



Key findings

Victoria Police: Perceptions of corruption

www.ibac.vic.gov.au

About this research

In late 2016, IBAC conducted research on perceptions of corruption. An online questionnaire was sent to Victoria Police employees.¹

Responses were received from 1 172 employees². Eighty per cent of respondents were sworn police officers; the remainder were public servants.

The full report is available on the IBAC website.

Integrity and awareness

- Victoria Police respondents overwhelmingly agreed that *behaving with honesty and integrity is important*, with 97 per cent of respondents agreeing with this statement.
- Ninety per cent agreed they *know what constitutes corrupt behaviour*.
- Corruption was more likely to be seen as something that occurs outside people's workplaces, that is, as *something that happens in Victoria* (63 per cent) rather than as a *problem in my workplace* (eight per cent).

'Policing relies on integrity, values and trust to survive.'

Respondent

Risk of corruption

- Five behaviours – *misuse of information, conflict of interest, abuse of discretion, perverting the course of justice and bribery* – were identified as the areas of highest corruption risk by Victoria Police employees.
- Eighty-seven per cent of Victoria Police respondents felt there was an opportunity for *misuse of information* to occur in Victoria Police.
- Victoria Police respondents were generally more likely to agree there were *opportunities for potential corrupt behaviours to occur*, than to agree *they had ever suspected or witnessed such behaviours in their workplace*.
- Forty-three per cent of the respondents had not observed any of the listed potential corruption or misconduct behaviours in Victoria Police, and three per cent did not believe there was an opportunity for any of the behaviours to occur in Victoria Police.

¹ Online questionnaires were also sent to employees from state and local government, and members of the Victorian community. These findings can be found on the IBAC website.

² Approximately six per cent of Victoria Police's 2016/17 workforce. See Victoria Police annual report 2016/17, p 7, www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=132934.

Key findings

Reporting corruption

- Social and moral beliefs are strong drivers to reporting. 87 per cent of Victoria Police respondents agreed that *reporting corruption is the right thing to do* and 79 per cent agreed they would report corruption *because it impacts on the Victorian community*.
- Barriers to reporting, caused by a lack of awareness of the process or concern about potential personal costs, has a direct impact on the willingness of people to report corruption.
- Sixty-four per cent of Victoria Police respondents agreed they confidently know *how to report corruption*.
- However, confidence in the levels of protection provided to people who report corruption was low:
 - Forty-six per cent felt that they would experience personal repercussions
 - Eighteen per cent thought they could lose their job.
- Twenty per cent of respondents did not agree with the statement *if I personally observed corruption I would definitely report it*.
- Only 20 per cent felt they would be protected from victimisation if they reported corruption.
- Just over one-third of respondents (38 per cent) thought that meaningful action would be taken if they reported corruption.

'We were taught to sort it out, contain. And then if you can't, escalate it up the line. Not externally.'

Respondent

Organisational support

- Sixty-nine per cent of respondents agreed that Victoria Police supports anti-corruption activities run by Victoria Police.
- Seventy-seven per cent of respondents agreed the culture at Victoria Police *encourages people to act with honesty and with integrity*.
- But only 36 per cent agreed that Victoria Police regularly communicates about reporting corruption.
- Two-thirds of respondents agreed their *direct supervisor would be supportive if I chose to report corruption* (66 per cent).
- Seventy-seven per cent of respondents agreed that *preventing corruption in my unit is my responsibility*, indicating there is a strong sense of personal responsibility for corruption prevention within Victoria Police.

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IBAC is Victoria's anti-corruption agency responsible for preventing and exposing public sector corruption and police misconduct. We do this by:

- investigating serious corruption and police misconduct
- informing the public sector, police and the community about the risks and impacts of corruption and police misconduct, and ways in which it can be prevented.

To find out how to report corruption, visit www.ibac.vic.gov.au or call **1300 735 135**.

If you need help with translation, call Translating and Interpreting Service on **13 14 50** or visit www.ibac.vic.gov.au/general/accessibility/tr