

Public Attitudes Towards the CJC

Research and Prevention Division

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The CJC's mission is to promote integrity in the Queensland Public Sector and an effective, fair and accessible criminal justice system.

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Criminal Justice Commission
557 Coronation Drive
TOOWONG QLD 4066

PO Box 137
BRISBANE ALBERT STREET QLD 4002

Tel 3360 6060
Fax 3360 6333

Web site: www.cjc.qld.gov.au
Email: mailbox@cjc.qld.gov.au

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Executive summary

This document presents the results of a telephone survey conducted in July 1999 of 1502 people throughout Queensland on their knowledge and attitudes towards the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC). This is the fourth survey in a series, previous surveys having been undertaken in 1991, 1993 and 1995. Where appropriate, the current survey's findings are compared to these previous surveys.

Overall, the proportion of Queenslanders who had heard of the CJC has remained at around the 90 per cent mark for the last three surveys. For those who had heard of the CJC, the key findings from the 1999 survey were as follows.

General views of the CJC

- 90 per cent of respondents agreed that 'having the CJC is a good thing for the people of Queensland'.
- 97 per cent of respondents stated they thought it was 'very' or 'fairly' important that the CJC be independent from the government.
- 56 per cent believed the CJC was 'very' or 'fairly' independent, and 32 per cent said it was not independent; the proportion of respondents who considered the CJC to be 'very' or 'fairly' independent increased since 1995, when it was 46 per cent.

The CJC's police oversight role

Compared with 1995:

- an increased proportion of those interviewed were aware of the CJC's police oversight role (up about 4% to 91%)
- the extent to which the CJC was perceived to be independent from the Queensland Police Service (QPS) increased by around 4 per cent to 66 per cent
- the extent to which the CJC was perceived to have improved police conduct increased by around 7 per cent to 70 per cent.

There was a continuing high level of agreement with the proposition that complaints against police should be investigated by an external body, not by the police themselves (89%).

The 1999 survey also included, for the first time, a question which asked respondents which body — the CJC or the QPS — was best to deal with various types of complaints against police. The types of matters that respondents were asked about were officer rudeness, assault and suspected bribery. The majority of respondents (58%) considered that the QPS was the best body to deal with a complaint of rudeness, whereas 58 per cent saw the CJC as the most appropriate agency to investigate an allegation of bribery. Views were divided fairly evenly as to whether the CJC or the QPS should handle an assault complaint.

The CJC's public sector oversight role

Since 1995:

- awareness of the CJC's public sector oversight role has increased (up about 7% to 69%)
- the extent to which the CJC is perceived to have successfully tackled public sector corruption has increased (up about 5% to 57%).

The CJC's local government oversight role

First time asked questions regarding this function found:

- only 39 per cent of respondents were aware of the CJC's local government oversight role
- among these respondents, 48 per cent saw the CJC as having been successful in tackling local government corruption.

Comparison between groups

- Knowledge of the CJC and its functions is less common among females than males. Generally, females were more likely not to have heard of the CJC and were more likely to be unaware of specific CJC oversight functions.
- Knowledge of the CJC is higher in Brisbane than in other parts of the State. Since 1995, there has been a substantial increase in the proportion of respondents in the West, Far North, and South East (excluding Brisbane) of the State who have not heard of the CJC.
- Younger people (aged 18 to 34) were more likely not to have heard of the CJC and were

- more likely to be unaware of specific CJC oversight functions.
- There was a large increase since 1995 in the proportion of respondents without a secondary education who had not heard of the CJC.
- A large proportion of students were unaware that the CJC has a public sector oversight role. This group was also less likely than other employment status groups to believe the CJC was independent from the police.
- Young people are generally less aware than older people of the existence and work of the CJC, particularly its role in relation to the public sector. This suggests that specific strategies need to be developed to provide young people with comprehensive information about the CJC and its activities. As a first step towards addressing this issue, the CJC is currently developing a resource kit for distribution to teachers in TAFE Colleges and secondary schools.

Implications

Although the overall results are positive, this and previous surveys have also identified several issues which require attention by the CJC.

- Only a minority of respondents to the 1999 survey were aware of the CJC's oversight role in relation to local government. This compares poorly with the findings of a similar survey recently conducted by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in New South Wales, which found that 81 per cent of respondents were aware that ICAC had responsibility for local government (ICAC 1999). Clearly, the CJC needs to be doing more to promote the community's awareness that the CJC is empowered to deal with suspected official misconduct in the local government sector.
- Knowledge of the CJC is greater in Brisbane than in other parts of Queensland, especially the Far North. Of some concern is the fact that between 1995 and 1999 there was a large increase in the proportion of respondents in the Far North who had not heard of the CJC. A higher CJC profile in the northern areas of the State (such as more frequent visits by the Chairman and other senior figures, and development of information campaigns in conjunction with local media) would help to redress this situation.
- Respondents placed a very high value on the CJC being independent from government, but there was some disagreement and uncertainty about how independent the CJC was in practice. For this reason, it is very important that both the CJC and the government of the day act in ways which protect and enhance the independent standing of the organisation.

Introduction

In July 1999, AC Nielsen Market Research conducted a telephone survey of 1502 people throughout Queensland on behalf of the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC). The survey was concerned primarily with measuring attitudes towards the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and public confidence, knowledge and satisfaction regarding making complaints about the police, public servants and local government employees.

A number of questions aimed at obtaining information about public knowledge of and confidence in the CJC were also included in this survey. These questions provide a measure of organisational performance over time and, potentially, a basis for comparison with similar agencies in other jurisdictions (for example, the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in New South Wales). These data will also be used to help focus future public education initiatives of the CJC. If the CJC is to be effective, it is essential that there is confidence in the organisation and that members of the public know that they can complain about corruption and other forms of misconduct to the CJC.

This document presents the responses to the questions in the survey relating specifically to the CJC. Reports on other aspects covered by the survey are available. Some of the questions were also asked in earlier public attitude surveys conducted in 1991, 1993 and 1995. For these

questions, comparisons with results from the earlier surveys are provided.

The previous three surveys consisted of samples of about 900 respondents. The sample size for the most recent survey was increased to enable more detailed demographic comparisons to be made. It should be noted that the responses for all surveys were weighted for age, sex and location in order to ensure the most accurate possible representation of Queensland attitudes were obtained. However, as these weighted responses did not differ from the actual responses, only the latter are presented in this paper. Numbers reported in all tables are percentages. Where appropriate, table or figure headings are worded exactly as the questions were asked in the survey. For this reason, a copy of the survey has not been included in this document.¹

Structure of the report

Part A of this report is divided into several sections. The first section examines the general public's awareness of the CJC and knowledge of its functions, and perceptions of its independence. The next three sections address respondents' awareness and perception of the CJC's police, public service and local government oversight functions.

