



Australian
National
University

Do Corruption Perceptions Matter?

Public Sector Fraud & Corruption Summit

Canberra – 2 May 2017

Dr Adam Masters

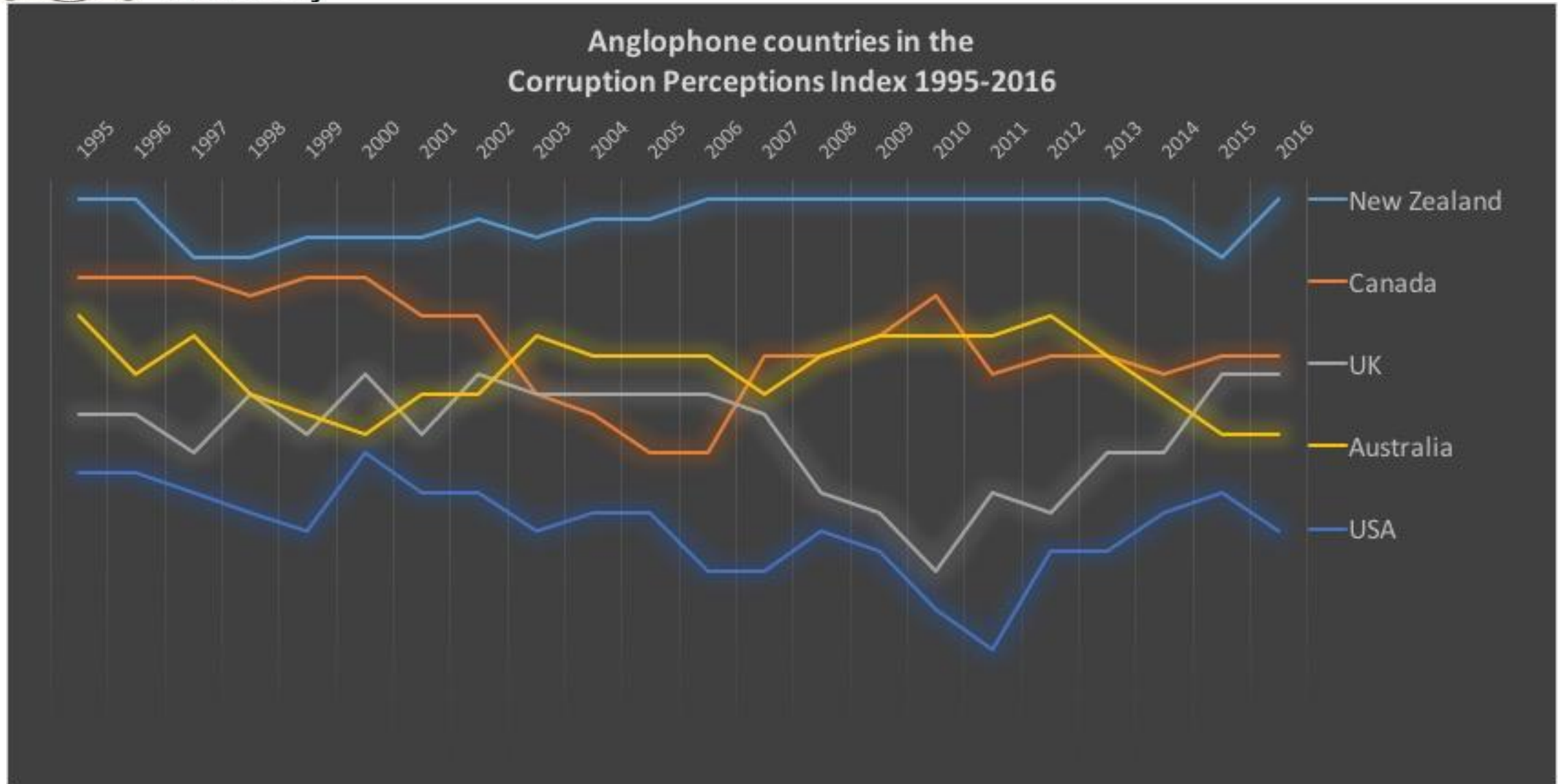
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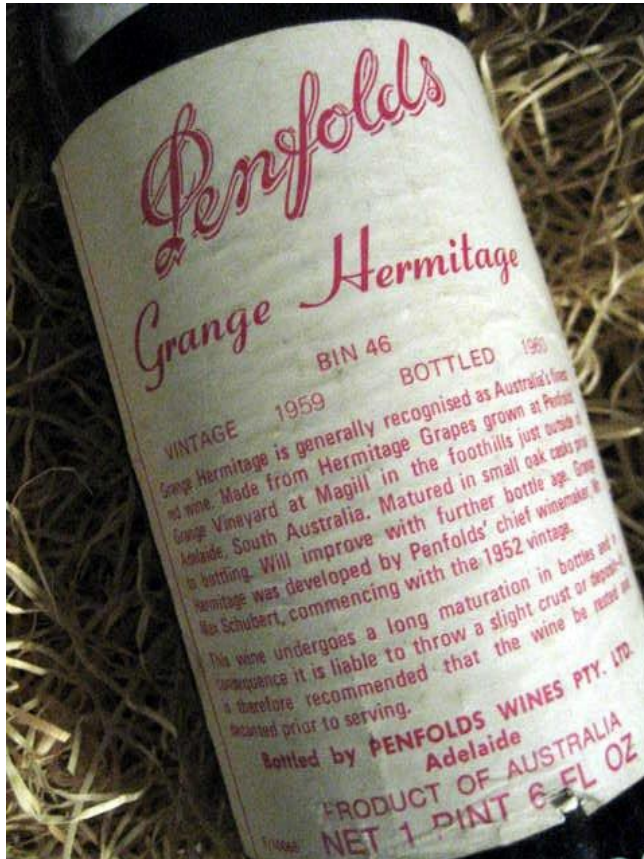


