

Patron, Lyn Provost

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Transparency International New Zealand

New Zealand needs to do more to fight foreign bribery

Just released report on foreign bribery labels New Zealand at
“limited enforcement.”

Exporting Corruption 2020: Assessing Enforcement of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, finds that active international enforcement against foreign bribery is shockingly low. Many of the World’s largest exporting countries fail to punish bribery in foreign markets

“Although domestic corruption in New Zealand appears low, we really need to lift our game in the way we respond to the threat of international corruption, Says Professor John Hopkins, the lead New Zealand author, on behalf of TINZ. Hopkins adds “The combination of an excellent reputation coupled with lax enforcement of foreign bribery is an extremely dangerous one. Organised crime and corrupt entities may see New Zealand a soft target for legitimising their activities.”

Recommendations for New Zealand include:

- Improve availability of statistics and information on investigations, MLA requests and cases in relation to foreign bribery
- Develop central registers (new or existing) to ensure public accessibility of beneficial ownership information for all New Zealand companies and trusts
- Remove the “routine government action” (facilitation payment) exemption from Section 105C of the Crimes Act
- Introduce clear and specific legislative protection for auditors (and others) who

report suspicions of bribery to the relevant authorities

- Improve protection for whistleblowers by strengthening the provisions in the Protected Disclosures Act, and other legislative amendments (e.g. extension of auditor protection under the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism Act 2015 to include foreign bribery)
- Introduce a positive requirement for commercial organisations to prevent foreign bribery by introduction of an offence of failure to prevent bribery (see The UK Bribery Act 2010, s7)
- Give greater priority and resources to the proactive investigation of foreign bribery to assess its extent in New Zealand
- Consider creating an independent anti-corruption agency, whose remit includes managing foreign bribery investigations
- Remove the requirement that the Attorney-General consent to foreign bribery prosecutions

“Foreign bribery is not an abstract phenomenon; it has huge consequences for both the payer and recipient. Money lost to foreign bribes creates significant economic repercussions, triggers unfair competitive advantages and results in fewer public services for the people who need them most. New Zealand needs to take action and demonstrate world leadership in the fight against corruption, “
Says Julie Haggie, CEO of Transparency International New Zealand.

Join Transparency International New Zealand, Transparency International Australia and the Transparency International secretariat on 15 October to discuss foreign bribery and the Exporting Corruption Report. Click for [webinar details and to register](#).

Background information for journalists

1. Media Contacts

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2. About Exporting Corruption

Since 2005, the Exporting Corruption series by Transparency International places countries into four categories of foreign bribery enforcement according to the number of investigations and cases the authorities open and conclude with sanctions over a four-year period. Different weights are assigned according to the stages of enforcement and the significance of cases. Countries' share of world exports also factors into their placement.

[The complete 2020 Exporting Corruption report is available here](#)

3. Exporting Corruption Downunder Webinar

In this webinar we hear how New Zealand and Australia stack up in their response to foreign bribery, and also hear from the report's author at Transparency International. Follow this link for [webinar details and to register](#).

4. About Transparency International

Transparency International is a global civil society coalition based in Berlin, leading the fight against corruption. It compiles a number of measures of different aspects of corruption including the Corruption Perceptions Index, the Global Corruption Barometer, and the Bribe Payers Index. Information on Transparency International can be found at www.transparency.org.

5. About the New Zealand chapter of Transparency International

The local chapter of Transparency International works to actively promote the highest levels of transparency, accountability, integrity and public participation in government and civil society in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. Find TINZ at www.transparency.org.nz.

Transparency International New Zealand has several projects designed to support greater integrity. These can be viewed in our [Annual Report](#), and include

- National Integrity System Assessment, a risk assessment of the pillars of democracy
- Development of a Financial Integrity Systems Assessment Tool, for use with the financial sector;
- Leaders Integrity forums for senior public leaders
- Submissions and advocacy
- Thought leadership through communications and events.

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