Part B explores some differences in the way certain demographic groups responded to the questions concerning knowledge of and confidence in the CJC. The demographic factors examined are sex, age, location, level of education and employment status.

Part A: General awareness

Knowledge of the CJC

Table 1 shows that the proportion of the population who have heard of the CJC has remained relatively stable at around the 90 per cent mark since 1993. The remainder of the questions presented in this paper (except where noted) were asked of those respondents who indicated that they had heard of the CJC.

Table 1 — Have you heard of the Criminal Justice Commission or CJC?

	1991 (n=901)	1993 (n=900)	1995 (n=900)	1999 (n=1502)
Yes	76.6	90.2	92.4	89.3
No	22.9	9.6	7.3	10.0
Don't know	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.7

Table 2 shows that most Queenslanders today have an idea of some functions of the CJC. In the 1991 survey about 53 per cent of those who had heard of the CJC said that they did not know what it did. However, over subsequent surveys this figure has fallen to around 12 per cent in 1999.

As indicated by several of the answers below, the majority of respondents in the last three surveys mentioned that the CJC performs a police oversight role.² The second most well-known function of the CJC in the 1999 survey (as indicated by two answers in table 2 — 'Investigate complaints about public servants' and 'Fights crime/corruption in government') was its public service oversight role, which was mentioned by around 25 per cent of people. This figure has risen from around the 10 per cent mark in the 1995 and 1993 surveys. Around 14 per cent of people surveyed in 1999 also thought that the CJC was still involved in investigating crime or organised crime, even though this responsibility was removed from the CJC in 1997 with the establishment of the Queensland Crime Commission.

Table 2 — In your own words, what does the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) do?

	1991 (n=690)	1993 (n=812)	1995 (n=832)	1999 (n=1342)
General functions				
Implement Fitzgerald Inquiry/reform	4.1	7.1	2.3	1.7
Independent investigative body that looks into everything and fights corruption generally in Queensland	—	4.8	6.3	10.2
Police-related functions				
Clean up the police service/check on police/act as watchdog	6.5	10.6	13.2	11.8
Put the corrupt police behind bars	1.6	2.3	0.7	0.6
Investigate corrupt police	18.6	22.3	34.3	29.4
Investigate complaints about police	—	20.0	24.0	15.5
Crime-related functions				
Investigate gambling	2.5	0.9	1.1	0.1
Investigate crime/organised crime	—	8.7	13.2	13.6
Witness protection	—	0.9	0.1	0.2
Public sector anti-corruption functions				
Investigate corrupt politicians	9.1	12.8	13.5	14.0
Investigate complaints about teachers	—	2.5	1.2	0.4
Investigate complaints about public servants	—	11.5	10.8	21.5
Investigate complaints about local councillors	—	5.3	3.6	3.3
Fights crime/corruption in government	—	—	—	4.2
Fights crime/corruption in courts and justice system	—	—	2.6	2.5
Fights corruption/investigates in prisons	—	—	—	2.1
Law reform and review functions				
Law reform	6.1	5.5	2.6	2.8
Review prostitution laws	2.0	2.2	0.6	0.2
Conducts research	—	—	1.0	0.1
Other				
Wastes time or money or does nothing	—	1.8	4.3	4.2
Other	17.0	4.1	7.4	4.2
Don't know/can't say	53.3	33.7	15.5	12.1

Note: The percentages for this question add to over 100% as multiple responses were allowed.

Very few people mentioned a link with the Fitzgerald Inquiry or the CJC local council oversight role. In addition, there was little recognition of the CJC's role in the area of research and law reform, or witness protection.

Responses to a new question in the 1999 survey, which was designed to be a summary indicator, are presented in table 3. Ninety per cent of those who had heard of the CJC thought that the CJC was 'a good thing' for Queensland. This can be compared to a similar question asked in New South Wales surveys regarding the ICAC. In the 1999 ICAC survey, 95 per cent of the 458 people who were asked this question responded in the affirmative (ICAC 1999).

Table 3 — Do you think that having the CJC is a good thing for the people of Queensland?

	1999 (n=1342)
Yes	90.0
No	5.8
Don't know/can't say/not sure	4.2

Independence of the CJC

Table 4 shows that an overwhelming majority of those who had heard about the CJC — approximately 95 per cent for both the 1995 and 1999 surveys — thought it was important that the CJC be independent from government. This has increased from a similarly worded question asked in 1991, to which about 79 per cent said that they thought independence was important.³

Table 4 — How important is it for a body like the CJC to be independent from the government?

	1991* (n=690)	1995 (n=832)	1999 (n=1342)
Very important	56.7	76.8	84.4
Fairly important	22.2	17.9	12.7
Neither important or unimportant	3.0	0.5	1.0
Not very important	9.0	1.8	0.5
Not important at all	3.3	0.4	0.4
Don't know	5.8	2.6	1.0

Note: * The wording for the 1991 question was 'How important is it that the Criminal Justice Commission functions as a totally independent body?' and the scale was 'very important', 'important', 'neither', 'unimportant', and 'very unimportant'.

Table 5 shows that in 1999 about 56 per cent of people who had heard of the CJC thought that it was 'very' or 'fairly' independent from government. This proportion has increased from only about 46 per cent in 1995. Conversely, the proportion who saw the CJC as not independent has fallen from 36 per cent to 32 per cent. The proportion of 'don't know' responses has also declined.

Table 5 — How independent do you think the CJC actually is [from the government]?

	1995 (n=832)	1999 (n=1342)
Very independent	6.9	8.1
Fairly independent	39.5	47.9
Not very independent	27.2	26.3
Not independent at all	8.8	5.9
Don't know	17.7	11.8

The police oversight function

Table 6 shows that in the 1999 survey about 90 per cent of those who had heard of the CJC were aware that it investigated police misconduct; an increase of about 4 per cent since the 1995 survey.⁴

Table 7 shows that in the 1999 survey around 66 per cent of those who had heard of the CJC and were aware of its police oversight role indicated that they thought the CJC was independent from the police, about 24 per cent thought the CJC was not independent, and about 10 per cent answered that they did not know. The proportion perceiving the CJC as independent had increased by about 4 per cent since 1995. Conversely, the proportion stating they did not know how independent the CJC was has dropped about 6 per cent since the 1995 survey.

Table 6 — Are you aware that the CJC investigates police misconduct?

	1995 (n=832)	1999 (n=1342)
Yes	86.8	90.7
No	13.2	9.3

Table 7 — How independent do you think the CJC is from the police?

