 67);

Because in the public sector you sit on a pedestal, you set an example, whereas in the private sector it is not so important, especially if it's minor. (Respondent 408).

Others thought that because private business was not accountable to the public, there would be fewer consequences from corruption in private business, or that the different goals of the two sectors made a difference in what is considered to be corrupt. Some examples of these comments are:

Private sector corruption is kept amongst themselves, whereas in the public they are not doing the things that the people want them to do. (Respondent 180);

What is considered corruption in the public sector may not be corrupt in private business. How can you be corrupt to yourself? (Respondent 230);

Because the public sector has to be by the book, private sector is there to make money. (Respondent 243);

Because the public sector is representing everyone and the private sector doesn't have that obligation. (Respondent 442).

### **3.2 Perceptions of differences in workplace behaviour in the public sector and in private business**

Having first asked people to compare corruption *in general* in the public sector and in private business, respondents were then asked about three specific incidents that might occur in a workplace. Three short hypothetical 'stories', or scenarios, were read to respondents. Each was read twice: once in relation to a government employee, and once in relation to an employee in a private company<sup>3</sup>. The three hypothetical scenarios were:

---

<sup>3</sup> The order of reading each of these scenarios in terms of government/private company employee was rotated so that half of the respondents were read each scenario first in relation to the public sector employee and second in relation to the employee of a private company, and half of the respondents were read each scenario first in relation to an employee of a private company and second in relation to the public sector employee. See Appendix 2 for the complete set of questions and responses.

1. *An employee accepts a free holiday to Bali in exchange for selecting a computer company for a job.*
2. *In order to speed up the process of filling a job vacancy, an employee appoints someone they know to a vacant position without advertising the position.*
3. *An employee gives confidential information about department clients to a friend who works in a private company.*

These scenarios provided a way to explore what behaviours respondents might label as corrupt. In a telephone survey such as this, however, it is not possible to determine which features of a scenario the respondent has used in making their judgement. Therefore, in order to avoid 'forcing' respondents to make a positive or negative judgement using only the *corrupt* or *not corrupt* responses, they were also asked whether they considered the employee's behaviour to be *acceptable* or *unacceptable*.

The key responses to these questions are summarised in Figures 1 and 2, which clearly show that people are more likely to judge a government employee's behaviour as *unacceptable* and *corrupt* than an employee in private business. This was the case for all three scenarios.

**Figure 1: Perception that the scenario is *unacceptable* in the public sector or private business**

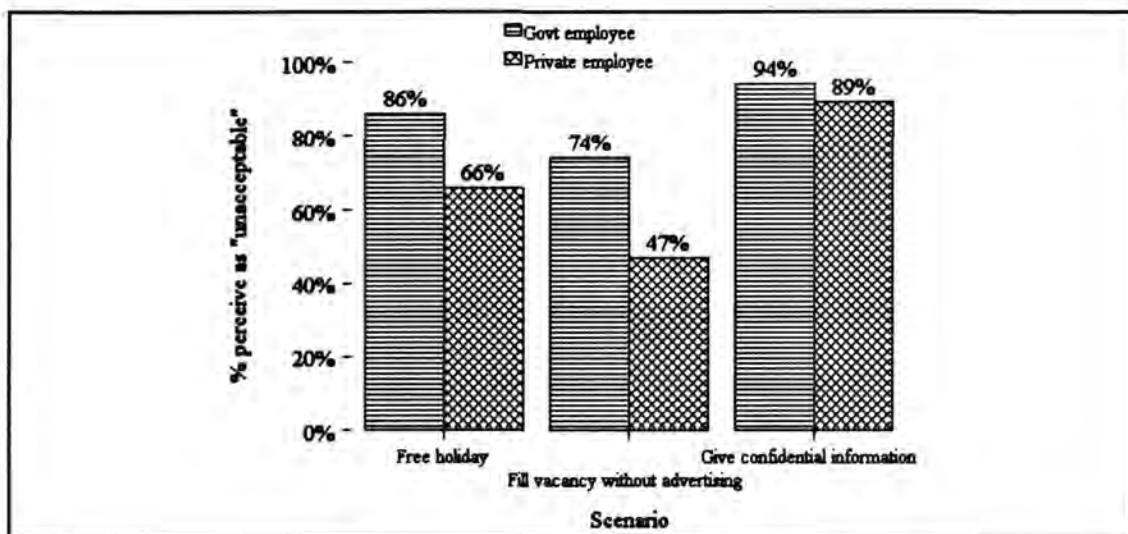
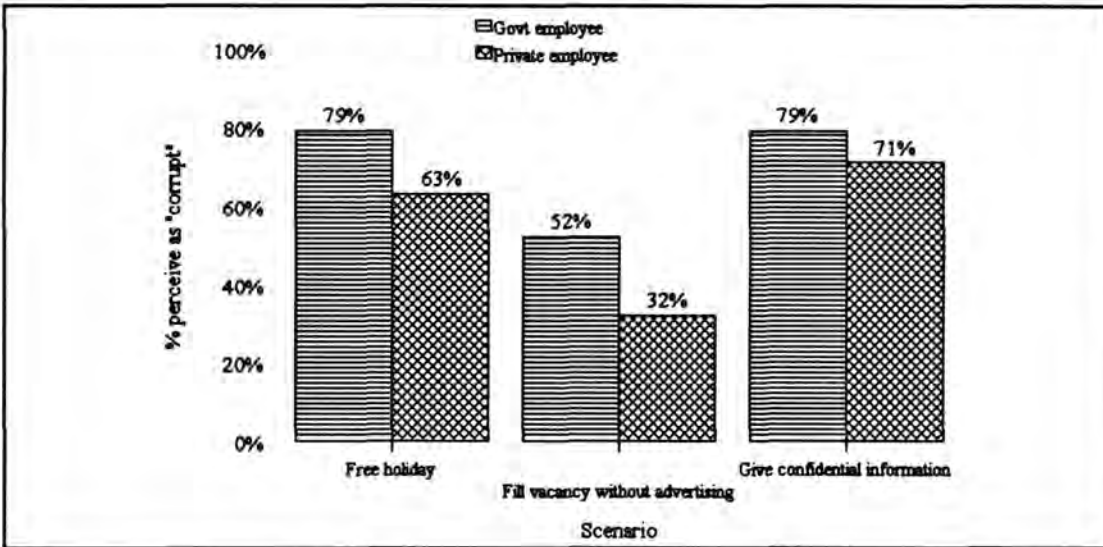


Figure 2: Perception that the scenario is *corrupt* in the public sector or private business



In comparing the unacceptable and corrupt percentages in Figures 1 and 2, it is interesting to note that more people considered the behaviours to be unacceptable than considered them corrupt. This was the same for all three scenarios for both the government employee and the employee in private business. In other words, respondents distinguished between unacceptable behaviour and corrupt behaviour. In Scenarios 1 (Free holiday)<sup>4</sup> and 3 (Give confidential information)<sup>5</sup>, a high percentage of respondents thought the behaviour to be *unacceptable* and *corrupt*. There was remarkably little statistically significant difference in response levels when the demographic variables were applied to the responses to these two scenarios.

People considered Scenario 2 for private business (Fill vacancy without advertising) to be the least *unacceptable* and the least *corrupt*. This finding is consistent with the fact that it is acceptable in private business to fill a job vacancy without advertising the position, and it is *not* corrupt to do so. A number of areas of statistically significant difference were revealed

<sup>4</sup> In terms of an employee in private business accepting the holiday, significantly more people in the 20-29 years age group (40%) than people in all other age groups (17%) thought it was an *acceptable* thing to do. When asked whether or not accepting the holiday would be a *corrupt* thing for someone in private business to do, the likelihood of people responding that it was corrupt appears to increase with age (20-24 years 48%; 30-34 years 61%; 45-49 years 75%; 65+ years 81%).

<sup>5</sup> In the scenario where an employee in a private business gives confidential information to a friend, significantly more respondents in the 20-24 years (30%) and 45-49 years (27%) age groups than respondents in the other age groups (16%) were likely to think that was *not corrupt*.

for Scenario 2 when the demographic variables were used to further explore response levels<sup>6</sup>.

Scenario 3 elicited the strongest response for both the government employee and the employee in private business in terms of the behaviour being considered both unacceptable and corrupt.

There was a small percentage of respondents who thought that responses to each of the scenarios were not clear cut, that 'it would depend' on the circumstances as to whether or not the situations were acceptable or unacceptable, corrupt or not corrupt.<sup>7</sup> For example, in Scenario 1 (Free holiday), some people thought that it would depend on what the workplace or company arrangements were, or what the company policy or rules were. Others thought that it would depend on whether or not the computer company was the best for the job anyway, had the best quote, or whether the process was open and specified at the start. A number of others suggested that it would make a difference if the employee deserved the holiday, or had earned it.

For Scenario 2 (Fill vacancy without advertising), some people thought that it would depend on whether the person who was appointed to the vacancy was qualified for the job, had the right skills, or had earned it. Others thought that it would depend on the type, status or level of the position being filled.

In terms of Scenario 3 (Give confidential information) the reason given most often was that it would depend on the person's motive for giving or receiving the information and whether or not it was going to be used for some kind of gain, or to hurt someone. A small number thought that the type or status of the information or person giving or receiving the information was what would make a difference.

