

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES

Department of Justice

Procedure

CONTENTS

1 . Statement of Support	4
2 . Purpose of these Procedures.....	4
3 . Meaning of Terms.....	5
4 . Roles and Responsibilities - DoJ	6
4.1. Officers and employees	6
4.2. Principal Officer (Secretary DoJ).....	6
4.3. Public Interest Disclosure Officer	7
4.4. Investigator	7
4.5. Welfare manager.....	7
5 . Options for reporting disclosures	8
5.1. Disclosure to persons within DoJ.....	8
5.2. Disclosure to the Ombudsman or the Integrity Commission.....	8
6 . Confidentiality	9
7 . Making a disclosure.....	9
7.1. Actions upon receipt of the disclosure.....	9
7.2. Is it a protected disclosure?.....	10
7.3. Is it a public interest disclosure?.....	10
7.4. Should the disclosure be referred to another body?.....	11
8 . Investigating a disclosure	12
8.1. Introduction	12
8.2. Initial investigation process	12
8.3. Natural justice.....	13
8.4. Conduct of the investigation	13
8.5. Referral of an investigation to the Ombudsman.....	14
8.6. Provision of information about the investigation.....	14
9 . Actions following an investigation	14
9.1. Investigator's final report	14
9.2. Action to be taken.....	15

10 . The discloser’s welfare	15
10.1. Keeping the discloser informed.....	16
10.2. Occurrence of detrimental action	16
10.3. Discloser implicated in improper conduct.....	16
11 . Support for subjects of disclosure.....	17
12 . Approval and review of these procedures	18
Appendix 1. Matters that do not have to be investigated.....	19
Appendix 2. Criminal offences	20
Appendix 3. Comparison with the Integrity Commission Act.....	21
Attachment 1: Flowcharts.....	22

I . STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

The Department of Justice (DoJ) is committed to the aims and objectives of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2002* (the Act).

DoJ does not tolerate improper conduct by its employees or officers, or the taking of detrimental action against those who disclose such conduct.

DoJ recognises the value of transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices, and supports the making of disclosures that reveal the type of conduct to which the Act is directed.

DoJ will take all reasonable steps to protect people who make disclosures from any detrimental action, and to protect their welfare. It will also afford natural justice to all parties involved in the investigation of a disclosure.

2 . PURPOSE OF THESE PROCEDURES

These Procedures are intended to assist DoJ officers and employees understand the way in which the Act operates and needs to be administered, and to set out how DoJ will respond if it receives a disclosure of improper conduct.

Their purpose is to:

- (a) provide for disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by DoJ or its officers or employees (“public officers”) in DoJ, or by people who are or have been “contractors” with DoJ for the supply of goods or services;
- (b) provide for such disclosures to be made to the Secretary (the Principal Officer) or to a delegated Public Interest Disclosure Officer;
- (c) ensure that officers and employees are protected if they disclose improper conduct or detrimental action;
- (d) establish a system for reporting, assessing and investigating such disclosures.

The procedures are designed to complement normal communication channels between supervisors and employees. Employees are encouraged to continue to raise appropriate matters at any time with their supervisors, and to use existing grievance procedures where appropriate. The DoJ’s Grievance Management Policy can be found on the intranet.

These Procedures draw upon the provisions of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2002* (the Act). DoJ Officers and employees should refer to the Act for additional detail.

3 . MEANING OF TERMS

In these Procedures¹ –

“contractor” means

- (a) *a person who at any time has entered into a contract with a public body² for the supply of goods or services to, or on behalf of, the public body; or*
- (b) *an employee of the contractor; or*
- (c) *a subcontractor engaged by the contractor to fulfil all or part of a contract with a public body for the supply of goods or services to, or on behalf of, the public body;*

“detrimental action” includes

- (a) *action causing injury, loss or damage; and*
- (b) *intimidation or harassment; and*
- (c) *discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to a person's employment, career, profession, trade or business, including the taking of disciplinary action; and*
- (d) *threats of detrimental action.*

“discloser” means a “public officer” or a “contractor” who makes a disclosure of improper conduct or detrimental action;

“improper conduct” means conduct that

- (a) *constitutes an illegal or unlawful activity; or*
- (b) *is corrupt conduct³; or*
- (c) *constitutes maladministration; or*
- (d) *constitutes professional misconduct; or*
- (e) *constitutes a waste of public resources; or*
- (f) *constitutes a danger to public health or safety or to both public health and safety; or*
- (g) *constitutes a danger to the environment; or*
- (h) *is misconduct, including breaches of applicable codes of conduct; or*
- (i) *constitutes detrimental action against a person who makes a public interest disclosure under this Act –*

that is serious or significant as determined in accordance with guidelines issued by the Ombudsman;

¹ Italicised terms are derived directly from the Act; non-italicised terms are specific to these Procedures.

