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**Government
of South Australia**

BEHAVIOURAL STANDARDS PANEL

2024-25 Annual Report

Behavioural Standards Panel

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To:

The Hon Joe Szakacs MP
Minister for Trade and Investment
Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

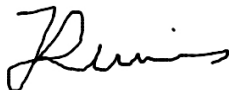
This annual report will be presented to Parliament to meet the statutory reporting requirements of *The Local Government Act 1999* and the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular *PC013 Annual Reporting*.

This report is verified to be accurate for the purposes of annual reporting to the Parliament of South Australia.

Submitted on behalf of the Behavioural Standards Panel by:

Dr Felicity-ann Lewis OAM

Presiding Member
Behavioural Standards Panel



26 September 2025

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Overview: about the agency

Our Purpose

The Behavioural Standards Panel (the Panel) is an independent statutory body that has been established under the Local Government Act 1999 (the Act) to consider complaints relating to alleged misbehaviour, repeated misbehaviour and serious misbehaviour by council members, as defined by section 262E of the Act.

Our functions, objectives and deliverables

The Panel considers complaints relating to the alleged misbehaviour, repeated misbehaviour and serious misbehaviour by council members under section 262E of the Act—

misbehaviour means—

(a) a failure by a member of a council to comply with a requirement of the council under section 262C(1); or

(b) a failure by a member of a council to comply with a provision of, or a requirement under, the council's behavioural management policy; or

(c) a failure by a member of a council to comply with an agreement reached following mediation, conciliation, arbitration or other dispute or conflict resolution conducted in relation to a complaint under Division 1;

repeated misbehaviour means a second or subsequent failure by a member of a council to comply with Chapter 5 Part 4 Division 2 (Member behaviour);

serious misbehaviour means a failure by a member of a council to comply with section 75G (Health and safety duties).

In accordance with section 262Q of the Act, complaints may be referred to the Panel by resolution of the council; the principal member of the council, at least 3 members of the council; or a responsible person in accordance with section s 75(G)(5) of the Act.

The Panel may inquire into a complaint in such manner as the Panel considers appropriate, conducting the inquiry in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness (section 262T(2) of the Act).

The Act also provides that, in exercising or performing a power or function in relation to inquiring into a complaint, the Panel—

must proceed with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as the requirements of the Act or any other Act and a proper consideration of the matter permit; and

is not bound by rules of evidence but may inform itself of any matter in any manner that the Panel considers appropriate (section 262U(4)).

After inquiring into a complaint the Panel may, order one or more of the following actions to be taken—

reprimand the member (including by means of a public statement);

direct the council to pass a censure motion in respect of the member;

require the member to issue a public apology (in a manner determined by the Panel);

require the member to attend a specified course of training or instruction, or to take other steps; require the member to reimburse the council a specified amount (which may include the reimbursement of the council's costs relating to investigation of the complaint and giving effect to an order);

remove or suspend the member from one or more offices held in the member's capacity as a member of the council or by virtue of being a member of the council (other than the office of member of the council);

suspend the member from the office of member of the council for a period not exceeding three months, with or without an allowance (as determined by the Panel);

direct the council to lodge a complaint against the member with the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT). The Panel may also, at any time, arrange for mediation, conciliation, arbitration or other dispute or conflict resolution measures to be conducted in order to resolve a matter (section 262V of the Act).

Our organisational structure

Members

The Act provides for three members of the Panel, who are appointed by the Governor. Members are appointed for terms of up to five years. At the conclusion of their term, members are eligible for renomination.

Members during 2024-25 were:

Dr Felicity-ann Lewis OAM, Presiding Member from 10 April 2025 to 9 April 2028, joint nominee of the Local Government Association and the Minister for Local Government.

Mr Adam Crichton, Member from 28 March 2022 to 9 November 2025, nominee of the Minister for Local Government

Ms Rosie Jervis, Member from 28 March 2022 to 9 November 2025, nominee of the Local Government Association.

Ms Thilan Legierse, Presiding Member from 28 March 2022 to 31 December 2024, joint nominee of the Local Government Association and the Minister for Local Government.

