

Media Release

The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Attorney-General
Minister for Resources



Tuesday, 23 March 2021

SPECIALIST LOCAL GOVERNMENT WATCHDOG APPOINTED

Local government wrongdoers have been put on notice, with the appointment of Michael Stefanovic AM as Victoria's new Chief Municipal Inspector.

Mr Stefanovic will protect the integrity of local governments by monitoring and investigating complaints about council operations, elections and prosecuting anyone in breach of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Playing an important role within the Local Government Inspectorate, Mr Stefanovic will make sure Victorian councils play by the rules, while encouraging transparency and accountability across the sector.

Mr Stefanovic has 35 years of experience, undertaking complex investigations in high-risk environments both within Australia and abroad.

An expert in his field, having led teams specialising in fraud, corruption and misconduct investigations with the World Bank in Washington DC, he also served as the Director of the Investigations Division at the United Nations in New York.

Since November 2020, he has been the Director for Compliance Operations with COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria. Prior to this, Mr Stefanovic was the Director of Investigations for the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants.

His experience extends to post-conflict environments, having served as a United Nations war crimes investigator in The Hague, Chief Resident Investigator in UN peacekeeping missions and a member of specialist teams engaged by the US State Department to investigate crimes against humanity in Myanmar (2018) and Darfur (2004).

In 2018, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia, following significant services to international relations.

Mr Stefanovic began his career in the Victoria Police ranks, which included time with the Homicide and Drug Squads.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

"Michael Stefanovic has investigated corruption and misconduct in some of the world's toughest conditions – we have every confidence he will uphold our councils to the high standard we all expect."

"Mr Stefanovic brings tremendous experience and most importantly, a pursuit of fairness and accountability. I would like to congratulate him and look forward to seeing the positive impact he's bound to make."

Quote attributable to Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane

"Councils do a fantastic job, but we must ensure they follow the rules and put their communities first. I look forward to working with Michael Stefanovic on strengthening governance across the sector."