



Speech By
Hon. Jarrod Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2014

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Crime and Corruption Commission, Chairman

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (2.30 pm), by leave: I seek leave to make a ministerial statement. I wish to advise the House that late yesterday I received a letter from the chair of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee advising that the committee had for the second time neglected to reach the requisite bipartisan support for the government's nomination of Mr Paul Favell as chairman of the Crime and Corruption Commission. No reasons were provided as to why the committee had taken the decision that it did.

While this may seem to be little more than a debating point, it goes to the very heart of the task of contributing to a stable and effective Crime and Corruption Commission. The government has a fundamental commitment to the preservation and importance of an independent and accountable Crime and Corruption Commission. We have always accepted the view that such a body is essential in modern society to ensure that the full powers of the state are brought to bear on corruption and serious crime.

In response to concerns raised about the appointment of the CCC chairman, the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 was amended to reintroduce the requirement for bipartisan Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee support for the appointment of chairman, deputy chairman and ordinary commissioners. The amendment took effect from 1 July 2014 so that the appointment of a person as permanent CCC chairman, deputy chairman or ordinary commissioners requires the bipartisan support of the committee.

I note Mr Favell's nomination has proceeded through a transparent recruitment process in response to public advertising in the local and national press. This contrasts with the situation that occurred for the three appointments in 2004, 2009, and 2011, when the successful applicants were not identified through a similarly public process. Had the government decided to proceed with Mr Favell's nomination again or decided to select another candidate, no clue has been provided as to the qualities that would meet the committee's requirements. I am at a loss to understand what additional qualities above and beyond those demonstrated by Mr Favell's extensive curriculum vitae he or any alternative nominee would have to demonstrate to receive the bipartisan support of the committee.

The government believes that Mr Favell possesses the qualities required of the leader of the state's primary serious crime and corruption fighting body. Mr Favell is a practitioner of unimpeachable integrity and reputation, having been admitted to the Queensland bar in 1980. Mr Favell is a sessional member of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal appointed in 2009, a nationally accredited mediator and has practised in all significant jurisdictions from the High Court down. Of even more practical interest is the fact that since 2011 Mr Favell has been engaged as the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner or its predecessor.

For the benefit of members of the House I table a copy of letters received from both the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association of Queensland with respect to Mr Favell's standing; however, Madam Speaker, I think it important that I read the contents of the letters into *Hansard*. The letter dated 28 October 2014 from the Queensland Law Society states—

Dear Attorney

Reference is made to the nomination of Mr Paul Favell as Chairman of the Crime and Corruption Commission.

The Society is not aware of any matter or circumstance that would preclude Mr Favell's appointment as Chairman.

The Society notes that Mr Favell is a barrister of good standing having been called to the Bar in 1980. We also note that in addition to previously serving on the Queensland Commercial and Consumer Tribunal and Social Security Appeals Tribunal, Mr Favell is a member of QCAT, and a member of the Professional Conduct Committee of the Bar Association of Queensland.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss the matter further.

Yours faithfully

Ian Brown

President

I table a copy of that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 28 October 2014, to the Attorney-General, Hon. Jarrod Bleijie, from the Queensland Law Society regarding Mr Paul Favell [\[6415\]](#).

The second letter, dated 29 October 2014, is from the Bar Association of Queensland and states—

Dear Attorney

I refer to our conversation yesterday in relation to the standing of Mr Paul Joseph Favell.

According to the records of the Supreme Court of Queensland Mr Favell was admitted to practice as a Barrister-at-Law on 22 July 1980.

Mr Favell holds a current barrister's practising certificate issued by the Association with nil conditions, which entitles him to practise at the private Bar in Queensland.

Mr Favell has been an active member in the affairs of the Association. He has assisted over the past ten years as a coach during the terms of the Bar Practice Course and has been involved in the Sports Law Conference held biannually by the Association.

Mr Favell is a long standing member of the Professional Conduct Committee of the Association and is also a sessional member of QCAT. His appointment to QCAT commenced in 2009.

Mr Favell holds a Certificate of National Accreditation as a Mediator issued by the Association, current until 30 June 2015.

Yours faithfully

Shane Doyle QC

President

I table a copy of that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 29 October 2014, to the Attorney-General, Hon. Jarrod Bleijie, from the Queensland Bar Association regarding Mr Paul Favell [\[6416\]](#).

Madam Speaker, there is a direct line between public confidence in institutions such as the Crime and Corruption Commission and effective leadership. There is no surer way of damaging public confidence in the CCC than to leave it leaderless. Stability is vital, and following the traumas of the then CMC's own making last year one measure of stability is the presence of a leadership team which is able to take the organisation forward.

In light of the events over the past 48 hours and to ensure the stability of the CCC, the government has recommended the continuing appointment in an acting capacity of Dr Ken Levy as chairman and Ms Diane McFarlane as acting CEO until such time as the positions can be permanently filled. The government has also recommended the permanent appointment of Mr Syd Williams QC as deputy chairman. I am pleased to advise that these appointments were approved by His Excellency at Executive Council earlier today. Current ordinary commissioner Professor Marilyn McMeniman AM has indicated a willingness to have her acting appointment extended, and I thank her for that. The government will now commence with a fresh set of advertising pursuant to the Crime and Corruption Act with a view to permanently filling these vacancies.

The government remains committed to the maintenance of a stable and successful Crime and Corruption Commission. We will do everything possible to ensure that the CCC has the experienced and effective leadership it deserves. Queenslanders would expect nothing less.