² For the purposes of these Procedures, “public body” is taken to mean the Department of Justice.

³ Note that ‘corrupt conduct’ is also defined in the Act. Refer S.3- interpretation

“principal officer” means the Secretary, DoJ;

“protected disclosure” means a disclosure of improper conduct or detrimental action made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act. The protections provided by Part 3 of the Act only apply where the disclosure made is a protected disclosure.

S.16 provides that “*a person who makes a protected disclosure is not subject to any civil or criminal liability or any liability arising by way of administrative process (including disciplinary action) for making the protected disclosure*”;

“public interest disclosure” means a protected disclosure of improper conduct or detrimental action in relation to which DoJ is satisfied that the disclosure shows or tends to show that the public officer or public body to whom the disclosure relates -

- *has engaged, is engaging or proposes to engage in improper conduct in his or her capacity as a public officer, or*
- *has taken, is taking or proposes to take detrimental action in reprisal for the making of the protected disclosure;*

“public officer” means an officer or employee of DoJ;

“recipient” means the person to whom the disclosure is made, i.e. the Public Interest Disclosure Officer or the Principal Officer.

4 . ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - DOJ

4.1. Officers and employees

DoJ officers, employees and contractors are encouraged to report known or suspected incidences of improper conduct or detrimental action under the Act.

DoJ officers and employees must refrain from any activity that is, or could be perceived to be, victimisation or harassment of a person who makes a disclosure.

4.2. Principal Officer (Secretary DoJ)

The Principal Officer has primary responsibility for ensuring that the provisions of the Act are implemented in accordance with section 62A of the Act.

The Principal Officer may delegate any or all of his or her functions to a Public Interest Disclosure Officer.

The Principal Officer is responsible for ensuring that disclosers and witnesses are protected from detrimental action, and that the culture of the workplace is supportive of protected disclosures being made.

4.3. *Public Interest Disclosure Officer*

A *Public Interest Disclosure Officer* is appointed by the Principal Officer under s 62A(2) of the Act, and holds a delegation which enables them to exercise the statutory powers and functions given to the Principal Officer by the Act.

The responsibilities of a *Public Interest Disclosure Officer* generally include:

- acting as a contact point for general advice about the operation of the Act
- making arrangements for a disclosure to be made privately and discreetly and, if necessary, away from the workplace
- receiving any disclosure made orally or in writing (from internal and external disclosers)
- impartially assessing the allegation and determining whether it is a protected disclosure
- impartially assessing whether a disclosure is a public interest disclosure
- taking all necessary steps to ensure that the identity of the discloser and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure are kept confidential.

4.4. *Investigator*

Where the recipient has determined that a disclosure is a public interest disclosure, or where the Ombudsman has referred a disclosed matter to DoJ for investigation, the Principal Officer will appoint an investigator to investigate the matter in accordance with the Act.

An investigator may be a person from within DoJ or a consultant engaged for that purpose.

4.5. *Welfare manager*

The welfare manager is responsible for looking after the general welfare of the discloser. The welfare manager will:

- examine the immediate welfare and protection needs of a person who has made a disclosure, and seek to foster a supportive work environment
- advise the discloser of the legislative and administrative protections available to him or her
- listen and respond to any concerns of harassment, intimidation, victimisation or other detrimental action which may be occurring in reprisal for making disclosure

- so far as is practicable, protect the identity of the discloser in the course of carrying out these responsibilities.

A welfare manager may be a person from within the public body or a consultant engaged for that purpose.

5 . OPTIONS FOR REPORTING DISCLOSURES

5.1. Disclosure to persons within DoJ

Disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by an officer or employee of DoJ may be made to:

- the Principal Officer; or
- a Public Interest Disclosure Officer.

Each person who holds or acts in any of the following positions within the DoJ has been appointed by the Principal Officer to act as a Public Interest Disclosure Officer, and holds a delegation which enables them to receive public interest disclosures under the Act. These positions are:

- Persons who hold, or act in the position of Deputy Secretary
- Persons who hold, or act in the position of Director of Human Resources

Where a person is contemplating making a disclosure and is concerned about approaching the Principal Officer or a Public Interest Disclosure Officer in the workplace, he or she can call the relevant officer and request a meeting in a discreet location away from the workplace.

