

Will Hodgman MP
Leader of the State Opposition
Wednesday August 13, 2008

Case for an anti-corruption commission boosted

Comments by a long-serving Tasmanian police officer that the stench surrounding the State Government may be eroding public confidence in the police force have once again highlighted the need for an independent anti-corruption watchdog in Tasmania.

The Leader of the State Opposition, Will Hodgman, said the statements by Senior Sergeant Danny Russell, which included that *"the answer can only be the creation of an independent authority for the investigation of corruption and major/organised crime associated with the public sector"* were a damning reflection of the decline in standards of governance that has occurred after ten years of Labor Government in Tasmania.

The comments also seriously undermine the government's claim that Tasmania does not need an anti-corruption authority because police can investigate such allegations.

The Tasmania Police Association also joined the growing chorus of calls for the creation of an independent anti-corruption authority.

While a Parliamentary committee is currently investigating the establishment of an ethics commission in Tasmania, the Premier, David Bartlett, has categorically stated that Tasmania does not need an independent anti-corruption commission.

Mr Hodgman said the Premier should explain if he stands by this statement still.

"The Labor Party and the Premier are becoming increasingly isolated in their view that Tasmania does not need an independent anti-corruption authority," Mr Hodgman said.

"An ethics commission, while needed, will not go far enough to clear up the stench in government that exists because of the Labor Government's contempt for accountability and transparency."

The State Opposition is committed to the creation of an independent anti-corruption commission and ethics body and clearly outlined the case for this in its submission to the ethics commission inquiry.

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