



## **Budget must restore ICAC funding to stop privatisation corruption**

Tuesday's State Budget must restore funding to the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) to maintain scrutiny of Government and the mass privatisation of public services says the Public Service Association (PSA).

The ICAC funding cut will slash staff numbers by 15% or approximately 20 positions and greatly reduce investigative capacity meaning less scrutiny of the actions of the increasingly secretive Baird Government.

The cuts come in the wake of the Auditor-General's report on Family and Community Services (FACS) which states that \$2.5 billion is paid to the non-government sector (NGOs) to deliver services usually handled by the Department with no direct accountability to Government for the management of this funding.

According to the Auditor General, the contracts with NGOs do not include outcome focused performance measures or include measurable targets to benchmark performance against the Department.

Unlike other states, NSW has not given the Auditor General legislative powers to follow the money.

The Baird Government are currently privatising TAFE - handing additional millions in public funds to cheap private providers with no accountability - Disability services, Out of Home Care for vulnerable children, the land titling and registry of the Land and Property Information Service, prisons, public housing, Sport and Recreation and National Parks.

"This Government has earmarked virtually the entire NSW public sector for privatisation and we are never privy to a business case if indeed one ever existed," said PSA General Secretary, Anne Gardiner.

"Everything is hidden behind closed doors and blanket assertions that the material is the subject of Cabinet confidentiality or commercial in confidence and as such cannot be released."

"The last thing that NSW needs is less scrutiny of process but with the investigative capacity of ICAC slashed, the Government is virtually writing its own get out of gaol free card."

The PSA believes the Baird Government must openly assess the socio-economic impact of any privatisation in the first instance.