



Speech By  
**Curtis Pitt**


**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 31 October 2013

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Ergon Energy, Comments by Premier**

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (3.10 pm): During question time yesterday I raised a sensitive matter with the Premier that involved the alleged inappropriate behaviour of a senior Ergon Energy manager during a recent teleconference. I sought to highlight the issue in broad terms so as not to identify any individual from any side of the incident. Unfortunately, rather than addressing the issue that I raised, the Premier instead proceeded to attack me and the opposition. He called the question 'extraordinary'.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** I will take that interjection from the Attorney-General. He called the question 'extraordinary', he referred to it as 'rubbish' and he mocked the opposition for even putting the question. He was then aided and abetted by the Deputy Premier who, in answering a completely unrelated question, described my question as 'the stupidest question' he has heard 'in 15 years in this House'. I table a copy of the relevant section of *Hansard* from yesterday, which shows that I have accurately recounted these comments and that no one has been verbally, as the Premier so often alleges.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from *Hansard* of 30 October 2013, pp. 3697-3698 [[3948](#)].

I wish to express my disappointment with the tone and content of the Premier's response. This was a serious matter involving some unsavoury comments made about an Ergon employee who had recently passed away. I raised the matter in this House in the interests of getting some straight answers on behalf of the recently deceased man's family and his work colleagues. The Premier's conduct in responding to my question stands in stark contrast to the demeanour of the Minister for Energy and even the current Acting Minister. I have confidence that either of them, if asked the question, would have given a far more appropriate response. However, in the end the Premier obviously decided to respond in the way he did and he will ultimately be judged for his behaviour.

The Premier challenged me to provide evidence, implying that there was no basis to my question without, to paraphrase him, tapes, transcripts, minutes or documentation. So in response I now present redacted copies of several documents that provide further information about the issue I raised. Firstly, I table an email by a senior manager at Ergon Energy to the Electrical Trades Union about this matter. The email's author clearly states that some comments made by the staff member in question were 'inappropriate and which are not condoned by Ergon Energy'. I also table a covering letter from the ETU and an affidavit signed by a Commissioner for Declarations from ETU organiser Stuart Traill about the matter.

*Tabled paper:* Redacted copy of email, dated 31 October 2013, sent to Peter Simpson, Electrical Trades Union [[3949](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Redacted copy of letter, dated 31 October 2013, sent to the member for Mulgrave, Mr Curtis Pitt MP, from PJ Simpson, Electrical Trades Union, titled 'RE: comments and the Premier and Deputy Premier's responses' [[3950](#)].

*Tabled paper.* Redacted affidavit, dated 31 October 2013, titled 'Statement of Stuart Traill', three-page document [\[3951\]](#).

I will forward non-redacted versions of these documents to the Premier and the minister to allow them to investigate the matter. I wish to place on the record that I was not expecting a detailed response on-the-spot from the Premier on this issue. I was, however, expecting a more reasoned, rational response than I received. The manner in which the Premier responded spoke volumes, as did the follow-on remarks from the Deputy Premier. The member for Ashgrove may be Premier of this state, but he is no statesman.