The responses to these scenarios provide several important insights into how people make differential judgements about behaviour in the public sector and behaviour in private business. They are in contrast to earlier responses, where 50% or more of respondents said that corruption was corruption wherever it occurred (see Table 6). These insights are:

---

<sup>6</sup> In terms of the *acceptability* of a government employee filling a vacancy without advertising the position, significantly more females (80%) than males (68%) thought it was an *unacceptable* thing to do. Similarly, respondents working in the public sector (81%) and those not in paid employment (80%) were more likely to think it was *unacceptable* than those working in the private sector (68%). Those working in the public sector (63%) were significantly more likely than those not in paid employment (55%) or those working in the private sector (45%) to also think it was *corrupt*. Place of residence was also significant in terms of responses, with 83% of people living *outside* metropolitan Sydney/Newcastle/Wollongong thinking it was *unacceptable* and *corrupt* (61%) compared to those living in metropolitan areas (70% *unacceptable* and 47% *corrupt*).

When asked about an employee in a private business filling a vacancy without advertising the position, the demographic variables of area of residence and place of employment had a significant effect. Respondents working in the private sector (47%) were more likely to think that this was an *acceptable* thing to do and *not corrupt* (63%) than those working in the public sector (28% *acceptable* and 53% *not corrupt*). Those living in metropolitan areas (46%) were more likely than those living elsewhere in NSW (29%) to think it was *acceptable*.

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix 2 for the full set of responses.

- People do distinguish between different types of behaviour, and make *separate* judgements about whether the behaviour is unacceptable and whether the behaviour is corrupt.
- The types of behaviours people are prepared to accept in the public sector are different to those they will accept in private business.
- People have a more stringent set of behaviour standards for public sector employees than they do for employees in private business.
- Respondent opinions were remarkably consistent whether they were employed in the public sector, the private sector, or not in paid employment.

#### 4. PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION

The ICAC's interest in people's perceptions of the effects of corruption stems from one of its statutory functions which is to educate the public about the detrimental effects of corrupt conduct. In order to explore perceptions of how people thought they would be personally affected by corruption, all respondents were asked:

*We are interested in ways that different people feel that corruption in the NSW public sector affects them personally. Thinking specifically about you and your family, do you feel that corruption in the NSW public sector affects you or your family in any way?*

Over half the respondents (56%) replied that they thought corruption would affect them and their family, with a substantial minority (37%) replying 'no'. As can be noted from Table 7, the respondents in 1996 were more likely to think that corruption does affect them or their family than were respondents in 1994. In 1994 the 'gap' between the proportions of respondents who thought they were or were not affected by corruption in the NSW public sector was small at 2%, with respondents almost equally divided in their views. However, the 1996 responses show that the 'gap' has widened considerably to 19%.

Table 7: Perception that corruption affects respondent or their family<sup>8</sup>

Response	1994 (n=402) %	1996 (n=511) %
Yes it does	46	56
No it does not	48	37
Don't know/not sure	6	8

Respondents were then asked to explain how corruption affected them. The response given most frequently was that corruption had a financial effect on people (18%). Others commented that corruption would affect people's chances of getting a job (7%), or that they would feel unsafe if police were corrupt (7%). Some said that everyone is affected by corruption (7%), or that it leads to people being disillusioned and losing confidence in the public sector (6%). Similar types of reasons were given in 1996 as in 1994 (see Table 8). Some examples of 1996 responses are listed below:

**Financial effects (18%):**

The standard of living must go down as the money is absorbed in areas it's not supposed to be. They should have more inquiries as it happens every day. (Respondent 23);

It puts up the cost of all services and decisions that are made don't benefit the taxpayer. (Respondent 228);

<sup>8</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, of the 284 people (56% of 511) who said that corruption *does* affect them or their family, 39% said corruption was a *minor problem* for the community. Conversely, of the 187 people (37% of 511) who said they were *not* affected by corruption, 37% said corruption was a *major problem* for the community.



Depends on what they are doing. It affects employment prospects, taxes, and everything associated with everybody. (Respondent 290).

Can't get a job/affects my chances for employment (7%):

We don't get a fair go, say with jobs, like the jobs for the boys thing. (Respondent 31).

Corruption in policing makes us feel unsafe (7%):

Indirectly, it makes us feel insecure about the police, not safe about the people that are meant to be protecting us and our property, standards that are set in government affect us all. (Respondent 199).

Everyone is affected (7%):

Because it affects the quality of our culture. The ethical values that are promoted in the community should be demonstrated in the conduct of the public sector. It affects us in the day-to-day life of people. (Respondent 133).

Disillusionment/loss of confidence/loss of trust (6%):

It's unfair, you put trust in the government and there are shonky people running things at the top. This disadvantages me and my family. (Respondent 124).

**Table 8: Ways in which corruption is perceived as affecting people and their families**

Corruption affects us in the following ways	1994 (n=402) %*	1996 (n=511) %*
Financial effects	20	18
Can't get a job/affects my chances for employment	1	7
Corruption in policing (makes us feel unsafe)	5	7
Everyone is affected	6	7
Disillusionment/loss of confidence/loss of trust	5	6
Provides a bad example to others/affects the morals/ethics/standards of the public sector/community	3	5
Creates inequities (advantaging people of influence)	4	5
Problems with local government	-	5
Quality of service is lessened/money being diverted from service	6	5
Privacy is an issue	-	1
People should obey the rules	-	1
Wrong decisions may be made	5	-
Specific examples of corruption given	7	5
Other effects	10	3
Don't know/can't specify how I or my family is affected	7	6
Other responses too vague to categorise	-	3

\* Respondents were able to name more than one type of effect.

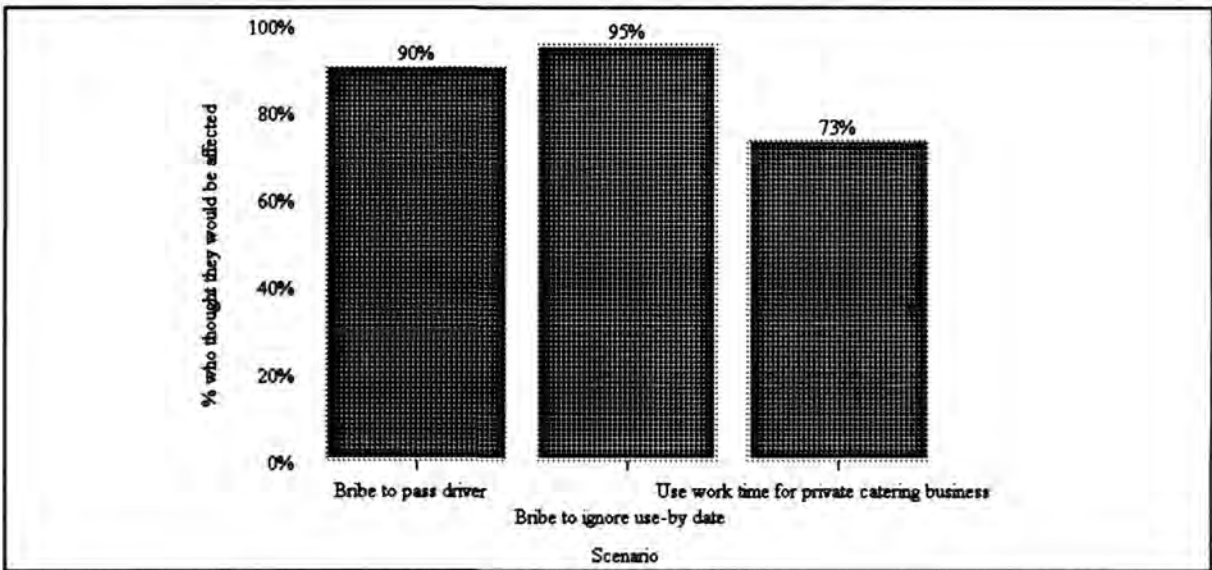
4.1 Perceptions of the effects of specific corrupt situations

The ICAC was interested to explore more directly respondents’ perceptions of how acts of corruption in the public sector would affect them or their family. Accordingly, a set of questions was formulated to focus attention on three different specific corrupt situations that could occur. After each scenario was read to respondents, they were asked if the corruption would affect them or their family in any way. If the response to that question was ‘yes’, they were then asked what effects, if any, they thought each of the situations might have on them and their family. The three hypothetical scenarios presented to respondents were:

- 1. *A person fails their driving test. The driving examiner accepts \$100 to say they have passed.*
- 2. *A health inspector visits a take-away food shop and finds some food that is clearly passed the use-by date. The health inspector takes \$100 from the owner of the shop to ignore the use-by date.*
- 3. *A government employee regularly spends part of the day using office facilities to organise their private catering business.*

Figure 3 shows the percentage of respondents who thought they would be affected by each of the corrupt situations. Tables 9, 10 and 11 provide summaries of responses to how they thought they would be affected.

Figure 3: Percentage of respondents who would be affected by a corrupt situation



In all three hypothetical scenarios, a large majority of respondents clearly thought there would be an impact on them or their family (Figure 3). In both the ‘Bribe the driver’ and ‘Bribe to ignore the use-by date’ situations respondents identified effects that were immediate, and sometimes drastic (Tables 9 and 10). In the ‘Use work time for private catering business’ situation, the effects were considered less immediate and drastic (Table 11), but nonetheless



impacting on respondents and their families. Overall, the responses reveal that people made clear strong links between the corrupt act and likely effects that could result.