A disclosure about the Principal Officer should be immediately referred to the Ombudsman.

5.2. Disclosure to the Ombudsman or the Integrity Commission

There are some situations in which a disclosure may only be made to a single entity. Either the Ombudsman or the Integrity Commission will be able to give advice on the most suitable entity to receive the disclosure, but the Ombudsman has overall responsibility for the administration of the Act.

A public body cannot receive a disclosure about itself, only its public officers. Where the disclosure is against a public body, the disclosure should be made to the Ombudsman or the Integrity Commission.

Additionally, instead of disclosing to a person in DoJ, a disclosure about improper conduct or detrimental action by DoJ or any of its members, officers or employees may be made directly to the Ombudsman or to the Integrity Commission⁴.

Internet: www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au
Phone: 1800 001 170

Internet: www.integrity.tas.gov.au
Email: integritycommission@integrity.tas.gov.au
Phone: 1300 720 289

6 . CONFIDENTIALITY

DoJ will take:

- all reasonable steps to protect the identity of a discloser; and
- all reasonable care to protect the privacy of witnesses and of the person against whom the disclosure has been made.

DoJ will ensure that all relevant files, whether paper or electronic, are kept securely⁵. A Trim file will be created for the disclosure, marked as being a *Public Interest Disclosures Act* matter.

7 . MAKING A DISCLOSURE

7.1. *Actions upon receipt of the disclosure*

The recipient may ask the discloser to put the disclosure in writing.

Alternatively, if the disclosure is oral, the recipient may make a file note, which records:

- the time when the disclosure was made,
- the circumstances under which it was made and,
- so far as is possible, the exact words used by the discloser.

Unless the recipient is the Principal Officer (or the disclosure is about the Principal Officer), the Public Interest Disclosure Officer will inform the Principal Officer of the disclosure, and

⁴ The IC Act does not contain any provisions which protect a person who makes a complaint under that Act from detrimental action by way of reprisal. The provision of such protection is a key feature of the PID Act.

⁵ Security access will be limited to the Principal Officer and the relevant Public Interest Disclosure Officer, the investigator, and the welfare manager.

provide the Principal Officer with a copy of the disclosure, or record of the disclosure, and of any accompanying documents.

If the disclosure is about the Principal Officer, it will be referred directly to the Ombudsman.

7.2. Is it a protected disclosure?

A disclosure will be assessed by the recipient to determine whether it has been made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act.

A disclosure does not need to expressly refer to the Act. It is necessary for the DoJ to assess whether or not the Act applies to any complaint it receives from a public officer.

The recipient will inform the discloser as soon as practicable as to whether the disclosure is a protected disclosure, and of their reasons for coming to that conclusion.

If the disclosure is assessed as being a protected disclosure:

- the discloser will be referred to Part 3 of the Act, which details the protections which the Act provides;
- the discloser will be informed of the process which will be followed with respect to the disclosure;
- the recipient will appoint a welfare manager to protect the interests of the discloser, and ensure that the discloser is advised of the name and contact details of that person.

A copy of the assessment will also be given to the Principal Officer.

7.3. Is it a public interest disclosure?

Where the recipient has received a disclosure that has been assessed to be a **protected disclosure**, he or she will make a determination as to whether the disclosure is a **public interest disclosure**. This assessment must be made within 45 days of the receipt of the disclosure.

Where the recipient concludes that it is a public interest disclosure, he or she will -

1. advise the Principal Officer (if not the person receiving the disclosure)
2. notify the Ombudsman within 14 days of the decision;
3. notify the person making the disclosure within 14 days of the decision (unless it is an anonymous disclosure), and
4. arrange for the disclosed matter to be investigated.

Steps 1- 3 above also apply if the recipient concludes that it is not a public interest disclosure. In such a case, the Ombudsman must then review this decision.

7.4. Should the disclosure be referred to another body?

Referral to the Ombudsman

The recipient may refer a public interest disclosure to the Ombudsman if he/she believes that he/she is not able to complete the investigation satisfactorily.

Referral to the Integrity Commission

The recipient may refer a protected disclosure to the Integrity Commission where he/she considers that the disclosure relates to misconduct as defined in s 4(1) of the *Integrity Commission Act 2009*.

The recipient must notify the discloser of the referral within a reasonable time (unless the disclosure was made anonymously).

The Integrity Commission may deal with the disclosure under the Integrity Commission Act, or it may refer the disclosure to the Ombudsman or a public body, as the case may require, for action by the Ombudsman or public body in accordance with the PID Act.