	1995 (n=722)	1999 (n=1217)
Very independent	17.3	17.2
Fairly independent	44.2	48.5
Not very independent	15.9	18.6
Not independent at all	6.2	5.6
Don't know	16.3	10.2

Table 8 shows that in the 1999 survey around 70 per cent of those who had heard of the CJC and were aware of its police oversight role indicated that they thought the CJC was successful in improving police conduct; about 13 per cent thought the CJC was not successful; and about 13 per cent answered that the CJC was neither successful nor unsuccessful, or that they did not know. Again, these figures show improvements since the 1995 survey.

Table 8 — Overall, how successful do you think the CJC has been in improving police conduct?

	1995 (n=722)	1999 (n=1217)
Very successful	7.8	9.6
Fairly successful	54.6	60.1
Neither successful or unsuccessful	15.2	13.1
Fairly unsuccessful	11.9	9.4
Very unsuccessful	3.0	3.4
Don't know	7.5	4.4

Dealing with complaints of police misconduct

Table 9 indicates that an overwhelming majority of those surveyed (this question was asked of all respondents in the surveys) — approximately 88 per cent for both the 1995 and 1999 surveys — thought it was important that complaints against the police be investigated by an independent body.

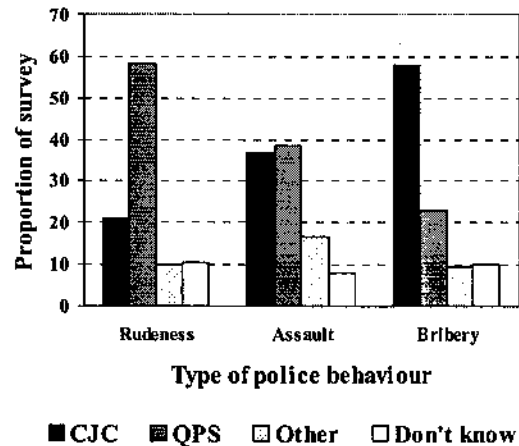
Table 9 — Complaints against the police should be investigated by an independent body, not by the police themselves

	1995 (n=900)	1999 (n=1502)
Strongly agree	52.3	45.7
Agree	35.1	43.5
Neither agree nor disagree	2.3	3.6
Disagree	6.6	5.1
Strongly disagree	2.2	0.9
Don't know	1.4	1.1

Figure 1 presents results from three new questions that asked respondents whether they would prefer a complaint to be handled by the CJC or the QPS. The type of complaints that respondents were asked about were officer rudeness, assault and suspected bribery. The figure shows that almost 60 per cent of people said that they considered the QPS to be the best organisation to deal with a complaint about a police officer's rudeness; about 20 per cent nominated the CJC and about 10 per

cent indicated a preference for another person or body. The most frequently stated other person or body were local Members of Parliament or the ombudsman.

Figure 1 — Preferred body for dealing with complaints of police officer rudeness, assault or suspected bribery (1999) (n = 1342)



There was a roughly equal split in views about whether the CJC or QPS was the best organisation to deal with an assault complaint against a police officer. Almost 40 per cent of people indicated the QPS and a similar proportion nominated the CJC. The most frequently stated other avenue of complaint for this type of matter was a solicitor or lawyer.

Almost 60 per cent of respondents saw the CJC as the best organisation to handle a complaint of police bribery, about 23 per cent nominated the QPS and about 10 per cent said they would complain elsewhere. The most frequently stated other avenue of complaint for this type of matter was a local Member of Parliament.

The public sector oversight role

Table 10 shows that people are gradually becoming more aware that the CJC has a public sector oversight role. In 1993 only about 48 per cent of those who had heard of the CJC knew that it carried out this oversight function, whereas in 1999 the proportion was almost 70 per cent. However, this does not compare favourably to the findings of the ICAC's latest community survey (ICAC 1999). That survey found that 94 per cent of the 458 respondents were aware that ICAC had responsibility for investigating corruption in the New South Wales public sector.⁵

Table 10 — Are you aware that the CJC is responsible for investigating and preventing corruption in the Queensland public sector?

	1993 (n=812)	1995 (n=832)	1999 (n=1342)
Yes	48.4	61.7	69.3
No	51.6	38.3	30.7

Note:

The wording for the 1993 question was 'Do you know you can complain about suspected public sector corruption to the Criminal Justice Commission?'

Table 11 shows that in 1999, of those respondents who had heard of the CJC and knew of its public sector oversight function approximately 55 per cent thought the CJC was successful in addressing public sector corruption; about 20 per cent thought the CJC was not successful; and about 25 per cent answered that the CJC was neither successful nor unsuccessful, or said that they did not know. These figures were a slight improvement on the 1995 survey.

Table 11 — How successful do you think the CJC has been in tackling public sector corruption?

	1995 (n=513)	1999 (n=930)
Very successful	3.9	4.9
Fairly successful	47.8	51.7
Neither successful or unsuccessful	12.3	17.5
Fairly unsuccessful	18.5	13.2
Very unsuccessful	8.0	4.5
Don't know	9.6	8.1

The local government oversight role

Table 12 shows that only about 40 per cent of those who had heard of the CJC were aware of its local government oversight role. No comparisons with previous years are possible as this question was asked for the first time in the 1999 survey. However, this result compares very poorly with the findings of a similar survey recently conducted by ICAC in New South Wales, which found that 81 per cent of the 458 respondents were aware that ICAC had responsibility for investigating corruption in the New South Wales local government (ICAC 1999).⁶

Table 12 — Are you aware that the CJC is responsible for investigating and preventing corruption in Queensland local government councils?

	1999 (n=1342)
Yes	39.1
No	60.9

Table 13 shows that of those who had heard of the CJC and knew of its local government oversight function, approximately 48 per cent thought the CJC was 'very' or 'fairly' successful in addressing local government corruption. About 20 per cent thought the CJC was not successful, and just over 30 per cent answered that the CJC was neither successful nor unsuccessful, or said that they did not know. The proportion of respondents who answered 'don't know' was considerably higher than in the equivalent questions for the QPS and the public sector.

Table 13 — How successful do you think the CJC has been in tackling local council corruption?

	1999 (n=525)
Very successful	7.2
Fairly successful	40.8
Neither successful or unsuccessful	16.0
Fairly unsuccessful	15.2
Very unsuccessful	4.4
Don't know	16.4

Part B: Demographic differences

Part B explores some differences in the way certain demographic groups responded to the questions concerning knowledge of and confidence in the CJC. Differences between various sections of the population were tested for using the Chi-square test. Due to the large sample sizes only those differences significant at a $p < .01$ level will be reported. The demographic factors examined were gender, age, location, level of education and employment status.