Transparency International





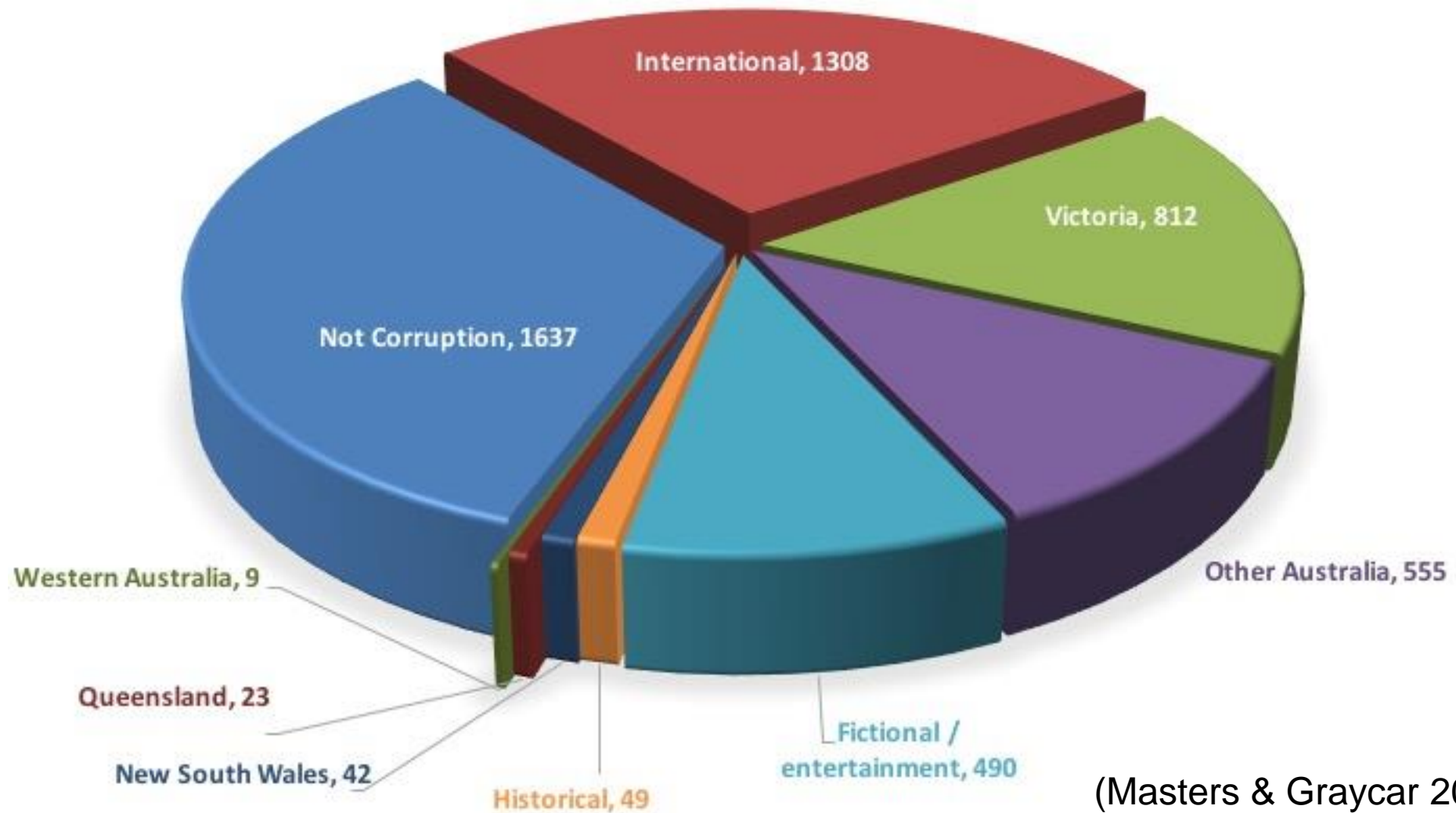
Perceptions affecting reality



Greysynd Ace in Canberra – 9 October 2016