Referral of criminal conduct to the Police

It is possible that, before or during an investigation, facts are uncovered that reveal the possibility of a criminal offence. If this happens, DoJ will not commence, or will suspend, the investigation and will consult with the Ombudsman as to the future of the matter. Under section 41 of the Act, the Ombudsman has the power to refer a disclosed matter to the Commissioner of Police for investigation.

If the Ombudsman is satisfied that the disclosed matter should be referred to Tasmania Police, DoJ should consider whether the disclosure should be referred to the Ombudsman under s 68 of the Act.

Once a disclosure is referred to the Commissioner of Police through the Ombudsman, the investigation under the Act process ceases.

There may still be administrative or operational issues which have been identified during the disclosure process or investigation that should be dealt with under other internal processes. The Principal Officer, or the Public Interest Disclosure Officer acting in consultation with the Principal Officer, will decide how the matter should be dealt with.

8 . INVESTIGATING A DISCLOSURE

8.1. *Introduction*

The Principal Officer will appoint an investigator to carry out the investigation. The broad objectives of an investigation will be:

- to collate information relating to the allegation as quickly as possible
- to consider the information collected and to draw conclusions objectively and impartially
- to maintain procedural fairness in the treatment of witnesses and generally to all parties involved in the disclosure

8.2. *Initial investigation process*

Each investigation will vary depending on the circumstances. The following steps may be applied or adapted, depending on the circumstances of the disclosure.

Terms of reference

The investigator may be given terms of reference which specify:

- the matters to be investigated
- the date by which the investigation is to be concluded, and
- the resources available to the investigator for the purposes of the investigation.

Timing

The completion date should be as soon as practicable but, in any event, not more than 6 months from the date of the determination that the disclosure is a public interest disclosure.

If at any stage before or during the investigation it appears that the investigation cannot be completed within 6 months, DoJ may apply to the Ombudsman for an extension of up to 6 months in which to complete the investigation.

Investigation plan

The investigator may prepare an investigation plan, listing the issues which are to be investigated and describing the steps which the investigator intends to take in investigating each of those issues.

The plan may be updated as necessary during the course of the investigation.

8.3. *Natural justice*

The principles of natural justice will be observed in the course of the investigation, with respect to all parties involved in the investigation.

This means that:

- No one is to be involved in the investigation who –
 - is known to be biased against any person who is potentially subject to an adverse finding, or
 - is known to hold any biases which are relevant to the subject-matter of the investigation, or
 - in respect of whom there is reasonable ground for apprehending or suspecting bias.

If the investigator is aware of any reason why they may be susceptible to an allegation of bias on the basis of these principles, they should immediately inform the Principal Officer.

Persons subject to adverse findings

- Any person who is potentially subject to an adverse finding or comment will be told of –
 - the allegations made against them, or which have arisen against them as a result of the investigation
 - all of the information which is adverse to their interests and which is, on an objective basis, credible, relevant and significant to the investigation
 - the potential findings, and their possible consequences
- This will be done before any final conclusions are formed by the investigator.
- Each such person will be given a reasonable time to respond to the material which is provided to them.

The final investigation report will record and deal with all submissions and evidence which a person has put in their defence.

8.4. *Conduct of the investigation*

Each investigation will vary depending on the circumstances. The following steps may be applied or adapted, depending on the circumstances of the disclosure.

- The investigator may make contemporaneous notes of discussions and phone calls, and may consider audiotaping significant interviews with witnesses
- Interviews should be conducted in private, and the investigator will take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the discloser. Where disclosure of the

identity of the person cannot be avoided, due to the nature of the allegations, the investigator should warn the discloser and his or her welfare manager of this.

8.5. Referral of an investigation to the Ombudsman

DoJ may refer the investigation of a disclosed matter to the Ombudsman where DoJ considers that its own investigation is being obstructed or that it is otherwise not within the capacity of DoJ to complete the investigation.

Any decision as to whether the investigation should be referred to the Ombudsman will be taken by the Principal Officer.

8.6. Provision of information about the investigation

The recipient will ensure that the discloser is kept regularly informed concerning the handling of a protected disclosure and an investigation.

The Principal Officer will report to the Ombudsman about the progress of an investigation.

9 . ACTIONS FOLLOWING AN INVESTIGATION

9.1. Investigator's final report

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will submit a written report⁶ of his or her findings to the Principal Officer. While the circumstances of each matter will vary, in broad terms the report should contain:

- the allegation/s
- a description of the manner in which the investigation was conducted, an account of all relevant information received
- details of the evidence and submissions supplied by any person against whom an adverse finding is made, and the evaluation of that material by the investigator
- the findings made and conclusions reached, and the basis for them.