### *Corrupt situation 1 - Bribe to pass driver*

By far the most common effect mentioned was the likely negative impact it would have on road safety (77%) (Table 9). Some typical comments are:

We have to share the road with that driver and they could cause an accident. (Respondent 20);

We have someone on the road that should have more practice before getting their licence. We have someone in a job that's not doing their job properly. (Respondent 92);

I'm on the road with an unskilled driver. (Respondent 323).

**Table 9: Perceived effects from bribing a driving test examiner**

Perceived effect on self or family	(n=511) %*
<i>Some effect</i>	<b>90</b>
Negative effect on road safety/accidents or fatalities might occur	77
It's unfair/to people who do go for their licence and fail/if there was a quota/ if examiners expect money to pass people/because people could miss out	5
Sets a bad example to the community/sets a trend/poor social ethic	2
Loss of confidence and trust in public sector/driving test	2
It could impinge on our rights/it's immoral/corrupt	2
Potential effects on insurance costs	1
Other effect	5
<i>No effect</i>	<b>8</b>
<i>Don't know/not sure</i>	<b>2</b>

### *Corrupt situation 2 - Bribe to ignore the use-by date on food*

Responses to this situation were the most clearly defined of the three corrupt situations, with only 4% saying there would be no effect (Table 10). The most common reasons given as to how this situation would affect people and their families involved the immediate health risks that could ensue (78%). Some typical responses are:

A lot of food lives past its use by-date. We have bought stale goods. We could get food poisoning. (Respondent 22);

Because I love food I like to buy a lot of things. If I bought an out-of-date food product I could get sick which would mean loss of money as well, plus it would be pretty disgusting to accept \$100 to let this happen. (Respondent 150).

The second most frequently stated potential effect was a general loss of faith in the public sector, that it was bad business practice, or that it would generally lower standards (11%).

The following is an example of this type of comment:

We might get sick in a very violent way. The inspector is not doing his job properly. (Respondent 44);

In that this questionable food is there for general consumption. Corruption of the trust placed in the food shop owner and the health inspector who is there to safeguard the public. (Respondent 227).

**Table 10: Perceived effects of bribing a health inspector**

Perceived effect on self or family	(n=511) %*
<i>Some effect</i>	95
We could buy/eat contaminated food and be poisoned/unhealthy/sick/ill	78
Loss of faith in public sector/bad business/lower standards	11
Someone could die	8
Cost to taxpayer/medical charges	4
Waste of personal money	1
Small effect - some food is okay after the use by date	2
Other effect	4
<i>No effect</i>	4
<i>Don't know/not sure</i>	1

### *Corrupt situation 3 - Using work time for a private catering business*

The distribution of these responses suggests that respondents thought this situation was *less* likely to affect them than either of the other two situations. More respondents said there would be '*no effect*' on them or their family from this situation, than gave a '*no effect*' response to either of the other two corrupt situations.

The most common reasons given as to why this situation would be likely to affect people concerned abuse of taxpayers' money and a likely increase in taxes or costs that might result (48%) (Table 11). Other reasons frequently given concerned the possibility of a loss of access to public sector services or a lessening of the quality of services that people could expect (25%). Some examples of these responses are:

#### **Abuse of taxpayers' money/increase in taxes/costs (48%):**

We are paying for them to do their job through our taxes and if they're not doing their job they are wasting the money. (Respondent 15);

My taxpayer's money is being wasted. (Respondent 30);

An increase in tax to cover lost production and maybe any dealings we have with that department might be delayed. (Respondent 82).

Loss of access to government service/loss of quality of service/job not being done properly (25%):

If I needed to use the service which this employee was meant to be providing, the service would be lacking. (Respondent 13);

In that there's a lack of efficiency, service to the public and a misuse of public time and the public's resources. (Respondent 227).

**Table 11: Perceived effects of a public servant using work time to organise a private catering business**

Perceived effect on self or family	(n=511) %*
<i>Some effect</i>	73
Abuse of taxpayers' money/increase in taxes/costs	48
Loss of access to government service/loss of quality of service/job not being done properly	25
Society as a whole will suffer/negative effect on social trends/morals/ethics	3
Unfair advantage, especially over other small businesses	3
Government as a whole will suffer/loss of faith/trust in public sector	1
Other effect	3
<i>No effect</i>	22
<i>Don't know/not sure</i>	5

## 5. ATTITUDES TO REPORTING CORRUPTION

Given that one of the statutory functions of the ICAC is to investigate allegations of corruption, it was of interest to explore people's attitudes towards reporting corrupt activities. This was undertaken by reading a series of statements<sup>9</sup> to respondents. Table 12 lists these statements and a summary of the responses (see Appendix 2 for a more detailed breakdown of responses).

Table 12: Attitudes to reporting corruption: 1996 data

Attitude Statement	Response (n=511)		
	Strongly/ Agree* %	Strongly/ Disagree** %	Don't know/ not sure %
People who report corruption are likely to suffer for it.	76	20	3
There is no point in reporting corruption in the <i>NSW public sector</i> because nothing useful <i>will</i> be done about it.	32	60	7
There is nothing that I personally can do about corruption in the <i>NSW public sector</i> . <sup>10</sup>	41	57	2
It's <i>not</i> my responsibility to report corruption.	8	90	2
I'm not sure how serious corruption needs to be before I should report it. <sup>11</sup>	39	58	4
The chances of getting caught doing something corrupt at work are slim. <sup>12</sup>	49	42	8
If I knew corruption was occurring, I would report it, <i>even if</i> I didn't have enough evidence to prove it.	40	55	5

\* "Strongly agree" and "agree" responses have been combined.

\*\* "Strongly disagree" and "disagree" responses have been combined.

These responses reveal an interesting dichotomy in people's perceptions. That is, that while responses to some statements indicate positive or optimistic attitudes toward reporting corruption, others reveal a negative, or pessimistic view about it. For example, 90% of respondents feel they do have some responsibility to report corruption, with over half (57%) believing that they are able to personally do something about it. Over half (58%) are confident that they know how serious corruption needs to be before reporting it, and 60% think that when they do report it, something useful will be done about it. In contrast, 55%

<sup>9</sup> Statements were read to respondents in a random order.

<sup>10</sup> Respondents working in the private sector (43%) were significantly more likely to agree with this statement than people working in the public sector (21%).

<sup>11</sup> Females (47%) were significantly more likely to agree with this statement than males (33%).

<sup>12</sup> Males (61%) were significantly more likely to agree with this statement than females (46%).

said they would not report corruption without enough evidence to prove it, and that, despite their own preparedness to accept some responsibility to report corruption, half the respondents think that the chances of getting caught doing something corrupt at work are slim (49%). Respondents are also pessimistic about the likelihood of repercussions as a consequence of reporting corruption with 75% believing that people who report corruption are likely to suffer for it.

The first three of the attitude statements shown in Table 12 are ones that have been asked in previous ICAC community attitude surveys. Table 13 compares previous responses with those in 1996.

**Table 13: Attitudes to reporting corruption: Trends over time**

Attitude statement	Strongly agree/Agree %			
	1993 (n=502)	1994 (n=402)	1995 (n=515)	1996 (n=511)
People who report corruption are likely to suffer for it. <sup>13</sup>	75	73	71	76
There is no point in reporting corruption in the NSW public sector because nothing useful will be done about it. <sup>14</sup>	32	31	31	32
There is nothing I personally can do about corruption in the NSW public sector. <sup>15</sup>	*	*	50	41

\* Question not asked in that year's survey.

The percentage of respondents who have agreed with the statement *People who report corruption are likely to suffer for it*, has remained relatively stable since 1993. However, in contrast to the previous small but decreasing trend, there has been a minor increase in the percentage of respondents who now agree with the statement (76%).

<sup>13</sup> The likelihood of agreeing with this statement appears to increase with age. Ninety-one per cent of people aged 60 years or older agreed with this statement, whereas 88% of people aged 40-59 years agreed with it, and 70% of people aged 20-39 years. People aged 18-19 years were least likely to agree with the statement (47%). This trend was also evident in the 1995 responses for this statement.

<sup>14</sup> In general, the percentage of respondents agreeing with this statement increased with age. In the 18-49 years age group 30% agreed with it compared to 48% of the 50-65+ years age group. This is in contrast to the 1995 responses where no clear trend was apparent.

<sup>15</sup> As with the 1995 survey results, the 1996 results indicate that the likelihood of respondents agreeing with this statement varies with age. In the 1996 survey, only 28% of the 30-34 years age group agreed with the statement, with 25% of the 45-49 years age group agreeing with it. In contrast 60% of the 65+ age group agreed with the statement.

Unemployed people (48%) were significantly more likely to agree with this statement than people employed in the private sector (43%) or people working in the public sector (21%). The 1996 results indicate that, since the 1995 survey, there has been a decrease in the percentage of all three groups who agree with this statement.

It is encouraging to see a continuation of the very consistent, low level of agreement with the statement *There is no point in reporting corruption in the NSW public sector because nothing useful will be done about it.*

It is also encouraging to note the decrease in the percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement *There is nothing I personally can do about corruption in the NSW public sector.*

## 6. AWARENESS OF AND SUPPORT FOR THE ICAC

### 6.1 Knowledge of the ICAC

When asked the question *Several years ago, the government set up a body to deal with corruption in the NSW public sector. Can you tell me what it is called?*, 38% of respondents were able to give the correct name or abbreviation for the Independent Commission Against Corruption. Two respondents thought it was *either* the ICAC or another organisation, for example the Royal Commission. A small number of respondents gave an incorrect name, for example, the Police Royal Commission, or an incorrect name which included the word 'corruption'.