Acting Members

Section 262H (2) of the Act enables the Minister to appoint acting members of the Panel to ensure that Panel business is able to be undertaken.

Following Ms Legierse's resignation as Presiding Member, she was appointed as an acting member to assist with Panel business relating to particular matters.

Administrative Support

Section 262K of the Act provides that the Panel will have such staff (comprised of persons employed in the Public Service of the State) as is necessary for the purposes of the performance of the Panel's functions. Staffing support for the Panel was provided for by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (the Department). The Panel has a dedicated Executive Officer, and further administrative support is also provided by the Department (Office of Local Government).

Changes to the agency

During 2024-25 there were the following changes to the agency's structure and objectives as a result of internal reviews or machinery of government changes.

- On 1 July 2025 the Behavioural Standards Panel was transferred to the Department for Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport as part of a Machinery of Government change.

Our Minister (s)

The Hon Joe Szakacs MP is the Minister for Local Government.

Legislation administered by the agency

The Panel is established under the *Local Government Act 1999*. The functions of the Panel are undertaken in accordance with the Act.

The agency's performance

Performance at a glance

The Panel maintains a website, www.bsp.sa.gov.au which includes information on the role of the Panel, how to contact them and assistance with the referral process. Referrals can be made to the Panel by using the interactive form on the website.

Under section 262N of the Act, the Panel may publish practice directions relating to practices and procedures in respect of matters before the Panel and publish guidance material relating to the performance of its functions.

The Panel has published the following guidance papers and practice directions:

Guidance Papers

About the Behavioural Standards Panel

About the new council member conduct management framework

Bullying

Sexual Harassment

Types of behavioural matters that may be referred to the Panel

Practice Directions

Practice Direction 1: Lodgement of complaint

Practice Direction 2: Assessment of complaint

Practice Direction 3: Inquiry Process

Practice Direction 4: Alternative dispute resolution

Practice Direction 5: Action and report on inquiry

The Panel’s publications are regularly reviewed and updated and can be accessed here <https://www.bsp.sa.gov.au/publications>

Agency specific objectives and performance

During the reporting period the Panel received the following referrals for consideration:

No. of Referrals	Status
3	Accepted referrals
9	Did not meet requirements

Reports

During the reporting period the Panel published a Final Report for inquiry 23BSP-0009. This inquiry considered complaints of serious misbehaviour by Councillor Adam Meyer of the Yorke Peninsula Council and is the first finalised inquiry undertaken by the Panel since it’s commencement.

The report can be accessed here:

https://www.bsp.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1446696/23BSP-0009-Yorke-Peninsula-Council-Cr-Meyer.pdf

Behavioural Standards Panel Meetings

The Panel meets as required to consider complaint referrals, inquiries and administrative business. The Panel is enabled by the *Local Government Act 1999* to hold meetings either in person or via electronic means. A summary of Panel Meetings held during 2024-25 is provided below:

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Meeting Date	Participants
20 August 2024	Panel Members Ms Thilan Legierse, Mr Adam Crichton, Ms Rosie Jervis Executive Officer: Ms Fran Hurley Office of Local Government: Ms Alex Hart, Mr David Whiterod, Ms Jayne Anggang
30 September 2024 Electronic, out of session	Panel Members Ms Thilan Legierse, Mr Adam Crichton, Ms Rosie Jervis
26 November 2024	Panel Members Ms Thilan Legierse, Mr Adam Crichton, Ms Rosie Jervis Executive Officer: Ms Fran Hurley Office of Local Government: Ms Alex Hart, Mr David Whiterod, Ms Jayne Anggang
17 December 2024 Electronic, out of session	Panel Members Ms Thilan Legierse, Mr Adam Crichton, Ms Rosie Jervis
23 December 2024	Panel Members Ms Thilan Legierse, Mr Adam Crichton, Ms Rosie Jervis Executive Officer: Ms Fran Hurley Office of Local Government: Ms Alex Hart, Mr David Whiterod, Ms Jayne Anggang
24 January 2025 Electronic, out of session	Panel Members Ms Rosie Jervis, Mr Adam Crichton
5 February 2025 Electronic, out of session	Panel Members Ms Rosie Jervis, Ms Thilan Legierse
13 February 2025 Electronic, out of session	Panel Members Ms Rosie Jervis. Ms Thilan Legierse