(SMH, 26 March 2017)



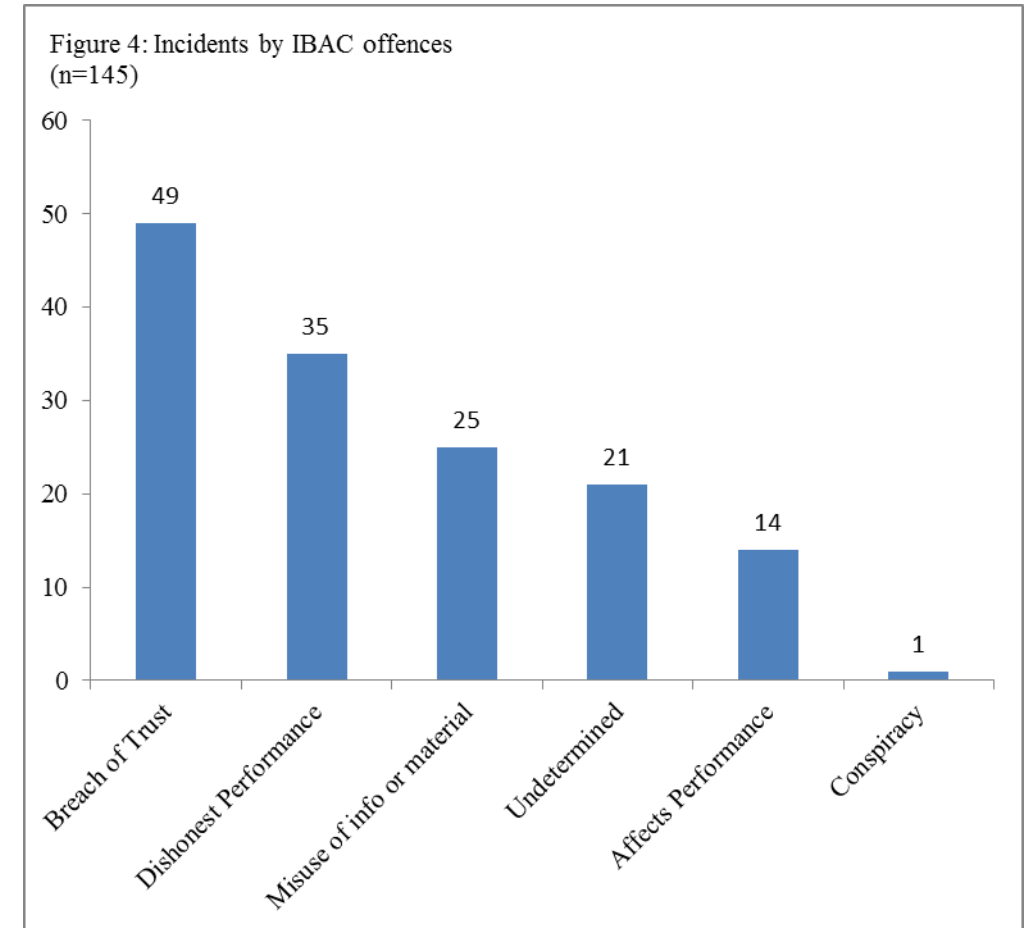
Victorian Media Reports of Corruption 2010-2012 (n=4919)