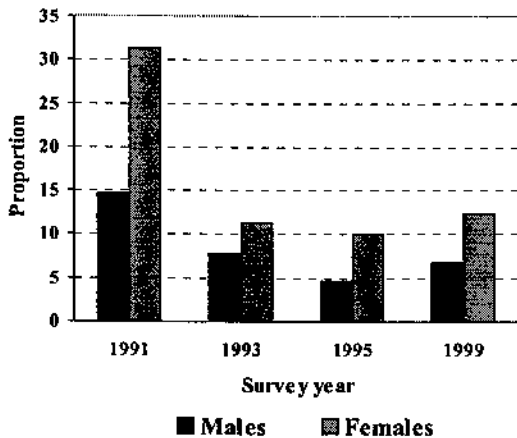
No demographic differences were found for the new summary question ('Do you think that having the CJC is a good thing for the people of Queensland?') so no reference to this question will be made here.

Gender

Knowledge of the CJC

In 1999, nearly twice as many females as males (12.4% compared to 6.8%) stated that they had not heard of the CJC.⁷ As illustrated in figure 2, similar trends were found in previous surveys. These differences were significant for each year except the 1993 survey.

Figure 2 — Proportion of male and female respondents who had not heard of the CJC

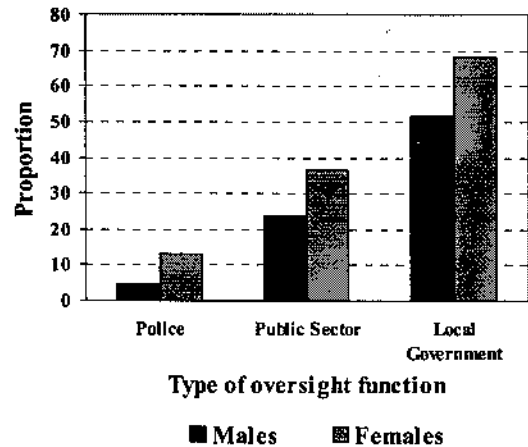


The CJC's oversight functions

There were statistically significant gender differences in public awareness about specific aspects of the CJC's role. As illustrated in figure 3, in general more females were unaware that the CJC investigates police misconduct,⁸ public sector corruption,⁹ and local government corruption.¹⁰

There were no significant gender differences in the views of how successful the CJC had been in improving police conduct or in tackling public sector and local government corruption.

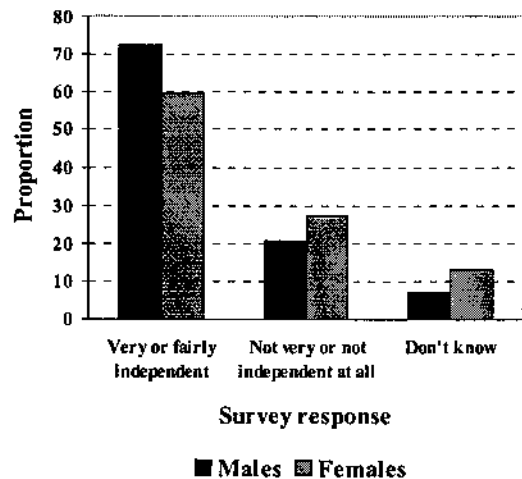
Figure 3 — Proportion of respondents not aware of the CJC police, public sector and local government oversight functions (1999)



Independence from the police

There was a statistically significant gender difference in respondents' views of how independent the CJC is from the police.¹¹ As shown in figure 4, males were more likely than females (72.5% compared to 59.9%) to think that the CJC was 'very' or 'fairly' independent. Females were more likely to see the CJC as 'not very' or 'not independent at all' (27.1% compared to 20.8% of males) or to state that they didn't know how independent the CJC was (13.1% compared to 6.8% of males).

Figure 4 — How independent do you think the CJC is from the police? (1999)



Dealing with police misconduct

Males and females did not significantly differ in their views as to which body — the CJC or the QPS — was most suited to deal with a complaint of rudeness. However, as figures 5 and 6 show, males were somewhat more likely than females to think the CJC should handle an assault¹² or bribery complaint.¹³

Figure 5 — Gender differences in views regarding who would be best to deal with a complaint of assault by a police officer (1999)

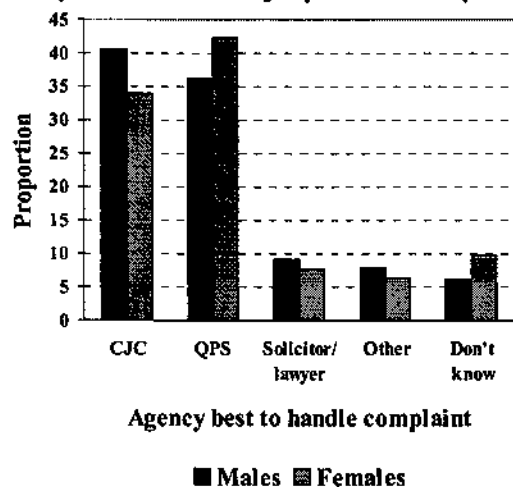
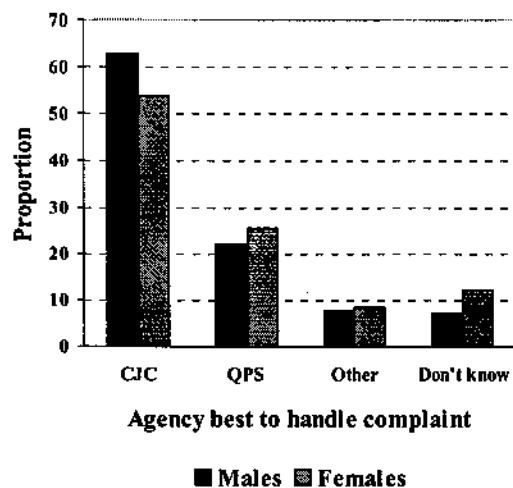


Figure 6 — Gender differences in views regarding who would be best to deal with a complaint of suspected bribery of a police officer (1999)

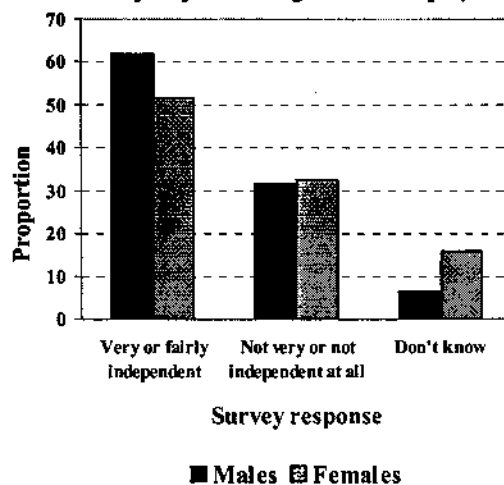


Independence from government

There were no significant gender differences in terms of the emphasis placed upon the CJC being independent from government. However, there were significant differences in terms of perceptions as to how independent the CJC actually is.¹⁴ Figure 7 illustrates that males were more likely than females to think that the CJC

was 'very' or 'fairly' independent (61.9% compared to 51.5%) and more females responded that they didn't know how independent the CJC actually was (15.9% compared to 6.5% of males).

