

Tuesday 7 March 2023

Investigation into the awarding of Roads and Traffic Authority and Roads and Maritime Services contracts (Operation Paragon)

ICAC FINDINGS

The ICAC found that Alexandre Dubois, Craig Steyn, Chahid Chahine, Barrak Hadid, Towfik Taha, Talal Rifai, Bilal Najjarin, Abdula Nachabe, Gamele Nachabe, Hassan Alameddine, John Goldberg, Joseph Rahme, Ashley Alexander, Sandra Alexander and Steven Masters engaged in serious corrupt conduct. Read the full findings [here](#).

ICAC RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission seeks the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) on whether any prosecution should be commenced. The DPP determines whether any criminal charges can be laid, and conducts all prosecutions. The Commission is of the opinion that consideration should be given to obtaining the advice of the DPP about the prosecution of Mr Dubois, Mr Steyn, Mr Chahine, Mr Hadid, Mr Taha, Mr Rifai, Mr Najjarin, Abdula Nachabe, Gamele Nachabe, Mr Alameddine, Mr Goldberg, Mr Alexander, Mrs Alexander and Mr Masters for various [offences](#).

CORRUPTION PREVENTION

The Commission has made nine [corruption prevention recommendations](#) to help prevent the conduct identified in the investigation from recurring.

BACKGROUND

On 7 May 2018, an anonymous caller contacted the Transport for NSW (TfNSW) hotline and reported that Mr Dubois was awarding average speed safety camera contracts to friends of his, and that three or four of the companies quoting for the work were owned by the same persons. The caller also indicated that Mr Dubois was significantly inflating the prices of these contracts.

Mr Dubois was a project manager of heavy vehicles programs within the Compliance Operations Branch of TfNSW's Compliance and Regulatory Services Division. After receiving this report, TfNSW conducted covert enquiries by accessing online procurement and contract records. Those enquiries identified that, since late-2012, Mr Dubois was directly or indirectly involved in engaging one of the companies identified in the report to undertake approximately \$10 million worth of work.

On 22 May 2018, Ken Kanofski, chief executive of the then RMS, which is now a part of TfNSW, reported this allegation to the Commission pursuant to s 11 of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988*. This section of the ICAC Act requires the principal officer of a public authority to report to the Commission any matter that the person suspects on reasonable grounds concerns or may concern corrupt conduct.

After assessing the matter, on 31 May 2018 the Commission determined to conduct a preliminary investigation and decided to escalate the matter to a full investigation, expanding the scope in March 2019 to include Mr Dubois' colleague, Mr Steyn, who was the heavy vehicle maintenance and average speed camera program manager. This was because the Commission discovered during the investigation that Mr Steyn was also involved in receiving benefits in return for awarding contracts. Some of the contracting companies were owned by the same persons, suggesting a subversion of the procurement process. A public inquiry was held over 51 days in May-June 2021, December 2021 and March 2022.

Read the full report [here](#).