(Masters & Graycar 2015)

Corrupt incidents in Victoria per the *IBAC Act 2012* Offences (n=145)

- Conduct of any person that adversely **affects the honest performance** by a public officer or public body of his or her or its functions as a public officer or public body
- Conduct of a public officer or public body that constitutes or involves the **dishonest performance** of his or her or its functions as a public officer or public body
- Conduct of a public officer or public body that constitutes or involves knowingly or recklessly **breaching public trust**
- Conduct of a public officer or a public body that involves the **misuse of information or material** acquired in the course of the performance of his or her or its functions as a public officer or public body, whether or not for the benefit of the public officer or public body or any other person
- Conduct that could constitute a **conspiracy** or an attempt to engage in any conduct referred to above.



(Masters & Graycar 2015)

The Media Effect

To what extent do you see the following institutions being affected by corruption?

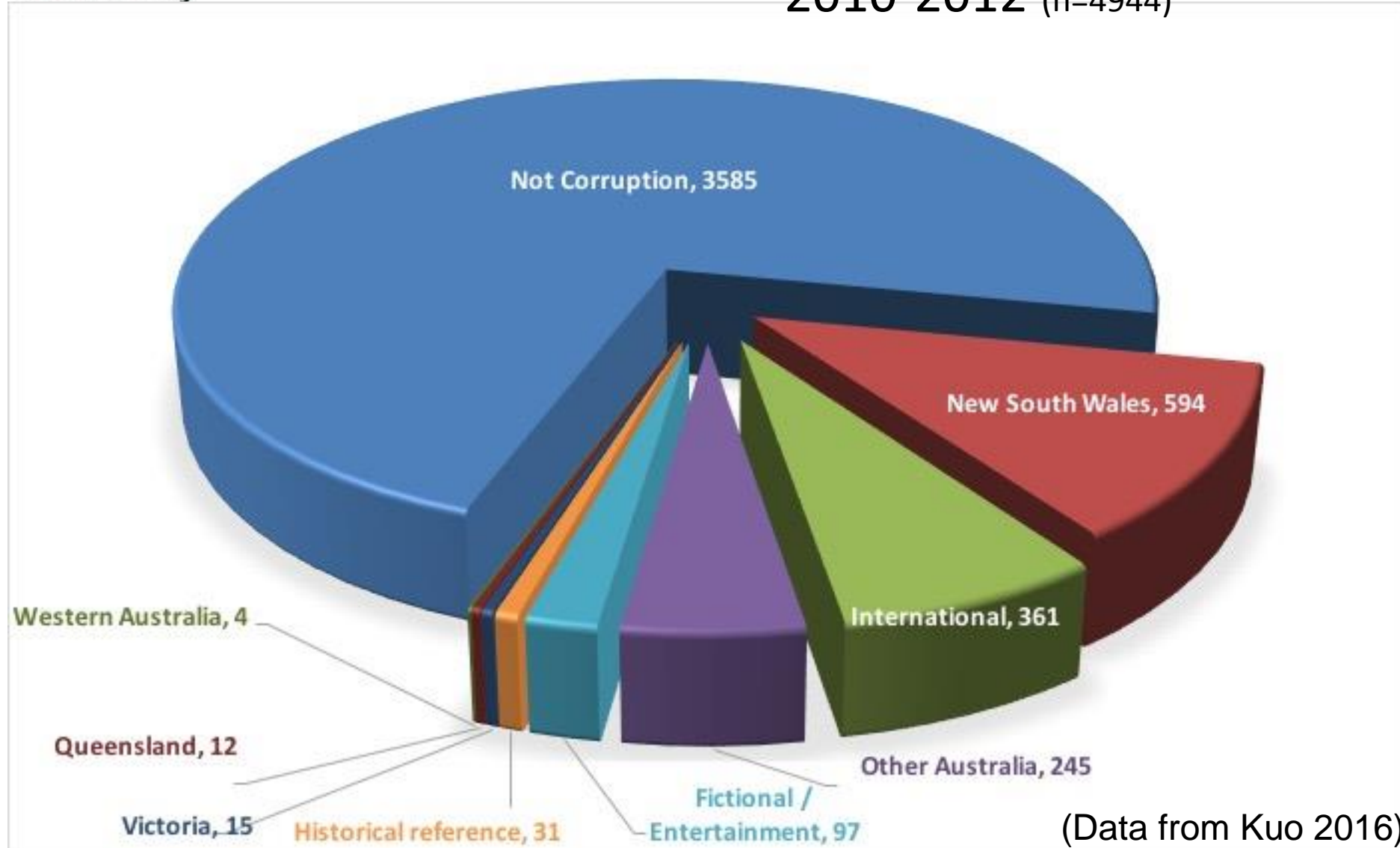
Per cent of respondents N= 2020

(Source ANUPoll 2012)

Australian Institution	Corrupt	Not corrupt	difference
Armed forces	8	69	-61
Police	16	56	-40
Public Service	13	51	-38
Local Government	19	48	-29
Trade Unions	38	24	+14
Political Parties	37	22	+15
Media	44	20	+24

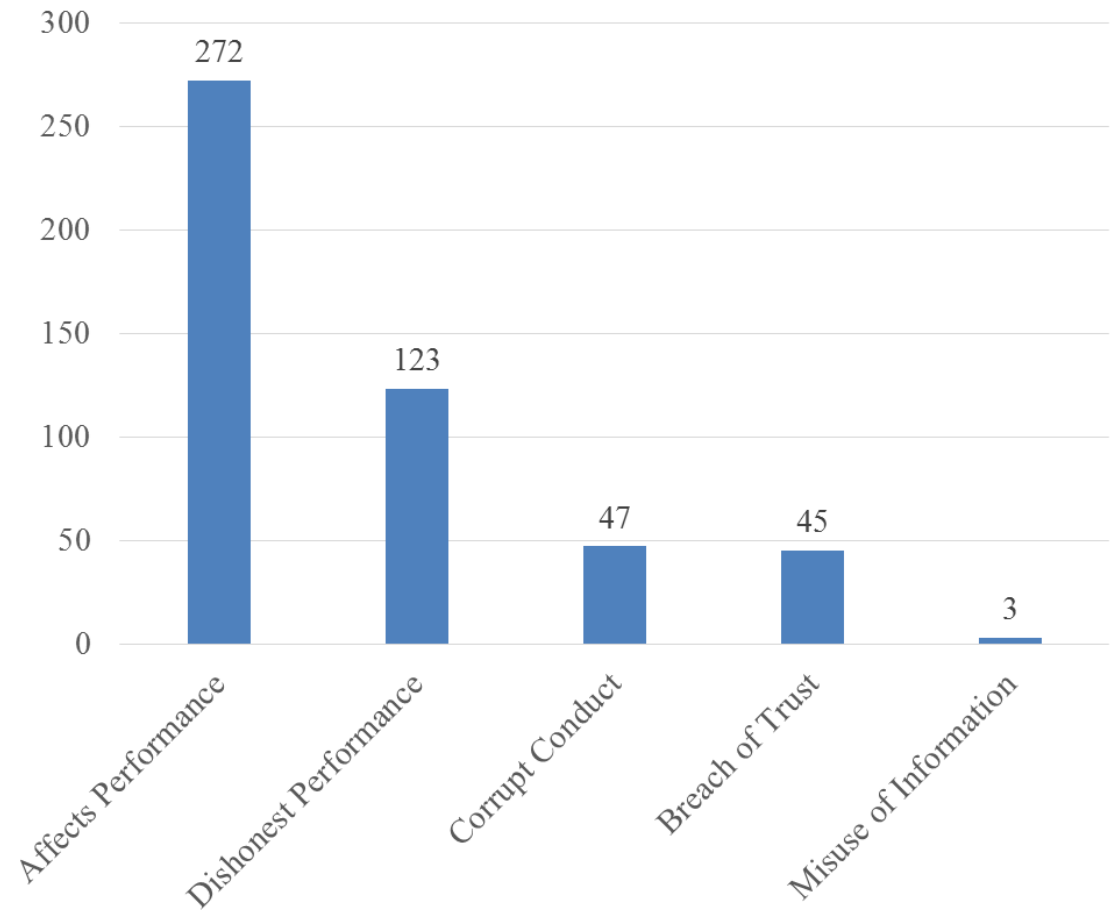


NSW Media Reports of Corruption 2010-2012 (n=4944)