Figure 7 — How independent do you think the CJC actually is [from the government]? (1999)



Region

In the 1999 survey the only regional differences related to whether respondents had heard of the CJC.¹⁵ Respondents living in Brisbane were more likely to have heard of the CJC (with only 6% indicating that they had not) than respondents from other parts of the State. In the South West and Central regions only 8.8 and 9.7 per cent respectively had not heard of the CJC. However, 12.5 per cent of the respondents from the South East of Queensland and 17.4 per cent of those from the Far North had not heard of the CJC.

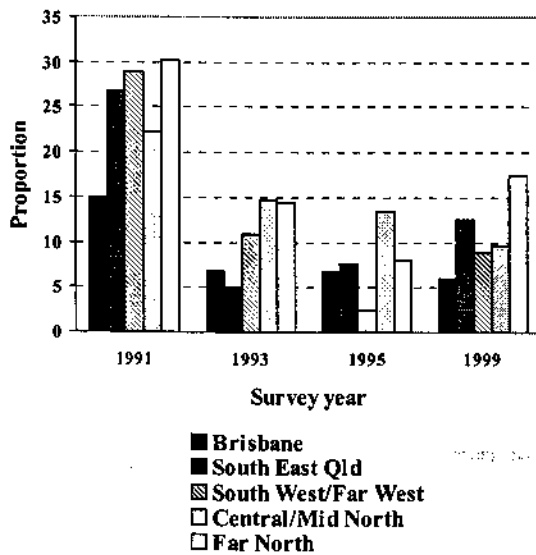
Figure 8 shows a fair degree of change in these levels of knowledge over the years surveyed. It should be noted that the location differences in the 1995 survey did not reach statistical significance (at the $p < .01$ level). Since 1991, when quite a large proportion stated that they had not heard of the CJC, the following trends can be seen in the level of knowledge about the CJC:

- Brisbane has remained fairly constant, with around 6 to 7 per cent stating they had not heard of the CJC
- the proportion of South East Queensland region respondents who had not heard of the CJC increased from 5 per cent in 1993 to 12.5 per cent in 1999
- in the South West/Far West region, the proportion stating they had not heard of the

CJC increased from only 2.5 per cent in 1995 to 8.8 per cent in 1999

- in the Central/Mid North region the proportion of respondents who had not heard of the CJC has fallen gradually from 14.7 per cent in 1993 to 9.7 per cent in 1999
- in the Far North region, the proportion stating they had not heard of the CJC increased markedly from 7.9 per cent in 1995 to 17.4 per cent in 1999.

Figure 8 — Proportion of respondents in regions who had not heard of the CJC



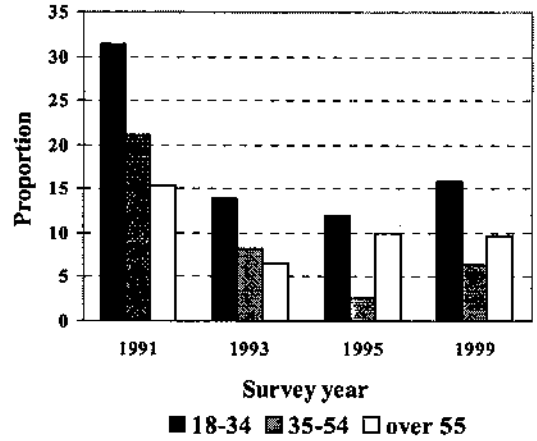
Age

There were statistically significant age differences in the knowledge of the CJC, awareness of the CJC's oversight functions, views on which agencies should deal with police misconduct, and the perceived independence of the CJC from the government.

In 1999, 15.9 per cent of the younger respondents (the 18–34 year old age group), had not heard of the CJC, compared with only 6.4 per cent of those aged 35–54 years and 9.7 per cent of those aged over 55 years.¹⁶ As illustrated in figure 9, similar trends were found in previous surveys and the age differences were significant for each year surveyed.

In 1999, there was a statistically significant difference between age groups in the level of awareness that the CJC investigates police misconduct,¹⁷ and in awareness that the CJC investigates and prevents public sector corruption¹⁸ and local government corruption.¹⁹

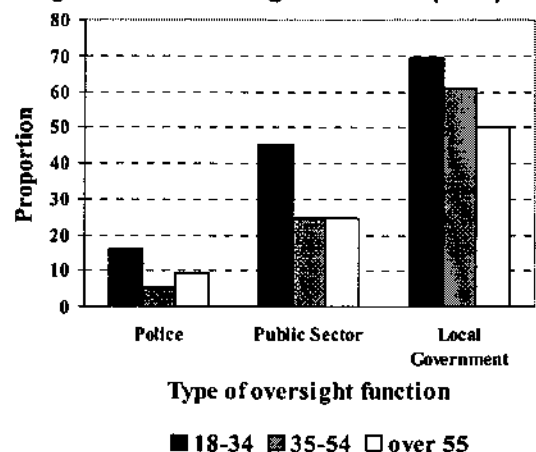
Figure 9 — Proportion of age groups not having heard of the CJC



As illustrated in figure 10, in general a greater proportion of younger respondents (18–34 year olds) were unaware of these CJC oversight roles:

- 16.1 per cent of respondents in the 18–34 year old age group were unaware that the CJC investigates police misconduct, compared with only 5.2 per cent of those aged 35–54 years and 9.4 per cent of those aged over 55 years.
- Younger respondents (aged 18–34) were more likely to be unaware that the CJC fulfils a public sector oversight role (45.3% compared to 24.8% of 35–54 year olds and 24.7% of over 55 year olds).
- Younger respondents (aged 18–34) were more likely to be unaware that the CJC fulfils a local government oversight function (69.4% compared to 61% of 35–54 year olds and 50% of those over 55 years).

