



Speech by

Robert Messenger

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

Hansard Thursday, 12 November 2009

CORAL COAST HOMES

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—LNP) (9.09 pm): I table a letter that I have recently received from the CMC.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 6 November 2009, from Helen Couper, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Misconduct, Crime and Misconduct Commission, to Mr Rob Messenger MP, in relation to a complaint about the Building Services Authority and Coral Coast Homes [1356].

A CMC investigation into the management of the Building Services Authority and its regulation of the Queensland building industry with regard to Coral Coast Homes was launched after a number of my constituents became victims of a very dishonest Burnett builder, John Biles. According to the CMC, an independent investigation commissioned by the BSA found with regard to the BSA's internal systemic issues: there is a lack of policy and procedure to guide decision-making process under relevant acts and regulations; deficient and/or inconsistent record-keeping practices; the retention of staff lacking financial qualifications to carry out compliance investigations; the lack of structured staff training programs; the absence of an internal file review system ensuring quality control of audit process and to ensure timely acting of matters; and a lack of integration of data held by the BSA in relation to individual licence holders.

The CMC letter also says that the investigator appointed by the BSA, Mr King of Corporate Success Group, also identified possible deficiencies in the financial requirement for licensing—FRL—framework with respect to the issue of chronic nonpayment of debts. The letter then goes on to say that it takes the view, and has made the recommendation to the BSA, that it is appropriate to institute a review of its corporate governance framework with the object being a rejuvenated, accountable and transparent system with which to move forward. I am very disappointed that the CMC referred the matter back to the BSA for self-investigation and other aspects of this letter. However, these comments are an absolutely damning indictment on the political leadership and the management of this government of the BSA.

It appears from the CMC letter that not one of my constituents who made a complaint about the BSA was interviewed by Mr King. Surely if you were to conduct a rigorous independent investigation focused on uncovering the truth, you would not only interview the BSA officers but also interview the people who made the complaints. Secondly, this is a very serious issue. The BSA's failure to protect my constituents from Coral Coast Homes has driven people to the point of almost taking their own lives because they have lost hope of recovering their life savings. It has driven people to suffer nervous breakdowns—physical breakdowns. It has severely tested family relationships. This deserved the attention of the CMC. The CMC investigators should have been involved in the interview of the seven BSA staff members. There is a big difference in being questioned by a private subcontracted investigator whom you are paying to do the job and the CMC.