



MEDIA RELEASE

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Corrupt Land Deal

The Corruption and Crime Commission has formed an opinion a LandCorp officer engaged in serious misconduct – using confidential, inside information for personal gain.

The opinion and a recommendation that LandCorp reinforce the need for compliance with its conflict of interest policy with staff and contractors are detailed in a *Report on a Purchase of Land in the Australian Marine Complex Henderson by a Senior Officer of LandCorp* tabled in Parliament today.

The Report highlights a breach of the integrity of government, which occurs when a public servant or agent corruptly uses the information available to them for personal gain.

Senior Development Manager, Ben McCarthy and a JLL Australia agent, Ben Widdowson (who was terminated the moment his Managing Director became aware of what he had done) were trusted to market and sell land in the Australian Marine Complex in Henderson.

Both dishonestly used inside knowledge to purchase Lot 69 Contest Link at Henderson after the seller, a mining services business that fell into difficulties arising from the Global Financial Crisis, could not develop the land.

Mr McCarthy deceived LandCorp into believing the original owners were developing the land, keeping his own involvement hidden.

The two men breached the code of ethics by which each was bound. In the Commission's opinion, Mr McCarthy engaged in serious misconduct by corruptly taking advantage of his employment to gain a benefit for himself and Mr Widdowson.

Though the CCC has no jurisdiction over Mr Widdowson, who is not a public servant, the report found his actions were intertwined with those of Mr McCarthy.

ENDS

Media Contact:

Marie Mills: (08) 9421 3600 or 0418 918 202.

CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION

186 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000
PO Box 7667, Cloisters Square
PERTH WA 6850

Telephone: +61 8 9215 4888
Toll Free: 1800 809 000
Fax: +61 8 9215 4884
info@ccc.wa.gov.au
www.ccc.wa.gov.au