7 April 2025 Electronic, out of session	Panel Members Ms Rosie Jervis, Ms Thilan Legierse
27 May 2025	Panel Members Ms Rosie Jervis, Ms Thilan Legierse Executive Officer: Ms Fran Hurley Office of Local Government: Ms Alex Hart, Mr David Whiterod, Ms Jayne Anggang

Work health, safety and return to work programs

The Panel’s work health, safety and return to work programs are managed through the Department for Housing and Urban Development’s human resources management framework.

There were nil incidents involving workplace injuries, nil notifiable incidents and nil provisional improvement or prohibition notices issued.

Executive employment in the agency

There was no executive employment undertaken by the Panel during the reporting period.

The [Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment](#) has a [workforce information](#) page that provides further information on the breakdown of executive gender, salary and tenure by agency.

Financial performance

Financial performance at a glance

The following is a brief summary of the overall financial position of the agency. The information is unaudited. Full audited financial statements for 2024-2025 are attached to this report.

Statement of Comprehensive Income	2024-25 Actual
Total Income*	0
Total Expenses	\$16 569.76
Total Comprehensive Result	-\$16 569.76

***Note:** The Panel’s operational costs are recoverable by agreement with the Local Government Association of South Australia. Costs incurred as part of Panel inquiries are recoverable from individual councils.

Consultants disclosure

The Panel did not hire any consultants during the reporting period

Contractors disclosure

The following is a summary of external contractors that have been engaged by the agency, the nature of work undertaken, and the actual payments made for work undertaken during the financial year.

Contractors with a contract value below \$10,000

Contractors	Purpose	\$ Actual payment
All contractors below \$10,000 each - combined	Various	\$13 525.60

Contractors with a contract value above \$10,000 each

Not applicable.

The details of South Australian Government-awarded contracts for goods, services, and works are displayed on the SA Tenders and Contracts website. [View the agency list of contracts.](#)

The website also provides details of [across government contracts.](#)

Risk management

Fraud detected in the agency

There has been no fraud detected in any of the Panel's activities during 2023-24.

Strategies implemented to control and prevent fraud

The Department for Housing and Urban Development supports the Panel in the management of its financial affairs. The Panel and its administrative support team adhere to the financial controls and policies of the Department and additional relevant policies relating to boards and committees issued by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Data for previous years is available at: n/a

Public interest disclosure

Number of occasions on which public interest information has been disclosed to a responsible officer of the agency under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018*:

Nil

Data for previous years is available at: n/a

Note: Disclosure of public interest information was previously reported under the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993* and repealed by the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018* on 1/7/2019.

Reporting required under any other act or regulation

Not applicable

Reporting required under the *Carers' Recognition Act 2005*

Not applicable.

Public complaints

Number of public complaints reported

One public complaint was received during the reporting period and was dealt with in accordance with the Department for Housing and Urban Development's Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy.

Data for previous years is available at: N/A

Service Improvements

Nil identified

Compliance Statement

The Behavioural Standards Panel is compliant with Premier and Cabinet Circular 039 – complaint management in the South Australian public sector	Y
The Behavioural Standards Panel has communicated the content of PC 039 and the agency’s related complaints policies and procedures to employees.	Y

Appendix: Audited financial statements 2024-25

Behavioural Standards Panel 2024-25

Income Description	Actual Income (GST Excl.)
nil	\$ -
Total Income	\$ -

Cost Description	Actual Expenditure (GST Excl.)
Publications/Books/Papers	\$ 70.96
Panel Remuneration	\$ 1,282.50
Work Cover Levy	\$ 1,690.70
Contractors	\$ 13,525.60
Total Expenditure	\$ 16,569.76