Media reports in NSW coded to the *ICAC Act 1988* Offences

- any conduct of any person (whether or not a public official) that **adversely affects**, or that could adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, the honest or impartial exercise of official functions by any public official, any group or body of public officials or any public authority
- any conduct of a public official that constitutes or involves the **dishonest** or partial exercise of any of his or her official functions
- any conduct of a public official or former public official that constitutes or involves a **breach of public trust**
- any conduct of a public official or former public official that involves the **misuse of information or material** that he or she has acquired in the course of his or her official functions, whether or not for his or her benefit or for the benefit of any other person
- **Corrupt conduct** is also any conduct of any person (whether or not a public official) that impairs, or that could impair, public confidence in public administration



(Data from Kuo 2016)



Perceptions v. Observations

In the last 5 years, how often have you or a family member come across a public official who hinted they wanted, or asked for, a bribe in return for a service in Australia? (n=2020)

	Number	%
Never	1842	91.2
Seldom	90	4.4
Occasionally	60	3.0
Quite often	14	0.7
Very often	1	0.1
Don't know/ can't say	8	0.4
Refused	4	0.2
Total	2020	100

Local Government

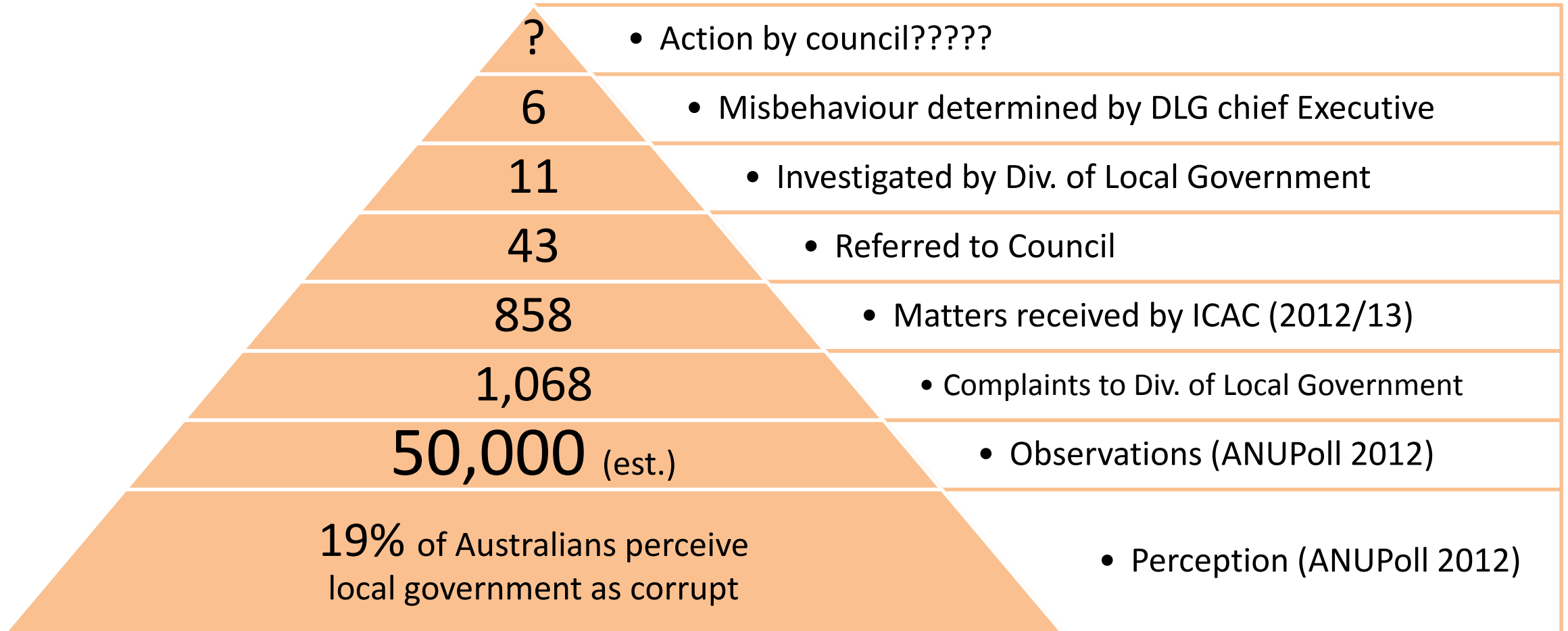
- Of those reporting a potential bribe, 18.4% recalled it was a local government official. This translates to approximately 1.5% of total Australian population
- Put another way, this could be 50,000 observations of corruption in local government annually