If the investigator has found that conduct disclosed by the discloser has occurred, the investigator may include recommendations as to:

- steps that need to be taken by DoJ to prevent the conduct from continuing or occurring in the future, and

⁶ The report will not include any comment adverse to any person unless that person has been given an opportunity to be heard in the matter and their defence is fairly set out in the report.

- action that should be taken by DoJ to remedy any harm or loss arising from that conduct.

If relevant, the report will be accompanied by:

- the transcript or other record of any oral evidence taken, including tape recordings, and
- all documents, statements or other exhibits received by the officer and accepted as evidence during the course of the investigation.

9.2. *Action to be taken*

If the Principal Officer is satisfied that the conduct which was the subject of the investigation has occurred, he or she will consider the recommendations in the investigator's report and decide upon the steps which are to be taken to prevent the conduct from continuing or occurring in the future. The Principal Officer will also consider whether any action should be taken to remedy any harm or loss arising from the conduct.

Where the Public Interest Disclosure Officer is responsible for the progress of the investigation and is satisfied that the disclosed conduct has occurred, he or she will recommend to the Principal Officer the action that must be taken.

The Principal Officer will provide a written report to the relevant Minister and the Ombudsman, setting out the findings of the investigation and any remedial steps taken.

Where the investigation concludes that the disclosed conduct **did not occur**, the Principal Officer will report these findings to the Ombudsman and to the discloser.

The Principal Officer will also inform the discloser of the findings of the investigation, and of any steps taken⁷ as a result of the findings made.

10. THE DISCLOSER'S WELFARE

The Principal Officer or the Public Interest Disclosure Officer will appoint a welfare manager to support all persons who have made a protected disclosure.

The welfare manager will provide advice about what the discloser should do if they believe that a colleague/s or associate is being subjected to detrimental action.

A discloser who believes that they are being subjected to detrimental action should report it to the Principal Officer or a Public Interest Disclosure Officer.

⁷ S.75 sets out the action to be taken by a public body if it finds that the conduct has occurred.

If they believe that the detrimental action is not being effectively dealt with by DoJ, they may report the matter to the Ombudsman.

10.1. Keeping the discloser informed

The recipient will inform the discloser of action taken in relation to his or her disclosure, and the time frames that apply.

The discloser will be informed of the objectives of any investigation that takes place, the findings of the investigation, and the steps taken by DoJ to address any improper conduct that has been found to have occurred.

The discloser will be given reasons for all decisions made by DoJ in relation to a disclosure.

10.2. Occurrence of detrimental action

If a discloser reports an incident of detrimental action allegedly taken, the **welfare manager** will:

- record details of the incident
- advise the discloser of his or her rights under the Act, and
- advise the Principal Officer of the detrimental action.

The taking of detrimental action can be an offence against the Act as well as grounds for making a further disclosure. Where such detrimental action is reported, the recipient will assess the report as a new disclosure under the Act, and it will be dealt with in accordance with these procedures.

10.3. Discloser implicated in improper conduct

Where a discloser is implicated in misconduct, DoJ will handle the disclosure and protect the discloser from detrimental action in accordance with the Act, the Ombudsman's guidelines and these procedures⁸.

The Principal Officer will make the final decision as to whether disciplinary or other action will be taken against a discloser. Where disciplinary or other action relates to conduct that is the subject of the person's disclosure, the disciplinary or other action will only be taken after the disclosed matter has been appropriately dealt with.

⁸ DoJ acknowledges that the act of disclosing should not shield disclosers from the reasonable consequences flowing from any involvement in improper conduct. Section 18 of the Act specifically provides that a person's liability for his or her own conduct is not affected by the person's disclosure of that conduct under the Act. However, in some circumstances, an admission may be a mitigating factor when considering disciplinary or other action.

In all cases where disciplinary or other action is being contemplated, the Principal Officer must be satisfied that it has been demonstrated that:

- the intention to proceed with disciplinary action is not causally connected to the making of the disclosure (as opposed to the content of the disclosure or other available information)
- there are sufficient grounds that would fully justify action against any non-discloser in the same circumstances, and
- there are sufficient grounds that justify exercising any discretion to institute disciplinary or other action.

The recipient will thoroughly document the process, including the reasons why the disciplinary or other action is being taken, and the reasons why the action is not in reprisal for the making of the disclosure.

The recipient will advise the discloser of the proposed action to be taken, and of any mitigating factors that have been taken into account.

