

Making allegations of corrupt conduct public. Is it in the public interest?

Firstly it is worth noting that the discussion paper fails to explain to the reader whether it means making matters public via internally promoting information e.g. press conferences OR if it means suppressing information requested by members of the public/press. It is therefore assumed that it means both.

Five considerations are listed in the discussion paper:

1. Open, transparent and accountable government.
2. Right to a fair trial
3. Reputation of alleged subject officers.
4. Freedom of speech
5. Effectiveness of the CCC

The primary and overriding consideration of all must be an **open, transparent and accountable government**. Suppressing information sought by members or the public or press about an alleged incident is in total disregard of this principal. Failing to announce an allegation particularly one emerging around election time can allow voters to be misinformed and thereby inhibit democracy. Assuming that such allegations may unfairly influence voters assumes that voters are incapable of independent thought and analysis. It also assumes biased reporting by the media. It could and should be argued that members of public sector and political environment have a higher duty of care and therefore additional levels of accountability and public scrutiny are expected and reasonable.

The **right to a fair trial** is only compromised if jury selection fails to find 12 people in the state of Queensland who do not ardently follow local politics. To the best of my knowledge no jury selection process has failed to the point where a trial could not proceed in Queensland. I am not aware of any CJC/CMC/CCC prosecutions over the past 20 years where this has occurred and I am sure this would have been outlined in the discussion paper had this actually happened.

Protection of reputation is protected by civil remedies such as slander and libel. I hold it totally absurd that persons entering or engaged in the political sphere would be so naïve as to not be aware or prepared for attacks on their reputation. Indeed most people would expect a higher standard of morals and ethics to be demonstrated in political figures and senior public servants. The onus is on them to walk the talk. A righteous person would have no fear of baseless attacks on their person.

Freedom of speech is supportive to the publicising of allegations, no further elaboration is necessary.

The final point of consideration is listed as the **'effectiveness of the CCC'**. In the discussion paper it alleges issues such as destruction of information and witness tampering. No examples have been provided support this claim. It is my belief that **if** the CCC is not fully disclosing information on corruption investigations then in that instance it is NOT effective in its role of combating and reducing corruption, it is allowing it to flourish.