As Table 14 indicates, this question has been asked in ICAC surveys since 1989. Between 1989 and 1995 there had been a steady increase in the percentage of respondents who, without prompting, gave the correct name for the ICAC. The prominence in the media of the Police Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service may be one reason why this percentage has decreased markedly from 47% in 1995 to 38% in 1996<sup>16</sup>.

When respondents who did not correctly name the ICAC (n=319) in the 1996 survey were asked *Have you heard of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the I.C.A.C. or I-cac?* 87% (n=278) of them said they had heard of the organisation. Combining these respondents with those correctly identifying the ICAC when asked, 92% of *all* respondents had heard of the ICAC. This is the same percentage as in the 1995 survey.

Table 14: Comparative data over time of respondents able to correctly name the ICAC

Identified the ICAC	1989* (n=350) %	1989** (n=350) %	1990 (n=350) %	1993 (n=502) %	1994 (n=402) %	1995 (n=515) %	1996 (n=511) %
Correct name	3	16	21	42	45	47	38
Incorrect name	12	9	14	12	7	8	11
Can't say	85	75	66	47	48	45	53

\*March, \*\*October;

The 470 (92%) respondents who had heard of the ICAC, were then asked a number of questions about their perceptions of its success in several areas.

### 6.2 Perceptions of the success of the ICAC

Since 1993 the ICAC has explored respondents' perceptions of how successful the organisation has been in exposing and reducing corruption in the NSW public sector. Specifically, two questions asked are:

---

<sup>16</sup> In the 1996 survey significantly more respondents who were in paid employment (41%) could correctly name the ICAC than respondents who were not in paid employment (32%). There was no significant difference between respondents employed in the public sector and respondents employed in the private sector in the percentage who could correctly name the ICAC.

*Do you think the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in exposing some of the corruption in NSW?*

*Do you think the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in reducing the level of corruption in NSW?*

In answering the first of these questions, 82 % of respondents thought that the ICAC had been *successful* in exposing some of the corruption in NSW. This continues a small but increasing trend in the percentage of respondents who think the ICAC has been successful in this regard. Table 15 provides these data for comparison.

**Table 15: Perceived success of the ICAC in exposing some of the corruption in NSW**

Response	1993 (n=486) %	1994 (n=371) %	1995 (n=475) %	1996 (n=470) %
Successful	80	78	81	82
Unsuccessful	9	10	11	10
Don't know	11	12	8	8

Responses to the second question also indicate a small but increasing trend, since 1994, in the percentage of people who think the ICAC has been *successful* in reducing the level of corruption. The percentage of respondents who think that the ICAC has been *unsuccessful* in this regard (25%) is the lowest it has been since the question was first asked in 1993. A further 22% *don't know* whether the organisation has been successful or not. The percentage of responses in this latter category is slightly higher than in previous surveys, although reasonably consistent over time. Table 16 shows these figures.

**Table 16: Perceived success of the ICAC in reducing the level of corruption in NSW**

Response	1993 (n=486) %	1994 (n=371) %	1995 (n=475) %	1996 (n=470) %
Successful	53	43	49	53
Unsuccessful	30	36	32	25
Don't know	17	21	19	22

People who responded *unsuccessful*, or *don't know* to this question, were asked why they thought that. As Table 17 shows, the type of reason given most often by people who thought the ICAC had been *unsuccessful* in reducing corruption, was that corruption was still happening. Others thought that corruption was something that could not be stopped because it was human nature, or the problem was too big for anyone to deal with. People who responded *don't know* did so mainly because they felt uninformed. Others said they did not know how much corruption there was in the first place so they had no way to gauge whether it had been reduced or not. The following are some typical examples of these responses.



**Corruption is still happening/still there/can see evidence of it (13%):**

Because corruption is still going on. (Respondent 32);

I believe that corruption still exists, less extent, but still there. (Respondent 255);

Because it is still going on. You don't see the people who report corruption getting a pat on the back. (Respondent 290).

**Corruption cannot be stopped/human nature/too large a problem (for anyone) (3%):**

Because they get around corruption another way. One corrupt person will obviously try to corrupt another person. It's like cancer. (Respondent 33);

Well, corruption is that deep-rooted that you are never going to cut it out. (Respondent 250).

**Don't know because I'm not informed/don't follow media/have no information (6%):**

Well, I have not read about it or I have not been given documented information to be able to give a 'yes' or 'no' answer. (Respondent 111);

Because I don't really know, I've never read their reports, and of course we're all reliant on what we're told by the press. (Respondent 442).

**Don't know how much corruption there was/is (3%):**

No one knows how much corruption is happening in the first place so how can I tell if it is reduced or not? (Respondent 35);

It's hard to know how much corruption is going on as you only get to hear about the corruption that has been discovered in the past. (Respondent 13).

**Table 17: Reasons given for *Unsuccessful* or *Don't know* responses**

Reasons given	1996 (n=470) % **
<i>Unsuccessful</i>	25
Corruption still happening/still there/can see evidence of it	13
Corruption cannot be stopped/it's human nature/too large a problem (for anyone)	3
No results/prosecutions/nothing done	3
Police Royal Commission has been successful/the ICAC has not	2
Has not addressed serious corruption	1
(The ICAC) Needs more power/support/wider terms of reference	1
ICAC has not reduced corruption but has had other (positive) effects	1
Too early to say	*
ICAC is corrupt	*
Other (unsuccessful)	7
<i>Don't know whether it's been successful or not in reducing corruption</i>	22
Don't know because I'm not informed/don't follow media/have no information	6
Don't know how much corruption there was/is	3
I never hear results of their work	1
It's too early to say	1
It's too hard to reduce/there's always going to be corruption	*
Other	4
Don't know	4

\* Some respondents did nominate these activities, but not enough to equal 1%.

\*\* Respondents were able to give more than one reason.

### 6.3 Support for the work of the ICAC

Respondents who had heard of the ICAC were asked: *Do you think that having the ICAC is a good thing for the people of NSW? Why do you say that?* As Table 18 shows, the 1996 level of support for the ICAC (93%) is the highest it has been since this question was first asked in 1993, and continues a consistently high positive response to this question. Only 3% of respondents were not sure or did not know if the ICAC was a good thing for the people of NSW.

**Table 18: Support for the work of the ICAC**

Response	1993 (n=486) %	1994 (n=371) %	1995 (n=475) %	1996 (n=470) %*
Yes, I think having the ICAC is a good thing	92	91	91	93
No, having the ICAC is not a good thing	3	4	3	5
Don't know/not sure	4	5	6	3

\* Figures listed total more than 100% due to rounding.

### ***Why the ICAC is a good thing***

The most common reasons given by respondents as to why they thought the ICAC is a good thing for the people of New South Wales, are shown in Table 19. The following are examples of some of these.

#### **Acts as a deterrent/keeps people honest (17%):**

Because it is a brake on corruption, it is like a red light. People know that it is there and that someone might be looking over their shoulder. (Respondent 20);

Because you need an independent body to investigate corruption. Just knowing it is there will help prevent corruption. (Respondent 374).

#### **Better than nothing/have to have something/somebody (15%):**

Because if you didn't have a body to control it then anyone can do anything. (Respondent 236);

Well, anything that investigates corruption has got to be a good thing. (380).

#### **It's good to have a watchdog/monitoring body (13%):**

It lets people know there is a watchdog around and you can't get away with anything. (Respondent 98);

There's got to be some audits on people's behaviour and workplace practices. (Respondent 411).

#### **Informs the public/makes public aware of corruption/exposes corruption (13%):**

I think if they can expose someone for not doing the right thing it's a good thing. It's a good thing for everyone. (Respondent 70).

#### **It's trying to control/trying to stop corruption (13%)**

Because at least it is trying to uncover corruption, it's a start. (Respondent 168).

#### **ICAC is effective (12%):**

Exposing and eliminating corruption is good (Respondent 262).

**Table 19: Reasons why the ICAC is or is not considered to be a good thing**

Reason given	1996 (n=470) %**
<i>Positive comments</i>	<i>93</i>
Acts as a deterrent/keeps people honest	17
Better than nothing/have to have something/somebody	15
It's good to have a watchdog/monitoring body	13
Informs the public/makes public aware of corruption/exposes corruption	13
It's trying to control/trying to stop corruption	13
ICAC is effective	12
It's somewhere to go to report corruption	9
It's a good thing IF ... (conditional support)	9
It's independent	5
Good to have someone that will investigate	5
It's a good thing BUT ... (support with reservations)	5
Specific reference to the good job of the Royal Commission/police corruption/paedophilia	4
Raises public confidence in government/public sector	3
Makes people accountable	3
Saves money/stops others wasting money	2
Focuses on corruption/has a specialist focus	1
Other	8
Don't know	1
<i>Negative comments</i>	<i>5</i>
Waste of money/is too expensive	2
Isn't doing it's job/doesn't address the right issues/no results	2
Not enough of a deterrent	*
Other	1
<i>Don't know</i>	<i>3</i>

\* Some respondents did nominate these activities, but not enough to equal 1%.

\*\* Figures listed total more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one reason.