(Source: Masters & Graycar 2016)



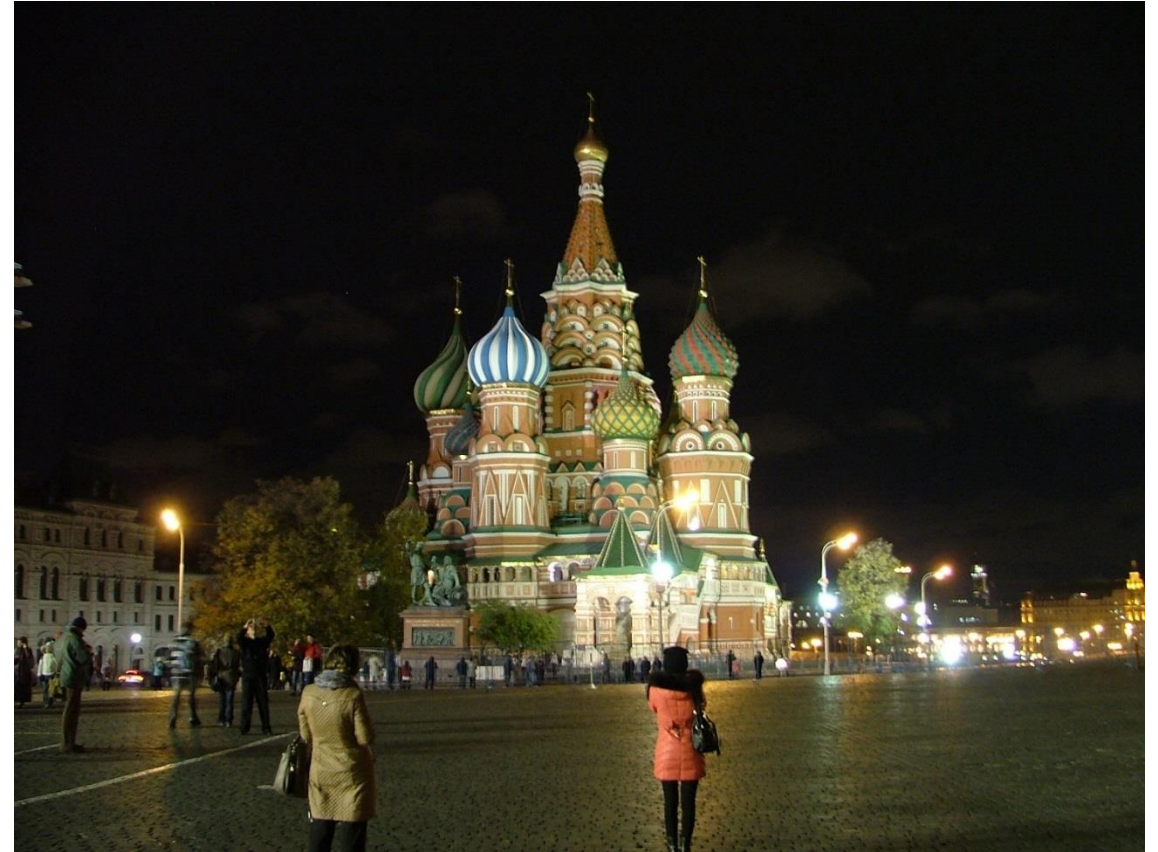
Corruption Disappearing...



(Masters & Graycar 2016)

Let's not forget the other end of the scale...

