

Institute report urges end of Integrity Commission

Sue Bailey

Tasmania's Integrity Commission is "weak and not fit for purpose", and should be replaced with an anti-corruption commission, research identifying 16 key reforms for the new parliament reveals.

The Australia Institute, an independent think-tank, will on Monday release a report – Democracy Agenda for the 51st

Tasmanian Parliament – based on research and consultation on democratic reform before the state election.

The report said research showed the Integrity Commission "continues to have jurisdictional, funding and secrecy problems".

It said other state integrity bodies were able to investigate corrupt conduct more broadly.

"The current Integrity Commission has never held a public

hearing, despite having the power to do so, and does not publish all misconduct investigation reports publicly," it said.

Priorities for reform included strengthening donations disclosure requirements, introducing truth in political advertising laws, an end to political pork-barrelling and Right to Information reforms.

Institute Tasmanian director Eloise Carr said the new parliament provided "a golden

opportunity" to strengthen integrity in politics.

"Tasmania lags behind other jurisdictions when it comes to key accountability and transparency mechanisms that ensure good government, including on political donations and protections against corruption," Ms Carr said.

"Tasmanians have elected a power-sharing parliament, which history shows can be among the most productive in

instituting democratic and parliamentary reform."

Independent Nelson MP Meg Webb said the report was timely as it "surfs the wave of community sentiment".

"Clearly, community expectation is leading public debate, and elected representatives must catch up," Ms Webb said.

"It is equally necessary we focus on improving the day-to-day governance and accountability mechanisms."