11. SUPPORT FOR SUBJECTS OF DISCLOSURE

Doj will support employees and officers who are the subjects of disclosure during the handling and investigation of disclosures.

Doj will take all reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of the person who is the subject of the disclosure during the assessment and investigation process.

Where an investigation does not substantiate a disclosure, the fact that the investigation has been carried out, the results of the investigation, and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure will remain confidential.

Where the allegations in a disclosure have been investigated, and the person who is the subject of the disclosure is aware of the allegations or of the investigation, the Public Interest Disclosure Officer or Principal Officer will formally advise the person who is the subject of the disclosure of the outcome of the investigation.

Doj will give its full support to a person who is the subject of a disclosure where the allegations contained in a disclosure are wrong or unsubstantiated.

If the matter has been publicly disclosed, the Principal Officer will consider any request by that person to issue a statement of support setting out that the allegations were clearly wrong or unsubstantiated.

I 2. APPROVAL AND REVIEW OF THESE PROCEDURES

These procedures were approved by the Ombudsman under s 60(3) of the Act on

The procedures will be submitted to the Ombudsman for review at least once in each 3 year period to ensure they meet the objectives of the Act and accord with the Guidelines and Standards published by the Ombudsman under s 38(1)(c) of the Act.

The date by which the procedures must be submitted to the Ombudsman for review is

APPENDIX I. MATTERS THAT DO NOT HAVE TO BE INVESTIGATED

Section 64 specifies certain circumstances under which a public body may legitimately decide not to investigate. Those circumstances are –

- if in the opinion of the public body the disclosure is trivial, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance
- if the subject matter of the disclosure has already been adequately dealt with by the Ombudsman or a public body, statutory authority, Commonwealth statutory authority, commission, court or tribunal
- if the person making the disclosure has commenced proceedings in a commission, court or tribunal in relation to the same matter, and that commission, court or tribunal has power to order remedies similar to those available under this Act
- if the person making the disclosure had knowledge for more than 12 months of the disclosed matter before making the disclosure and failed to give a satisfactory explanation for the delay in making the disclosure
- if the disclosure relates solely to the personal interests of the person making the disclosure
- if the disclosure is based on false or misleading information, or
- if the matter which is the subject of the disclosure has already been determined and the additional disclosure does not provide significant or substantial new information.

Any decision not to proceed with an investigation on a ground specified in s 64 must be made by the Principal Officer.

If the Principal Officer determines that the disclosed matter is not to be investigated on a ground specified in s 64, notice of this fact must be given within 14 days to both the Ombudsman and (except in the case of an anonymous disclosure) the person who made the disclosure. Reasons for the decision must accompany the notice.

The Ombudsman is required by s 65(2) to review such a decision. Following the review, the Ombudsman must notify the DoJ of his or her decision within a reasonable time. If the Ombudsman on review determines that the disclosure should not be investigated, the matter does not need to be dealt with under the Act. The Principal Officer, or the Public Interest Disclosure Officer in consultation with the Principal Officer, will decide how the matter should be dealt with.

APPENDIX 2. CRIMINAL OFFENCES

The following offences are created by the Act:

- **Section 19(1)**
This provision makes it an offence for a person to take detrimental action against a person in reprisal for a protected disclosure being made. The section provides for a maximum penalty of a fine of 240 penalty units or two years imprisonment, or both.
- **Section 23(1)**
This provision makes it an offence for a person to disclose, except under specified circumstances, information which they have obtained or received in the course of or as a result of a protected disclosure or the investigation of a disclosed matter under the Act. The section provides for a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units or six months imprisonment, or both.
- **Section 54**
This section creates various offences relating to obstructing the work of the Ombudsman under the Act, including offences relating to misleading the Ombudsman. The section provides for a maximum penalty of 240 penalty units or two years imprisonment, or both.
- **Section 87(1)**
This provision makes it an offence for a person to knowingly provide false information under the Act to certain officers (including the Ombudsman) with the intention that it be acted on as a disclosed matter. The provision provides for a maximum penalty of 240 penalty units or two years imprisonment, or both.
- **Section 87(2)**
This section makes it an offence for a person to knowingly provide false information to a person conducting an investigation under the Act. The provision provides for a maximum penalty of 240 penalty units or two years imprisonment, or both.

APPENDIX 3. COMPARISON WITH THE INTEGRITY COMMISSION ACT

The PID Act and the *Integrity Commission Act 2009* (IC Act) work very differently.

Perhaps the most important difference is that the IC Act does not contain any provisions which protect a person who makes a complaint under that Act from detrimental action by way of reprisal. The provision of such protection is a key feature of the PID Act.

