



Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

Record of Proceedings, 3 December 2015

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (2.40 pm): On 1 December, Mr Russo, the acting chair of the PCCC, made a statement in this House. That statement reflected on me and the committee generally. I table that statement.

Tabled paper: Extract from the *Record of Proceedings*, undated, regarding the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee [\[1832\]](#).

I believe the statement makes it clear that the PCCC is dysfunctional under the leadership of the acting chair. There are principally three issues: (1) that the position of the chair of the PCCC is still an acting role and urgently needs to be resolved; (2) the PCCC is so dysfunctional under the acting leadership of the member for Sunnybank that in six months we have not even been able to finalise a bipartisan and efficient way to organise when to meet; and (3) there have been substantial delays in the Attorney-General's appointment processes that have been blamed on the PCCC when, in fact, members are simply trying to ensure that the CCC has the most suitable nominations appointed.

Firstly, let me clarify the facts, although under standing orders my hands are somewhat tied. On 9 November at 6.04 pm, on a day when the committee had conducted five hours of business, the Attorney-General wrote to the committee. A more timely letter could have been dealt with on that day. Receipt of that correspondence confirmed that the Attorney-General took some seven months to write to the committee regarding those appointments. The excuse given by Mr Russo in his statement for the seven-month delay, in defence of the Attorney-General's complete inaction, was the delay in the Attorney-General's appointment of Mr MacSporran as chairman. Mr MacSporran, a fine appointment as chair, commenced on 1 September. Mr Russo, in turn, blamed that delay on the committee's decision-making process.

I would like to point out to the House that the committee is chaotically led by the acting chair and member for Sunnybank, who should not try to absolve himself of responsibility for the PCCC's dysfunction. The acting chair then unilaterally called a meeting on Wednesday, 11 November. While standing orders give him that power, it took us by surprise as the Labor members have consistently refused to meet on the Wednesday of a sitting week. Many months previously, I had confirmed that I would attend the centenary of Anzac remembrance commemorations in my electorate of Toowoomba North. The meeting on 11 November lasted 11 minutes.

The committee then met on Thursday, 12 November. I cannot discuss the details of that meeting under standing orders, other than to say further information and deliberations were sought and required prior to making such important appointments. On Monday, 16 November some of the requested information was provided to the secretariat. Further, when employing staff it has always been my personal preference to interview in person.

On 18 November the acting chair unilaterally called a meeting for 20 November. I had already given verbal advice, but on the 19th I advised in writing that the opposition members would not be prepared to consider those appointments until the 30th at the earliest. The acting chair then chose to call a further meeting without consultation with the opposition. That meeting lasted eight minutes and authorised the acting chair to make his statement to the House.

I would further like to point out to the House that in June, some six months ago, there was a draft meeting protocol drawn up. This protocol would aid the acting chair and the committee to set—

(Time expired)