## 7. AWARENESS OF THE ROLE OF THE ICAC

As well as investigating allegations of corrupt conduct, corruption prevention and education are part of the ICAC's statutory functions. As such, exploring people's awareness of the role of the ICAC assists the organisation in targeting its corruption prevention and education programs. In order to explore some specific perceptions about the ICAC's role, a number of statements were read to respondents who were asked to say whether they thought each was 'true' or 'false'. Table 20 shows the responses to these statements in terms of respondents' misconceptions. As can be noted, the two most common misconceptions are that the ICAC can investigate corruption in the private sector, even when the corruption has nothing to do with the public sector (almost two-thirds of respondents thought this), and, that the ICAC has the power to prosecute people (59% of respondents thought this).

**Table 20: Misconceptions of the ICAC's role**

Statement	Respondents holding this view %
The ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption in the private sector even when the corruption has nothing to do with the public sector.	65
The ICAC has the power to prosecute people.	59
The ICAC is the anti-corruption body for the whole of Australia.	41
The ICAC cannot investigate allegations of corruption against NSW judges and magistrates.	26
The ICAC cannot investigate allegations of corruption in NSW local government.	20
The ICAC cannot investigate allegations of corruption against NSW politicians.	16
The ICAC cannot investigate allegations of corruption in the NSW public sector.	7

Refer to Appendix 2 for a more detailed breakdown of responses.

## 8. MEDIA REPORTS ABOUT THE ICAC

A previous community attitude survey revealed that a large majority of people learned about the activities of the ICAC through reports in newspapers, on television and radio. As such, the impressions of the ICAC that people glean from these reports are important. In the 1996 survey, a first step in exploring impressions from the media, was to ask respondents if they could remember any media reports about the ICAC. Specifically people were asked:

*ICAC activities are sometimes reported on TV, radio and in newspapers. Can you tell me what any of the stories have been about?.*

As shown in Table 21, almost half of the respondents (49%) mentioned police, whereas 30% of respondents were unable to name any media stories related to the ICAC. Other responses were either general, or not related to the ICAC, e.g. Alan Bond. This appears to indicate that people in the community either do not recall the media stories because they did not read, hear or see them, or, because they do not strongly associate a particular story with the ICAC.

**Table 21: Identified media reports about ICAC activities**

Media stories recalled	(n=470) % **
Police	49
Nick Greiner/Terry Metherell (previous Minister for Education)	14
Paedophiles/paedophilia	12
Politicians	6
Downgrading of Semple's position	3
Magistrates and judges	2
RTA	2
Local Councils (unspecified)	2
Noteworthy/famous individuals (e.g. John Elliott; Christopher Skase; Alan Bond)	5
Byron Bay	1
State Rail	1
Public servants (unspecified)	1
Interstate corruption	1
Construction/building industry	1
Other previous ICAC investigations	1
Philip Smiles/payment of parliamentary pension	*
Police Airwing/Crane Air	*
Harness Racing Authority/Chief Steward	*
Licensing inspector/licensed clubs/card machines	*
Randwick Council	*
Aboriginal Land Council	*
Glebe Morgue	*
Other (vague descriptions)	2
No/don't know	30

\*Some respondents did nominate these activities, but not enough to equal 1%.

\*\* Figures listed total more than 100% as respondents were able to name more than one media story.

In further exploring which media reports about the ICAC respondents might remember, two questions were asked about a 1996 ICAC investigation, that of Glebe Morgue. In June and July 1996, when the public inquiry was being held, there was considerable, and sometimes

sensational media coverage, as it concerned allegations that some morgue staff were searching some of the bodies and stealing items from them, for example, clothing, money, jewellery. Accordingly, it was thought that if people were going to remember any recent media reports about the ICAC, then the Glebe Morgue stories would be likely to be one. However, as shown in Table 22, this was not the case. The table shows the two questions that were asked and the responses given.

**Table 22: Awareness of the Glebe Morgue investigation**

Question	Response (n=470) %	
	Yes	No/don't know
Have you heard or read anything about the Glebe Morgue investigation?	43	57
The Glebe Morgue was an ICAC investigation. Were you aware of that?	20	80

It is clear from these responses that, despite 43% of respondents having heard about the Glebe Morgue inquiry, and the considerable media coverage it generated, respondents did not associate it with the ICAC. Indeed, these results support the earlier suggestion that people do not make a link between media stories and the public 'face' of the ICAC.

### **8.1 Impressions about the ICAC from media reports**

The most common impressions gained from media reports are categorised in Table 23. Given the frequency with which the police were mentioned (49%, Table 21), it is likely that some respondents have confused the role of the ICAC with the role of the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service, which was operational at the time of the survey. Nonetheless, whether responses were intended as praise for or criticism of the ICAC, the Police Royal Commission, or any other organisation, they do indicate the person's level of support for an anti-corruption body. The following examples of comments illustrate some of these:

**Doing a good job/doing good things/having a positive effect (30%):**

Overall I think they are a good thing. (Respondent 20);

They're positive impressions of the ICAC that they're doing something about corruption. (Respondent 205);

They're good. Doing the job. (Respondent 322).

**Really trying to stamp out corruption (14%):**

That they are trying to do as much as they possibly can about corruption. (Respondent 285).

**Exposing a lot of corruption (6%):**

They are usually right, they usually expose the crooks. (Respondent 58).

**Putting fear into the minds of corrupt people/acting as a deterrent (4%):**

They are doing a good job and making the ratbags in the community scared. (Respondent 330).

**Positive but with reservations (11%):**

They do their job well and effectively, it's a shame that the court process has to drag on for so long. (Respondent 13);

There is probably a lot of good people in there and trying to do their best and an honest job, but they get let down by the legal system. It is very hard for them to try and prosecute big businessmen as they are so powerful. (Respondent 137);

It's positive, but there seems to be little flow from it when their investigations finish. No one seems to appear in court because of ICAC findings. No one seems to be being charged. (Respondent 283).

**Needs more resources/greater powers (8%):**

I don't think it has enough power. (Respondent 55);

The impression I get is that they don't have the power or the resources to do more. Financial and political interference. (Respondent 146).

**Doesn't achieve/not effective (10%)**

It's a toothless tiger. It cannot seem to force its findings through the courts and get something done about what it seems to think are the problems. It hasn't got teeth. Get those bastards out. (Respondent 50);

The impression is that it is active but toothless. (Respondent 311).

**Other negative (9%)**

I don't know if they are doing as much as they can about corruption. (Respondent 151);

They are not doing much. Very flat in the past 12 months. I haven't heard much about ICAC lately. (Respondent 269).



**Table 23: Impressions of the ICAC from media reports**

Impressions	(n=356) %
<i>Positive impressions</i>	
Doing a good job/doing good things/having a positive effect	30
Really trying to stamp out corruption	14
Exposing a lot of corruption	6
Putting fear into the minds of corrupt people/acting as a deterrent	4
Very thorough	4
Independent	2
Professional	1
Positive with reservations	11
Needs more resources/greater power	8
Other positive impressions	7
<i>Negative impressions</i>	
Doesn't achieve/not effective	10
Too slow	3
Damages the reputation of the accused	2
Should focus on bigger issues	1
Other negative	9
<i>Other</i>	
Comments specifically mention Police Royal Commission	6
Sees that the ICAC is controversial/under attack yet respondent supports ICAC	4
Depends which newspaper you read/channel you watch	3
There should be more media coverage	2
Comments specifically mention John Elliot, NCA	1
Other comments - not clear whether the comments are positive or negative	6
Don't know/don't think about it	4

\* Figures listed total more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one impression.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Characteristics of Respondents**