Figure 10 — Proportion of age groups not aware of the CJC's police, public sector and local government oversight functions (1999)



There were no significant age differences in regards to respondents' views on the most appropriate body to deal with a complaint of officer rudeness. There were, however, significant age differences in respondents' views on the most appropriate body to deal with a complaint of assault²⁰ or suspected bribery.²¹ Figure 11 shows that younger respondents (aged 18-34) were more likely to prefer the CJC to deal with a complaint of assault and less likely to prefer a solicitor or lawyer. Conversely, older respondents (over 55 years) were more likely to prefer the QPS.

Figure 12 shows that younger respondents were again more likely to prefer that the CJC deal with suspected bribery and conversely less likely to prefer the QPS.

Figure 11 — Age differences in views regarding who would be best to deal with a complaint of assault by a police officer (1999)

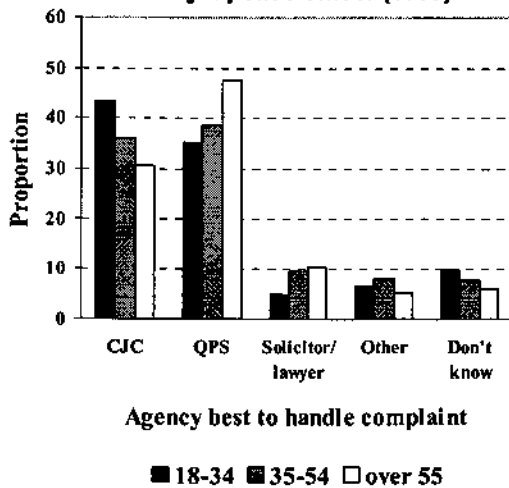
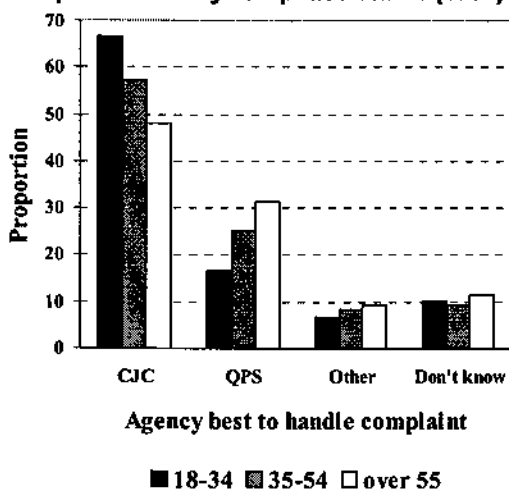
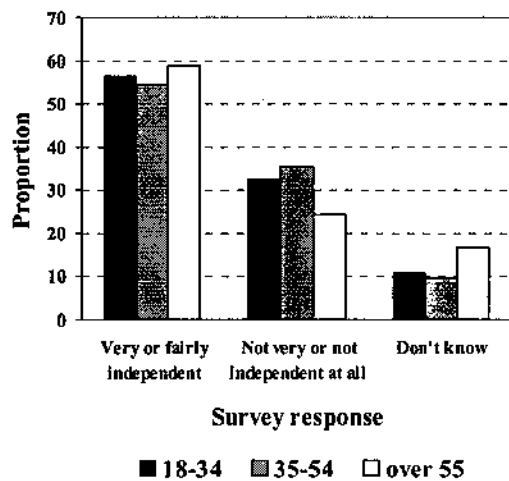


Figure 12 — Age differences in views regarding who would be best to deal with a complaint of suspected bribery of a police officer (1999)



There were no significant age differences between respondents in their views of the importance of the CJC being independent from the government. However, there were significant differences in terms of perceptions as to how independent the CJC actually is.²² Figure 13 illustrates that fewer respondents aged over 55 thought the CJC was 'not very' or 'not independent at all' (24.4% compared to 35.6% of 35-54 year olds and 32.6% of 18-34 year olds). Also, a greater proportion of older respondents said that they did not know how independent the CJC actually was.

Figure 13 — How independent do you think the CJC actually is [from the government]? (1999)



Education

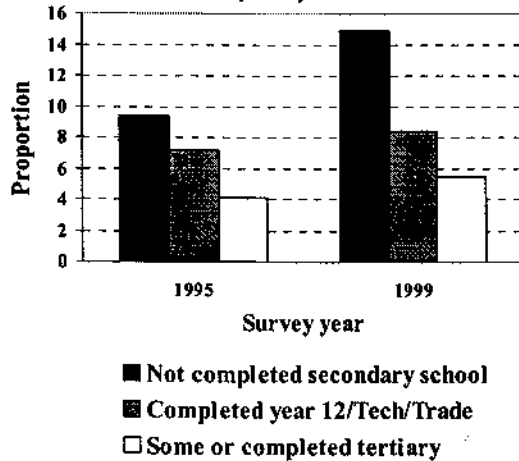
There were statistically significant education differences in knowledge of the CJC, awareness of the CJC's police oversight function, perceived independence from the police, views on which agencies should deal with police misconduct, and the perceived independence of the CJC from government.

Not surprisingly, tertiary educated respondents were more likely to have heard of the CJC.²³ As shown by figure 14, only 5.5 per cent of those with some experience of tertiary education had not heard of the CJC, compared with 14.9 per cent of those who had not completed secondary school.

Level of education was only asked in one previous survey — the 1995 survey — and in this year the level of education differences did not reach significance. As illustrated in figure 14, education trends similar to the 1999 survey were

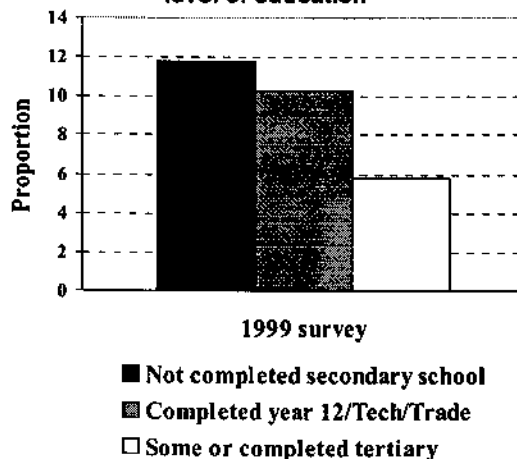
evident in the 1995 survey. The significant difference found in the 1999 survey was due to the large increase in the proportion of respondents who had not completed secondary school who had not heard of the CJC (an increase from 9.4% in 1995 to 14.9% in 1999).