Other important differences are -

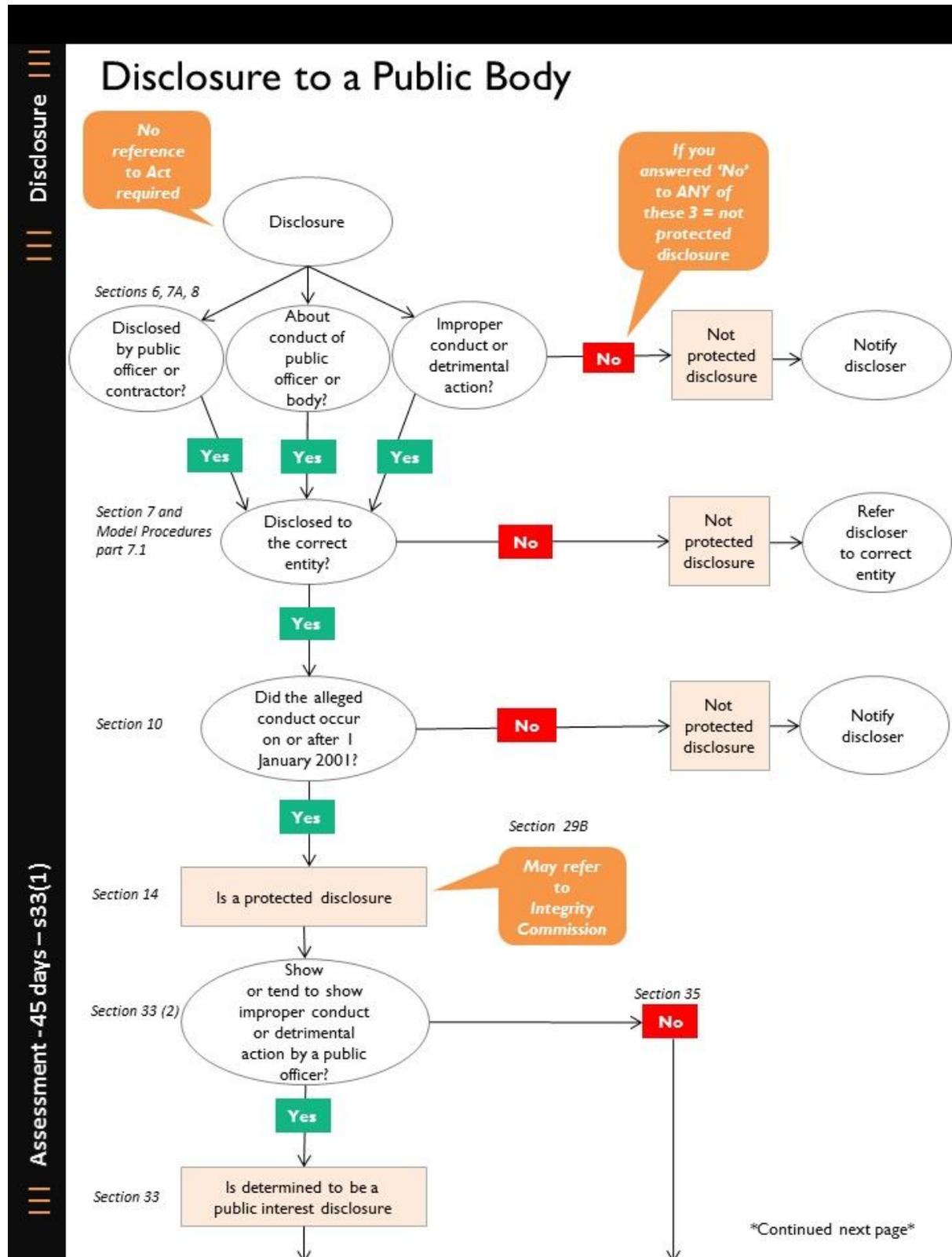
- the fact that anyone can make a complaint under the IC Act, whereas the right to make a disclosure under the PID Act is given only to a current public officer and a contractor
- differences in the types of conduct to which the Act applies. The PID Act concerns “improper conduct”, which embraces “corrupt conduct”. The IC Act concerns “misconduct”. The definitions of the expressions thus used in the two Acts do not align
- the fact that a disclosure may be made under the PID Act about proposed conduct, whereas the IC Act only concerns past conduct
- the fact that a disclosure under the PID Act may be oral, whereas a complaint under the IC Act must be in writing
- the different processes which each Act applies to a matter brought forward under it.