Figure 4: Distribution of respondents by age

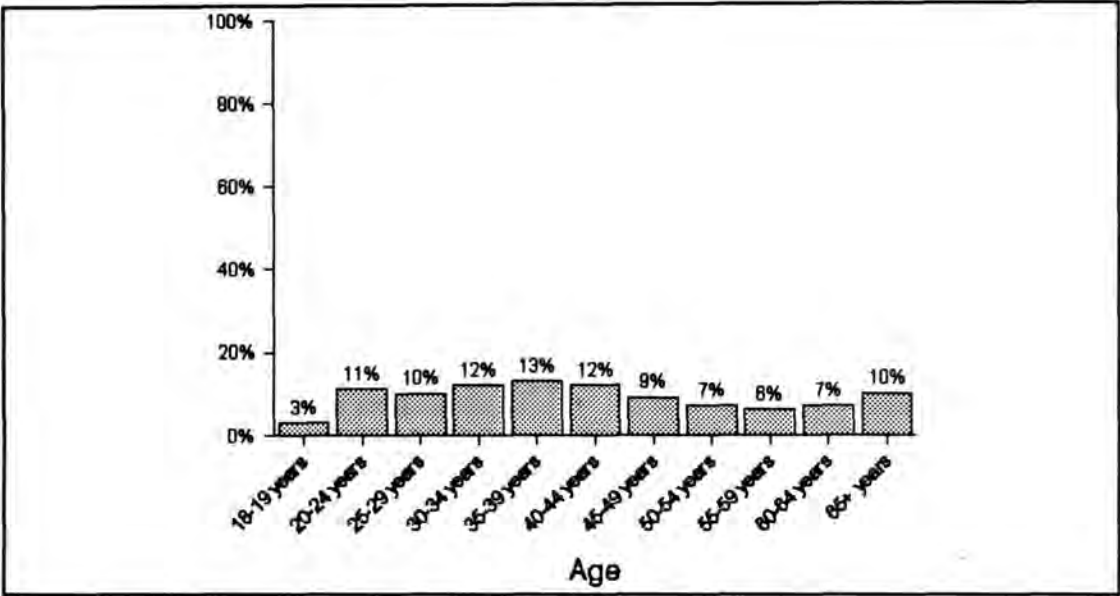


Figure 5: Distribution of respondents by gender

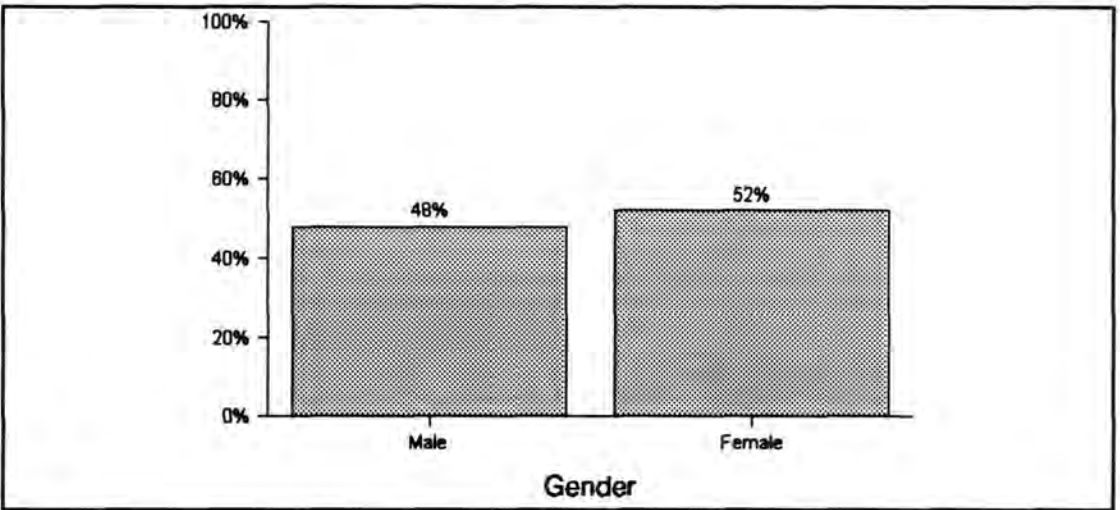


Figure 6: Distribution of respondents by area of residence

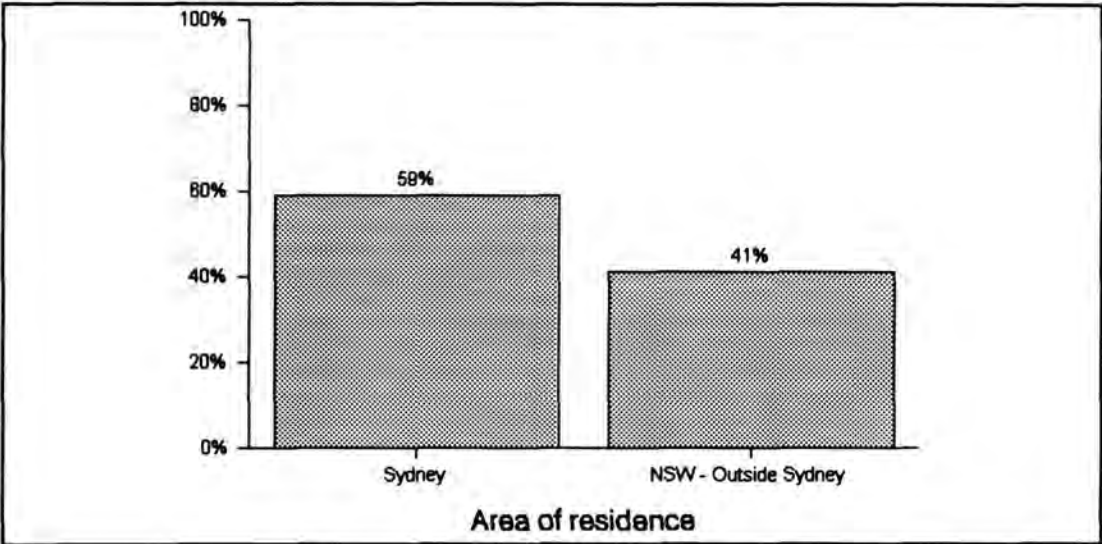
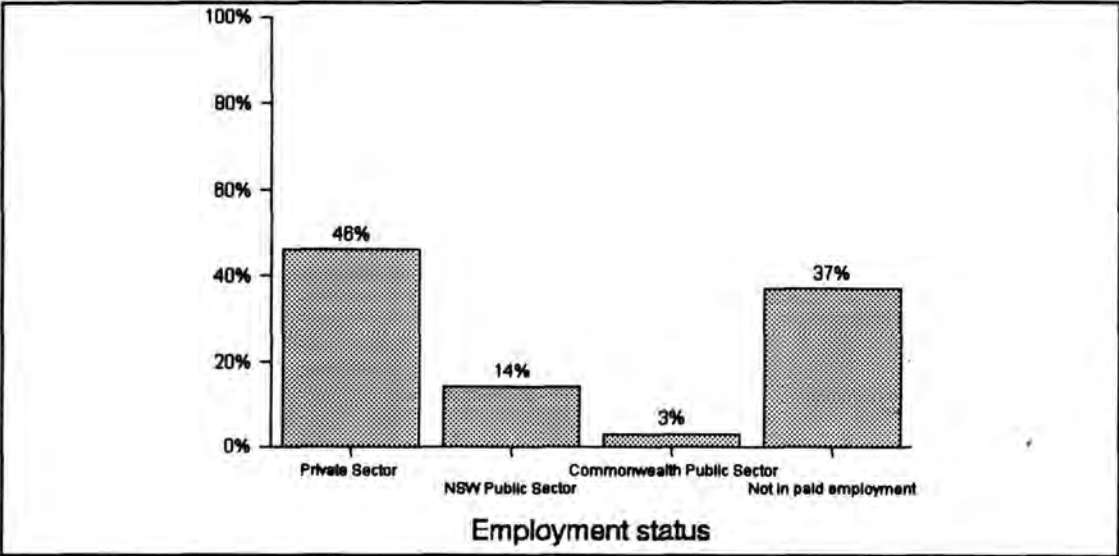


Figure 7: Distribution of respondents by sector of employment



**APPENDIX 2: Copy of Questions asked and summary of responses given**

**1996 Community Attitude Survey**

Good (morning/afternoon) My name is ..... from Taverner Research Company. Today we are conducting a survey of people's views about the NSW public sector and issues that might affect people in NSW. Responses to the survey are, of course, anonymous and confidential. I was wondering if I could speak to the person in the household who is over 18 who had the most recent birthday?

**Q1. When I talk about "the NSW public sector" I mean state government departments and authorities, local councils, as well as members of the parliament, judges and magistrates.**

**So firstly, do you consider that corruption in the NSW public sector is: a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem for the community?**

	1996 (n=511)	1995 (n=515)	1994 (n=402)
A major problem	49%	58%	44%
A minor problem	43%	38%	47%
Not a problem	4%	1%	4%
Don't know	4%	3%	5%

**Q2. Imagine that a NSW public sector employee is offered \$100 by a member of the community to move his name to the top of a waiting list, and the public sector employee accepts the money. Who, if anyone, has done anything wrong?**

	(n=511) %
The member of the community for offering the money	5
The public sector employee for accepting the money	28
Both the member of the community and the public sector employee	65
The government for allowing such things to happen	1
No one	1
Don't know/other	1

I'd like to find out more about what sorts of things you think are corrupt. I'm going to read out a series of statements, and for each of them I would like you to tell me whether you *strongly agree... agree ... disagree ... or ... strongly disagree* with each statement.

**Q3. You can't call something corrupt if everybody does it.**

(n=511)

Strongly agree	2%
Agree	11%
Disagree	44%
Strongly disagree	42%
Don't know/not sure	1%

**Q4. Something is corrupt *only if those involved personally benefit from it*.**

(n=511)

Strongly agree	5%
Agree	19%
Disagree	51%
Strongly disagree	22%
Don't know/not sure	3%

**Q5. What is seen as "corruption" in the public sector, is seen as smart business in the private sector.**

(n=511)

Strongly agree	5%
Agree	32%
Disagree	43%
Strongly disagree	14%
Don't know/not sure	6%

Next I'd like to find out whether you think there are any differences in the types of behaviour that you would consider corrupt in the public sector as opposed to those that you would consider corrupt in private business.

**Q6a. Firstly, are there any workplace behaviours that you see as being corrupt in the public sector that you would consider not corrupt in private business?**

(n=511)

Yes	16%
No	68%
Don't know/not sure	16%

**Q6b.\* Why do you say that?**

**Q6c.\* What types of behaviours are you thinking of? Can you think of any examples?**

\* Responses to these two questions have been combined as few examples of behaviour were given in response to Q6c.