Figure 14 — Proportion of respondents not having heard of the CJC by level of education (1999)



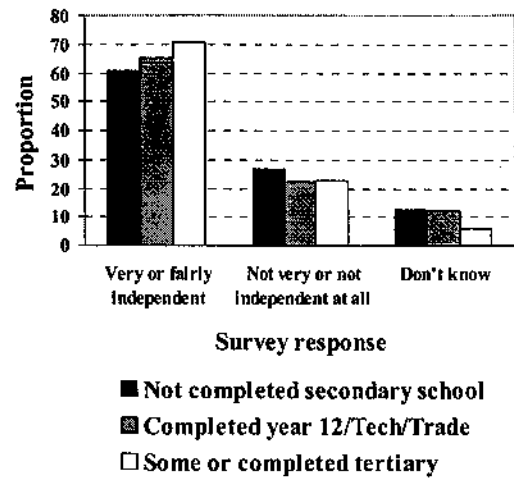
There was a statistically significant education difference in awareness that the CJC investigates police misconduct.²⁴ As shown in figure 15, respondents with some experience of higher education were more likely to know the CJC performs a police oversight function. Only 5.8 per cent of this group were unaware compared to 10.3 per cent of those who had completed year 12 or some other technical or trade qualification and 11.8 per cent of those who had not completed secondary school.

Figure 15 — Proportion of respondents not aware of the CJC police oversight function by level of education



As illustrated in figure 16, the likelihood of a respondent considering the CJC to be independent of the police increased with education.²⁵ Of those who had some experience with tertiary education, 70.8 per cent thought the CJC was 'very' or 'fairly' independent, compared with only 60.9 per cent of those who had not completed secondary school. There were no significant education differences in views of how successful the CJC had been in improving police conduct.

Figure 16 — How independent do you think the CJC is from the police? (1999)



There were no significant education differences in regards to respondents' views as to the most appropriate body to deal with a complaint of an assault by a police officer. There were however significant education differences in respondents' views on the most appropriate body to deal with a complaint of rudeness by a police officer²⁶ or suspected bribery.²⁷ Figure 17 shows that the more educated the respondents, the more likely they were to think a complaint of officer rudeness should be dealt with by the QPS.

Figure 17 — Level of education differences in views regarding who should deal with a complaint of rudeness by a police officer (1999)

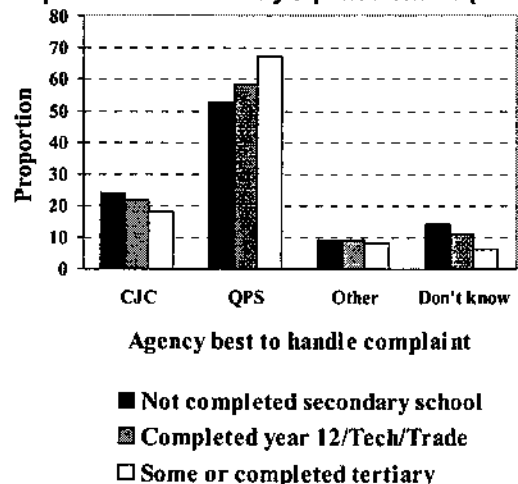


Figure 18 shows that, of those with some experience of tertiary education, 66 per cent stated the CJC was the best agency to deal with an allegation of bribery, compared to 55.7 per cent of those who had completed year 12 or some other technical or trade qualification.

There were no significant education differences in respondents' views of the importance that the CJC be independent from government, but there were significant differences in perception of how independent the CJC actually is.²⁸ Figure 19 shows that a greater proportion of the less educated respondents did not know how independent the CJC actually was. Of those who had not completed secondary school, 15.4 per cent stated they did not know how independent the CJC was, compared to only 6.7 per cent of those who had experienced some tertiary education.

Figure 18 — Level of education differences in views regarding who should deal with a complaint of suspected bribery of a police officer (1999)

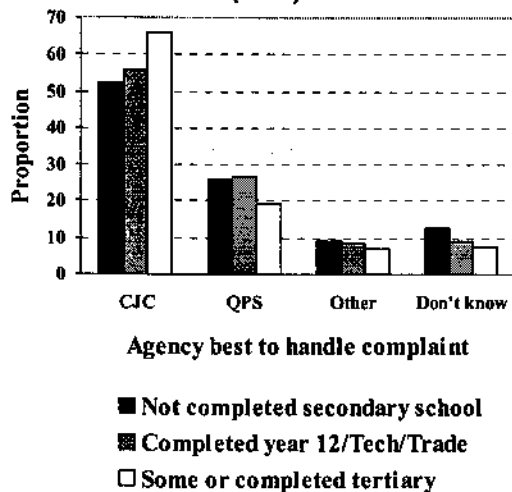
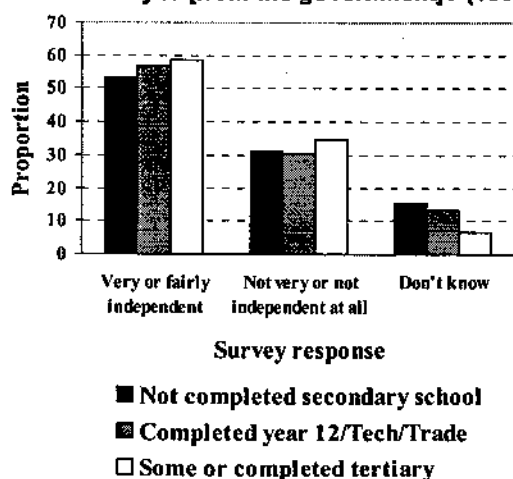


Figure 19 — How independent do you think the CJC actually is [from the government]? (1999)



Employment status

Employment status was divided into four groups for analysis: students; working (either full-time, part-time or casual); home duties; and pensioners or retired respondents. There were insufficient unemployed respondents to include this group in the analysis. Employment status differences correlated fairly strongly with the age and gender analyses already presented earlier in the document; therefore, only an abbreviated outline of these differences is presented below.

- Respondents in the workforce were most likely to be aware that the CJC investigates police misconduct with only 7.1 per cent indicating that they were unaware. Respondents engaged in home duties were least likely, with 15.4 per cent indicating they were not aware that the CJC investigates police misconduct.²⁹
- Respondents in the workforce and pensioners or retired respondents were most likely to be aware of CJC's public sector oversight function (71.3 and 70.6% respectively). Students were least likely to be aware (52.1%) and respondents engaged in home duties fell in the middle (62.5%).³⁰
- Respondents in the workforce were most likely to think the CJC was 'very' or 'fairly' independent from the police with 68.9 per cent indicating these responses. Students and respondents engaged in home duties were least likely with 52.3 and 53 per cent respectively agreeing with that view.³¹
- Students were most likely to state that the CJC was 'very' or 'fairly' independent from the government (64.6%); respondents engaged in home duties (48.5%) and pensioners or retired persons (51.9%) were least likely. None of the students surveyed said that they didn't know how independent the CJC was, compared with 18.3 per cent of pensioner or retired respondents and 16.2 per cent of respondents engaged in home duties.³²

Discussion and conclusions

Overall, the results of the survey show that there is considerable public awareness of, and confidence in, the CJC. The great majority of respondents had heard of the CJC and most were aware of its oversight role in relation to the Police Service and the public sector. There was a high level of agreement with the proposition that 'the CJC is a good thing for the people of Queensland' and substantial support for the view that the CJC had been 'fairly' or 'very' successful in improving police conduct and tackling public sector corruption. The majority of respondents also agreed that the CJC was 'fairly' or 'very' independent from the police and the government.

