




Speech By
Peter Russo

MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK

Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2015

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (12.31 pm): In accordance with standing order 211A, the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee has authorised me to make the following statement. I advise the House of the committee's recent consideration of the proposed nominees for the positions of part-time ordinary commissioners. On Monday, 9 November 2015, the Attorney-General wrote to inform the committee that, as a result of a comprehensive recruitment process undertaken in accordance with section 227(2) of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, the government advised the names of two preferred nominees as part-time ordinary commissioners. Pursuant to section 228(1) of the act, the Attorney sought the committee's bipartisan support for these nominations. The Attorney's correspondence also enclosed copies of the curricula vitae for both nominees.

On Wednesday, 11 November 2015, the committee met to consider this matter. In the absence of the non-government members, the committee resolved to meet with the Attorney-General and the proposed nominees the following day. On Thursday, 12 November 2015, the committee met with the Attorney-General and, in accordance with past practice, conducted interviews with the proposed nominees. After the interviews, the committee discussed the nominations and requested the secretariat to provide a written overview of the appointment processes of the last 10 years. On Monday, 16 November 2015, the committee was provided with the research request.

Given that the requested research material had been provided to the committee on Wednesday, 18 November 2015, as acting chair, in accordance with standing order 198, I called a meeting for Friday, 20 November 2015, to further consider this matter. In issuing the meeting request, I outlined reasons for the meeting. Those reasons included that the committee needed to make a determination to enable the Attorney to take matters to the Governor in Council by 26 November and that applicants should be afforded the courtesy of being advised of the success or otherwise of their application without undue delay.

On Thursday, 19 November 2015, the acting deputy chair advised that the LNP members of the committee would not be attending the meeting because they had not been given sufficient time to conduct research regarding the appointments and would therefore not be prepared to consider this matter until 30 November 2015 at the earliest. On Friday, 20 November 2015, the committee met to consider this matter. As only government members of the committee were present, the committee was not able to finalise its consideration of the nominations. The committee agreed to write to the Attorney-General to advise that the committee was yet to determine this matter. The committee resolved to meet again on Wednesday, 25 November 2015.

The records provided by the secretariat indicate that predecessors of this committee have, upon interviewing proposed nominees, quickly come to a decision. Given the publicity surrounding the

nomination process for the chairman of the Crime and Corruption Commission earlier this year and the delay in the committee's decision-making process, I bring these latest delays to the attention of the House.

Although these roles were advertised some time ago, the Attorney advised that the delay in the committee finalising the chairman's appointment has, in turn, delayed the Attorney from being able to consult with the chairman of the CCC on these further appointments as required under the act. As the House is no doubt aware, these senior roles at the CCC have not been permanently filled for a significant period.

In addition to its important monitoring and reviewing responsibilities, the committee has an important role to play in ensuring the requisite staffing stability at the commission. To not respond to these matters in a timely way is an affront to the commission, a poor reflection on the committee and demonstrates disrespect for the parliamentary process and, indeed, this House. Through this committee, the parliament holds the commission to account. It follows that the parliament, through the committee, should not impede the commission from being able to perform its role effectively.