Reasons given	(n=511) %*
Corruption is corruption wherever it occurs	52
The public sector is/needs to be more accountable (than the private sector)	6
Corruption occurs in both the public and private sectors	5
Corruption in the public sector affects everyone/corruption in the private sector only affects business/there are fewer consequences from corruption in the private sector	4
Public sector and private sector have different goals. Public sector is not in competition/ the private sector is motivated by profit	3
I have not seen any corruption/ don't see corruption anywhere	2
I think the public sector is corrupt	2
I think the private sector is corrupt	1
It would depend on the situation	1
Miscellaneous comment about the public sector	1
Miscellaneous comment about the private sector	1
Relationship of comment to the question was unclear	4
Specific examples given of behaviour which would be corrupt in one sector but not in the other	4
Can't think of any examples/don't know	18
No comment	5

\*Figures listed total more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one reason.

**Q6d. Now turning that around, are there any workplace behaviours that you see as being corrupt in the private sector that you would consider not corrupt in the public sector?**

(n=511)

Yes	7%
No	73%
Don't know/not sure	19%

Reasons given	(n=511) %
Corruption is corruption wherever it occurs	56
The definition of corruption in the public sector is broader than the private sector definition: something which is corrupt in the private sector would always be corrupt in the public sector	2
Corruption occurs in both the public and private sectors	1
Specific examples given of behaviours which would be corrupt in one sector but not in the other	2
The public sector is/needs to be more accountable than the private sector	2
Miscellaneous comment about the public sector	2
Miscellaneous comment about the private sector	2
Relationship of comment to the question was unclear	3
I have not seen any corruption/ don't see corruption anywhere	2
Can't think of any examples/don't know	26
No comment	3

\*Figures listed total more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one reason.

Now I'd like you to think about how people behave at work, and what you consider to be acceptable workplace practice. I'm going to read a number of statements to you about situations that might occur at work.

**Q7a. A government employee accepts a free holiday to Bali in exchange for selecting a computer company for a job. Do you think that this is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour?**

(n=511)

Acceptable	7%
Unacceptable	86%
Don't know/not sure	2%
It depends	5%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
What the workplace/company arrangements/policy rules are	2
Whether it's fair/if the person deserves it/has earned it/has worked for it	2
Whether or not the computer company was the best for the job/had the best quote for the job anyway	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q7b. Do you think that it is corrupt or not corrupt?**

(n=511)

Corrupt	79%
Not corrupt	12%
Don't know/not sure	3%
Other	1%
It depends	6%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
Whether the process was open/public/specified at the start	2
What the workplace/company arrangements/policy rules are	1
The reason or motive of the computer company offering the holiday	1
Whether it's fair/if the person deserves it/has earned it/has worked for it	1
Whether or not the computer company was the best for the job/had the best quote for the job anyway	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q7c. What if a person working in a *private* company accepted the holiday from the computer company? Would that be acceptable or unacceptable?**

	(n=511)
Acceptable	21%
Unacceptable	66%
Don't know/not sure	2%
Other	1%
It depends	9%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
What the workplace/company arrangements/policy rules are	5
The reason/motive of the computer company offering the holiday	2
Whether or not the computer company was the best for the job/had the best quote for the job anyway	2

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q7d. Would that be corrupt or not corrupt?**

	(n=511)
Corrupt	63%
Not corrupt	27%
Don't know/not sure	2%
Other	1%
It depends	7%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
What the workplace/company arrangements/policy rules are	4
Whether the process was open/public/specified at the start	2
The reason or motive of the computer company offering the holiday	1
Whether it's fair/if the person deserves it/has earned it/has worked for it	1
Whether or not the computer company was the best for the job/had the best quote for the job anyway	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q8a. In order to speed up the process of filling a job vacancy, a person working in a *private* business appoints someone they know to a vacant position without advertising the position. Do you think that this is acceptable or unacceptable?**

	(n=511)
Acceptable	39%
Unacceptable	47%
Don't know/not sure	1%
Other	1%
It depends	12%



It depends on:	(n=511) %*
Whether the person appointed was qualified for the job/has the right skills/has earned it	7
What the workplace/company arrangements/policy/rules are	5
The type/level/status of the position	2
Whether or not the job should be advertised	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q8b. Do you think that it is corrupt or not corrupt?**

	(n=511)
Corrupt	32%
Not corrupt	58%
Don't know/not sure	4%
Other	1%
It depends	5%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
Whether the person appointed was qualified for the job/has the right skills/has earned it	3
What the workplace/company arrangements/policy/rules are	2
The type/level/status of the position	1
Whether or not it's fair	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q8c. What if a *government employee* appointed someone they know without advertising the position, to hasten the process? Would that be acceptable or unacceptable?**

	(n=511)
Acceptable	17%
Unacceptable	74%
Don't know/not sure	1%
Other	1%
It depends	7%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
Whether the person appointed was qualified for the job/has the right skills/has earned it	5
What the workplace/company arrangements/policy/rules are	2
Whether or not the job should be advertised	2
The type/level/status of the position	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q8d. Would that be corrupt or not corrupt?**

	(n=511)
Corrupt	52%
Not corrupt	38%
Don't know/not sure	3%
Other	1%
It depends	6%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
Whether the person appointed was qualified for the job/has the right skills/has earned it	3
What the workplace/company arrangements/policy/rules are	1
The type/level/status of the position	1
Whether or not the job should be advertised	1
Whether or not it's fair	1
If there was a bribe involved	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q9a. A government employee gives confidential information about department clients to a friend who works in a private company. Is that situation acceptable or unacceptable?**

	(n=511)
Acceptable	3%
Unacceptable	94%
It depends	3%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
The motive for giving/receiving the information/whether the information is going to be used for some kind of gain or hurt someone	1
The type/status/importance of the information being given out	1
The status of the person giving or receiving the information	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q9b. Do you think that situation is corrupt or not corrupt?**

	(n=511)
Corrupt	79%
Not corrupt	12%
Don't know/not sure	2%
Other	1%
It depends	6%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
The motive for giving/receiving the information; whether the information is going to be used for some kind of gain or hurt someone	5
The type/status/importance of the information being given out	1
The status of the person giving or receiving the information	1
Whether giving out the information breaches any guidelines	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q9c. What if a person working in a *private* company gives the information to a friend? Would that be acceptable or unacceptable?**

	(n=511)
Acceptable	5%
Unacceptable	89%
Don't know/not sure	1%
It depends	5%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
The motive for giving/receiving the information; whether the information is going to be used for some kind of gain or hurt someone	3
The type/status/importance of the information being given out	2
The status of the person giving or receiving the information	1
Whether giving out the information breaches any guidelines	1

\*More than one response could be given.

**Q9d. Would that situation be corrupt or not corrupt?**

	(n=511)
Corrupt	71%
Not corrupt	18%
Don't know/not sure	3%
Other	1%
It depends	7%

It depends on:	(n=511) %*
The motive for giving/receiving the information; whether the information is going to be used for some kind of gain or hurt someone	5
The type/status/importance of the information being given out	2
The status of the person giving or receiving the information	1
Whether giving out the information breaches any guidelines	1

\*More than one response could be given.

- 10a. We are interested in ways that different people feel that corruption in the *NSW public sector* affects them *personally* ... (pause). Thinking specifically about you and your family, do you feel that corruption in the NSW public sector affects *you or your family*, in any way?

	1996 (n=511)	1994 (n=402)
Yes	56%	46%
No	37%	48%
Don't know/not sure	8%	6%

- 10b. In what way does it affect *you or your family*? (If respondent answers "It costs" or something similar, *probe* with: What exactly do you mean by that? Can you provide an example?) (*probe fully*) How else does corruption in the NSW public sector affect you or your family?

Corruption affects us in the following ways	(n=511) %*
Financial effects	18
Can't get a job/affects my chances for employment	7
Corruption in policing (makes us feel unsafe)	7
Everyone is affected	7
Disillusionment/loss of confidence/loss of trust	6
Provides a bad example to others/affects the morals/ethics/standards of the public sector/community	5
Creates inequities (advantaging people of influence)	5
Problems with local government	5
Quality of service is lessened/money being diverted from service	5
Privacy is an issue	1
People should obey the rules	1
Specific examples of corruption given	5
Other effects	3
Don't know/can't specify how I or my family is affected	6
Other responses too vague to categorise	3

\*More than one type of effect could be given.

I'm now going to read some more statements to you. Please tell me what effects, if any, these situations might have on you or your family?

- Q11. A person fails their driving test. The driving examiner accepts \$100 to say they have passed. What effects, if any, do you think this might have on you or your family?

	(n=511)
Some effect	90%
No effect	8%
Don't know/not sure	2%

Effect on self or family	(n=511) %*
Negative effect on road safety/accidents or fatalities might occur	77
It's unfair/to people who do go for their licence and fail/if there was a quota/if examiners expect money to pass people/could miss out	5
Sets a bad example to the community/sets a trend/poor social ethic	2
Loss of confidence and trust in public sector/RTA/driving test	2
It could impinge on our rights/it's immoral/corrupt	2
Potential effects on insurance costs	1
No effect	8
Don't know/not sure	2
Other	5

\*More than one type of effect could be given.

**Q12.** A health inspector visits a take-away food shop and finds some food that is clearly passed the use-by date. The health inspector takes \$100 from the owner of the shop to ignore the use-by date. What effects, if any, do you think this might have on you or your family?

(n=511)

Some effect	95%
No effect	4%
Don't know/not sure	1%

Effect on self or family	(n=511) %*
We could buy/eat contaminated food and be poisoned/unhealthy/sick/ill	78
Someone could die	8
Cost to taxpayer/medical charges	4
Loss of faith in public sector/bad business/lower standards	11
Waste of personal money	1
Small effect - some food is okay after the use by date	2
No effect	4
Don't know/not sure	1
Other	4

\*More than one type of effect could be given.