Although the overall results are positive, this and previous surveys have also identified several issues which require attention by the CJC.

- Only a minority of respondents to the 1999 survey were aware of the CJC's oversight role in relation to local government. This compares poorly with the findings of a similar survey recently conducted by ICAC in New South Wales, which found that 81 per cent of respondents were aware that ICAC had responsibility for local government (ICAC 1999). Clearly, the CJC needs to be doing more to promote the community's awareness that the CJC is empowered to deal with suspected official misconduct in the local government sector.
- The disparity between Queenslanders' knowledge of the CJC public sector oversight role and the New South Wales public's knowledge of ICAC's role in this area was not as great as the difference found between knowledge of the two organisations' local government oversight roles; however, this is an aspect of the CJC's role that could benefit from improved community awareness.
- Young people are generally less aware than older people of the existence and work of the CJC, particularly its role in relation to the public sector. This suggests that specific

strategies need to be developed to provide young people with comprehensive information about the CJC and its activities. As a first step towards addressing this issue, the CJC is currently developing a resource kit for distribution to teachers in TAFE Colleges and secondary schools.

- Knowledge of the CJC is greater in Brisbane than in other parts of Queensland, especially the Far North. Of some concern is the fact that between 1995 and 1999 there was a large increase in the proportion of respondents in the Far North who had not heard of the CJC. A higher CJC profile in the northern areas of the State (such as more frequent visits by the Chairman and other senior figures, and development of information campaigns in conjunction with local media) would help to redress this situation.

Some other pertinent findings are as follows:

- A majority of respondents agreed that complaints of rudeness were best investigated by the QPS, but most saw the CJC as the appropriate body to investigate an allegation of bribery. There was a roughly even split of opinion about which body was best to deal with an assault complaint. At present less serious complaints such as rudeness and minor assaults are usually dealt with by the QPS, whereas the CJC investigates the more serious matters. The survey findings indicate that this division of responsibility is broadly in line with public expectations.
- Respondents placed a very high value on the CJC being independent from government, but there was some disagreement and uncertainty about how independent the CJC was in practice. For this reason, it is very important that both the CJC and the government of the day act in ways which protect and enhance the independent standing of the organisation.

As indicated in the Introduction, those findings from the survey which relate to the public's perception — and experience — of misconduct in the Police Service and the public and local government sectors are to be presented in separate papers.

Reference

Independent Commission Against Corruption 1999, *Community and Journalists' Attitudes to Corruption and the ICAC*, ICAC, Sydney.

Endnotes

- 1 Copies of the questionnaire can be supplied upon request.
- 2 It should be noted that, as respondents were allowed multiple responses in this question, if percentages in the following table are just added together then some respondents will be double counted. For example, some of the people stating that the CJC 'investigates corrupt police' will have also stated that the CJC 'investigates complaints about police'.
- 3 This question was not asked in the 1993 survey.
- 4 These questions were not asked in the 1991 and 1993 surveys.
- 5 The ICAC question required a 'true', 'false' or 'don't know' response to the following statement: 'The ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption in the NSW public sector'.
- 6 The ICAC question required a 'true', 'false' or 'don't know' response to the following statement: 'The ICAC can investigate allegations of corruption in NSW local government'.
- 7 $\chi^2 = 12.448$, df 1, $p < .001$ (respondents answering 'don't know' were excluded from the analysis).
- 8 $\chi^2 = 27.284$, df 1, $p < .001$.
- 9 $\chi^2 = 26.21$, df 1, $p < .001$.
- 10 $\chi^2 = 38.13$, df 1, $p < .001$.
- 11 $\chi^2 = 23.912$, df 2, $p < .001$.
- 12 $\chi^2 = 14.462$, df 4, $p < .01$.
- 13 $\chi^2 = 14.887$, df 3, $p < .01$.
- 14 $\chi^2 = 31.322$, df 2, $p < .001$.
- 15 $\chi^2 = 25.905$, df 4, $p < .001$ (respondents answering 'don't know' were excluded from the analysis).
- 16 $\chi^2 = 27.876$, df 2, $p < .001$ (respondents answering 'don't know' were excluded from the analysis).
- 17 $\chi^2 = 33.503$, df 2, $p < .001$.
- 18 $\chi^2 = 54.563$ df 2, $p < .001$.
- 19 $\chi^2 = 27.158$ df 2, $p < .001$.
- 20 $\chi^2 = 28.103$, df 8, $p < .001$.
- 21 $\chi^2 = 28.528$, df 6, $p < .001$.
- 22 $\chi^2 = 18.088$, df 4, $p < .001$.
- 23 $\chi^2 = 27.946$, df 2, $p < .001$ (respondents answering 'don't know' or refusing to disclose their educational level were excluded from the analysis).
- 24 $\chi^2 = 10.776$, df 2, $p < .01$ (respondents refusing to disclose their educational level were excluded from the analysis).
- 25 $\chi^2 = 15.848$, df 4, $p < .01$ (respondents refusing to disclose their educational level were excluded from the analysis).
- 26 $\chi^2 = 26.988$, df 6, $p < .001$ (respondents refusing to disclose their educational level were excluded from the analysis).
- 27 $\chi^2 = 23.04$, df 6, $p < .001$ (respondents refusing to disclose their educational level were excluded from the analysis).
- 28 $\chi^2 = 18.945$, df 4, $p < .001$ (respondents refusing to disclose their educational level were excluded from the analysis).
- 29 $\chi^2 = 14.825$, df 3, $p < .01$ (respondents refusing to disclose their employment status were excluded from the analysis).
- 30 $\chi^2 = 11.545$, df 3, $p < .01$ (respondents refusing to disclose their employment status were excluded from the analysis).
- 31 $\chi^2 = 22.041$, df 6, $p < .001$ (respondents refusing to disclose their employment status were excluded from the analysis).
- 32 $\chi^2 = 23.475$, df 6, $p < .001$ (respondents refusing to disclose their employment status were excluded from the analysis).