- In Russia, 86% of the people believe public authorities are corrupt – 23% of households have paid a bribe (Rose & Mishler 2007)
- In Vietnam, 66% of people in contact with the police have paid a bribe in the last 12 months (TI 2017)
- In Pakistan, 75% of people in contact with the police have paid a bribe (TI 2017)
- In India, 59% of people have paid a bribe when seeking health care or an ID document (TI 2017)

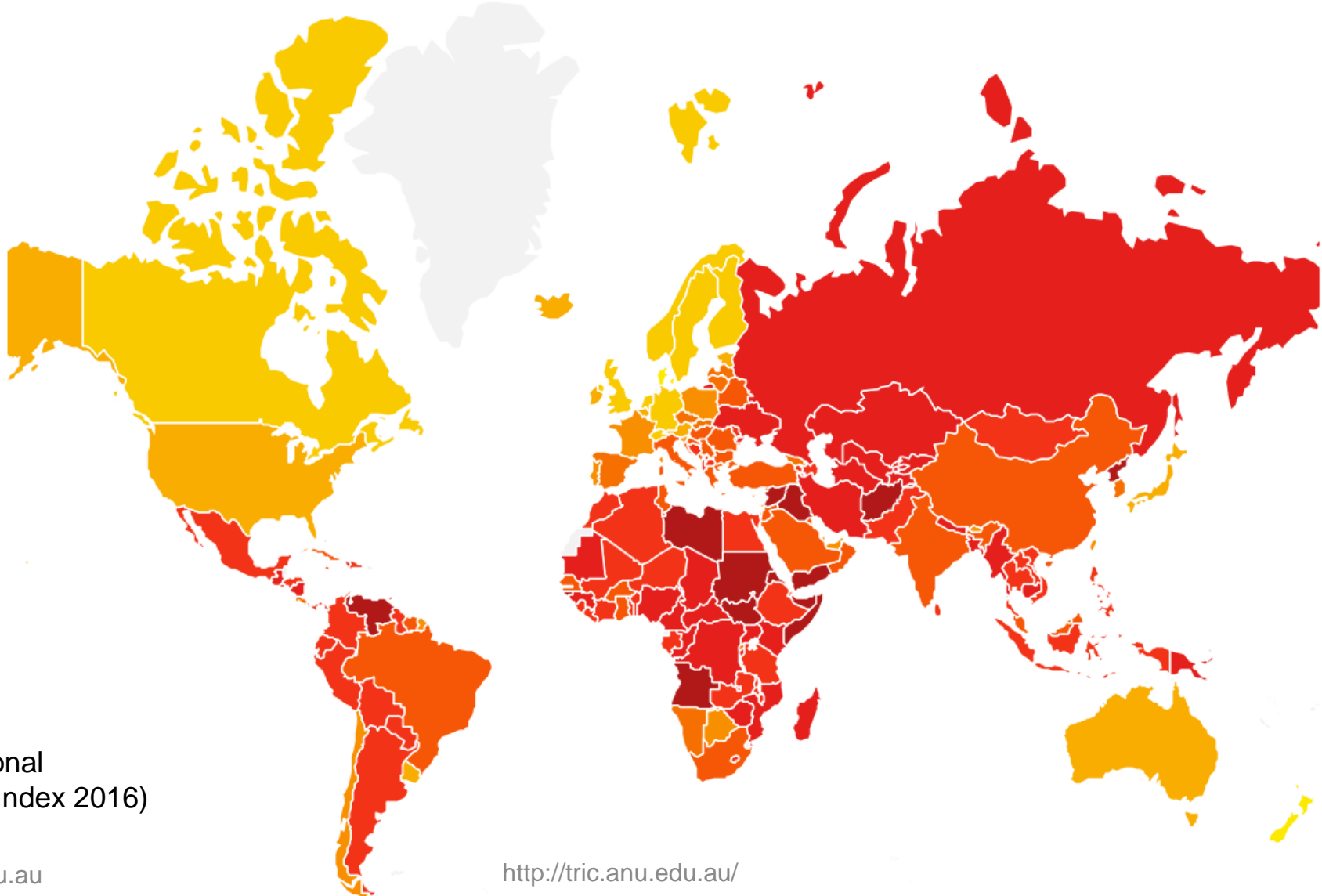


Key take-away messages

- Despite the slippage on the Corruption Perceptions Index, Australia remains a low corruption country
- Corruption perceptions remain—and are likely to remain—disproportionately greater than any measurable reality
But higher perceptions stimulates anti-corruption activity
- We face a paradox, the more we publicly tackle corruption and the greater success we have in reducing it could result in a rising public and international perception this is a corrupt society



Questions?



(Transparency International
Corruption Perceptions Index 2016)

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