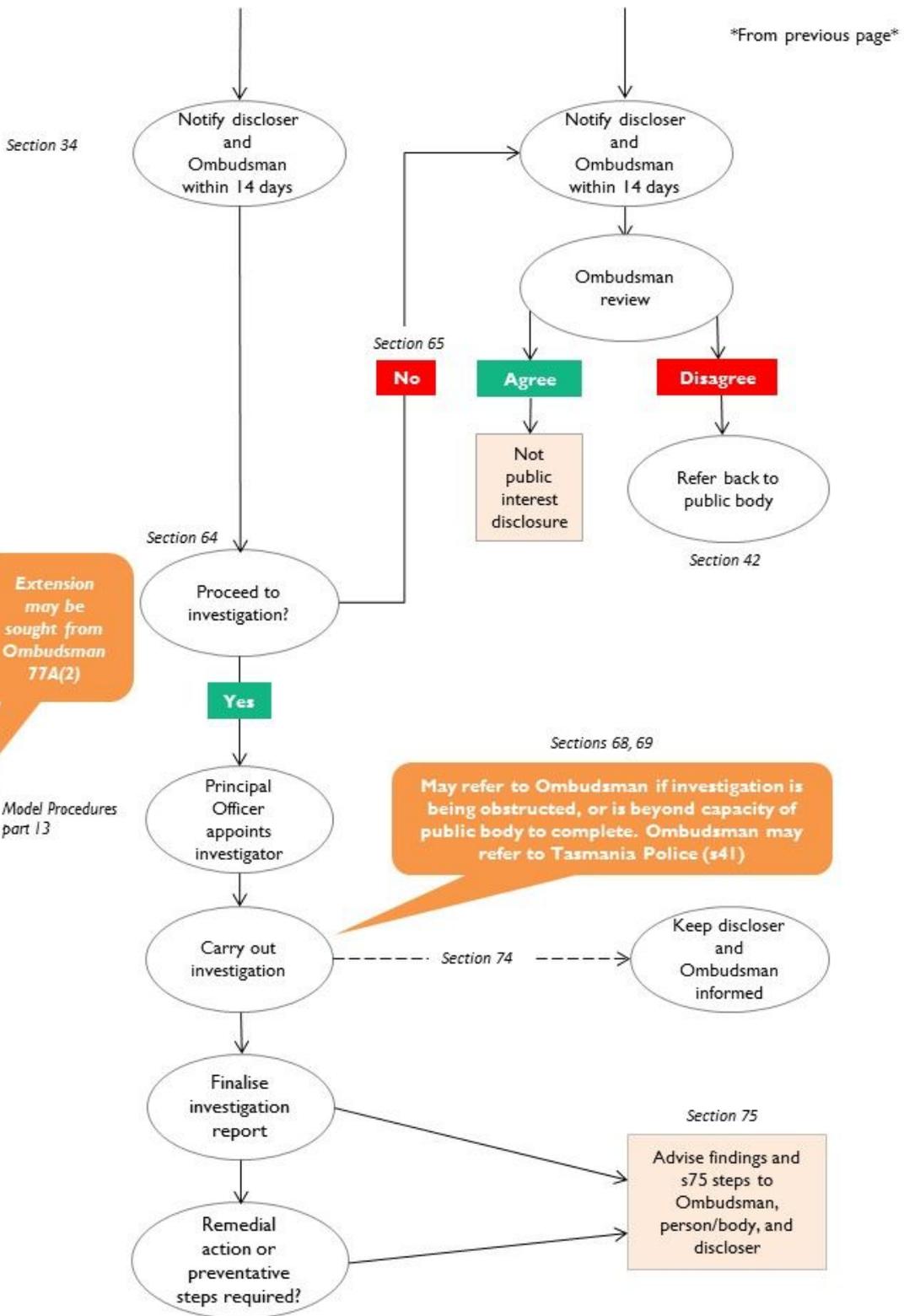
A person who is trying to decide which Act to proceed under should consider seeking legal advice on what is the best course for them to take.

It is possible for a disclosure which is made under the PID Act to be dealt with under the IC Act – see Part 4A of the PID Act.

ATTACHMENT I: FLOWCHARTS

Table I. Disclosures made to Public Body





Procedure Title	Public Interest Disclosure Procedures
Related Policy	-
Branch	Office of the Secretary
Date of first Issue	July 1 2016
Version Number	1.3
Approval	Agency Executive
Date of this version	August 24 2017
TRIM Reference	DOC/17/69530
Next Review Date	August 2020