**Q13.** A government employee regularly spends part of the day using office facilities to organise their private catering business. What effects do you think this might have on you or your family?

(n=511)

Some effect	73%
No effect	22%
Don't know/not sure	5%

Effect on self or family	(n=511) %*
Abuse of taxpayers' money/increase in taxes/costs	48
Loss of access to government service/loss of quality of service/job not being done properly	25
Society as a whole will suffer/negative affect on social trends/morals/ethics	3
Unfair advantage, especially over other small businesses	3
Government as a whole will suffer/loss of faith/trust in public sector	1
No effect	22
Don't know/not sure	5
Other	3

\*More than one type of effect could be given.

For the following statements, please tell me whether you ... *strongly agree* ... *agree* ... *disagree* ... or ... *strongly disagree* with each of them.

	Statement	(n=511)				
		Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Don't know/not sure %
Q14	People who report corruption are likely to suffer for it.	24	52	18	2	3
Q15	It's <i>not</i> my responsibility to report corruption.	1	7	58	32	2
Q16	I'm not sure how serious corruption needs to be before I should report it.	2	37	45	13	4
Q17	The chances of getting caught doing something corrupt at work are slim.	5	44	35	7	8
Q18	If I knew corruption was occurring, I would report it, <i>even if</i> I didn't have enough evidence to prove it.	6	34	48	7	5
Q19	There is no point in reporting corruption in the <i>NSW public sector</i> because nothing useful <i>will</i> be done about it.	6	26	45	15	7
Q20	There is nothing that I personally can do about corruption in the <i>NSW public sector</i>	5	36	45	12	2

**Q21a.** Several years ago, the government set up a body to deal with corruption in the NSW public sector. Can you tell me what it is called?

Response	1996 (n=511) %	1995 (n=515) %
Correct name - Independent Commission Against Corruption	38	47
Don't know/not sure	53	45
Incorrect name - including Royal Commission Against Corruption or similar; Police Royal Commission	3	2
Incorrect name - Ombudsman	2	1
Other incorrect	6	5

**Q21b.** (If incorrect or don't know) Have you heard of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the I.C.A.C. or I-cac?

(n=319)

Yes	87%
No	11%
Don't know/not sure	2%

Combining answers to Q21a and Q21b 92% had heard of the ICAC.

**Q22.** Do you think the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in *exposing some* of the corruption in NSW?

Response	1996 (n=470) %	1995 (n=475) %	1994 (n=371) %
Successful	82	81	78
Unsuccessful	10	11	10
Don't know	8	8	12

**Q23a.** Do you think the ICAC has been successful or unsuccessful in *reducing* the level of the corruption in NSW?

Response	1996 (n=470) %	1995 (n=475) %	1994 (n=371) %
Successful	53	49	43
Unsuccessful	25	32	36
Don't know	22	19	21

**Q23b. (If response is "unsuccessful" or "don't know/not sure") Why do you say that?**

Reasons given	1996 (n=470) %
<i>Unsuccessful</i>	
Corruption still happening/still there/can see evidence of it	13
Corruption cannot be stopped/it's human nature/too large a problem (for anyone)	3
No results/prosecutions/nothing done	3
Police Royal Commission has been successful/the ICAC has not	2
Has not addressed serious corruption	1
(The ICAC) Needs more power/support/wider terms of reference	1
ICAC has not reduced corruption but has had other (positive) effects	1
Too early to say	*
ICAC is corrupt	*
Other (unsuccessful)	7
<i>Don't know whether it's been successful or not in reducing corruption</i>	
Don't know because I'm not informed/don't follow media/have no information	6
Don't know how much corruption there was/is	3
I never hear results of their work	1
It's too early to say	1
It's too hard to reduce/there's always going to be corruption	*
Other	4
Don't know	4

\*Some respondents did nominate these activities, but not enough to equal 1%.

**Q24a. Do you think that having the ICAC is a good thing for the people of NSW?**

	1996 (n=470)	1995 (n=475)	1994 (n=371)
Yes	93%	91%	91%
No	5%	3%	4%
Don't know/not sure	3%	6%	5%



**Q24b. Why do you say that?**

Reason given	1996 (n=470) %*
<i>Positive comments</i>	
Acts as a deterrent/keeps people honest	17
Better than nothing/have to have something/somebody	15
It's good to have a watchdog/monitoring body	13
Informs the public/makes public aware of corruption/exposes corruption	13
It's trying to control/trying to stop corruption	13
ICAC is effective	12
It's somewhere to go to report corruption	9
It's a good thing IF (conditional support)	9
It's independent	5
Good to have someone that will investigate	5
It's a good thing BUT (support with reservations)	5
Specific reference to the good job of the Royal Commission/police corruption/ paedophilia	4
Raises public confidence in government/public sector	3
Makes people accountable	3
Saves money/stops others wasting money	2
Focuses on corruption/has a specialist focus	1
Other	8
Don't know	1
<i>Negative comments</i>	
Waste of money/is too expensive	2
Isn't doing it's job/doesn't address the right issues/no results	2
Not enough of a deterrent	**
Other	1
Don't know	3

\*Figures listed total more than 100% as more than one reason could be given.

\*\*Some respondents did nominate this but not enough to equal 1%

The following statements are about the role of the ICAC. Please tell me whether you think each of the statements is true or false ...

Question		1996 (n=470) %		
		True	False	Don't know
Q25	The ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption in the NSW public sector.	93	2	5
Q26	The ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption in the private sector even when the corruption has nothing to do with the public sector.	34	35	31
Q27	The ICAC is the anti-corruption body for the whole of Australia.	27	59	14
Q28	The ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption in NSW local government.	80	6	14
Q29	The ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption against NSW politicians.	84	7	9
Q30	The ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption against NSW judges and magistrates	73	9	17
Q31	The ICAC has the power to prosecute people	40	40	19

Q32. ICAC activities are sometimes reported on TV, radio and in newspapers. Can you tell me what any of the stories have been about?

	(n=470)
Police	49%
Nick Greiner/Terry Metherell (Min. of Education)	14%
Paedophiles/paedophilia	12%
Politicians	6%
Downgrading of Semple's position	3%
Magistrates and judges	2%
RTA	2%
Local Councils (unspecified)	2%
Noteworthy/famous individuals (e.g. John Elliott; Christopher Skase; Alan Bond)	5%
Byron Bay	1%
State Rail	1%
Public servants (unspecified)	1%
Interstate corruption	1%
Construction/building industry	1%
Other previous ICAC investigations	1%
Philip Smiles/payment of parliamentary pension	*
Police Airwing/Crane Air	*
Harness Racing Authority/Chief Steward	*
Licensing inspector/licensed clubs/card machines	*
Randwick Council	*
Aboriginal Land Council	*
Glebe Morgue	*
Other (vague descriptions)	2%
No/don't know	30%

\*Some respondents did nominate these activities, but not enough to equal 1%.

**Q33a. Have you heard or read anything about the Glebe Morgue investigation?**

(n=470)  
 Yes 43%  
 No/Don't know 57%

**Q33b. The Glebe Morgue was an ICAC investigation. Were you aware of that?**

(n=470)  
 Yes 20%  
 No/Don't know 80%

**Q34. Thinking about all the reports about the ICAC on television, radio and in the newspapers, what impressions do you get about the ICAC from these reports?**

Impressions of the ICAC	n=356 %*
<b>Positive impressions</b> Doing a good job/doing good things/having a positive effect 30 Really trying to stamp out corruption 14 Exposing a lot of corruption 6 Putting fear into the minds of corrupt people/acting as a deterrent 4 Very thorough 4 Independent 2 Professional 1 Positive with reservations 11 Needs more resources/greater power 8 Other positive impressions 7	
<b>Negative impressions</b> Doesn't achieve/not effective 10 Too slow 3 Damages the reputation of the accused 2 Should focus on bigger issues 1 Other negative 9	
<b>Other</b> Comments specifically mention Police Royal Commission 6 Sees that the ICAC is controversial/ under attack yet respondent supports ICAC 4 Depends which newspaper you read/channel you watch 3 There should be more media coverage 2 Comments specifically mention John Elliot, NCA, Brewing 1 Other comments - not clear whether the comments are positive or negative 6 Other responses which do not address the question 1 Don't know/don't think about it 4	

\*Figures listed total more than 100% as respondents were able to give more than one impression.

## Demographics

### D1. Record gender

	(n=511)
Female	52 %
Male	48 %

### D2. What is your age?

	(n=511)
18-19 years	3 %
20-24 years	11 %
25-29 years	10 %
30-34 years	12 %
35-39 years	13 %
40-44 years	12 %
45-49 years	9 %
50-54 years	7 %
55-59 years	6 %
60-64 years	7 %
65+ years	10 %

### D3. Are you currently in paid employment?

	(n=511)
Yes	63 %
No	37 %

### D4. (If in paid employment) In the public sector or private sector?

	(n=321)
Public sector	27 %
Private sector	73 %

### D5. (if public sector, ask) is that the NSW public sector or the Commonwealth public sector?

	(n=86)
NSW public sector	83 %
Commonwealth public sector	17 %

### D6. Do you live in

	(n=511)
Sydney	59 %
Newcastle	6 %
Wollongong	1 %
Country NSW	33 %