




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2018

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Resolution, Cessation of Investigation

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (11.05 am): As chair of the Ethics Committee I rise to report on a matter referred to the Ethics Committee of the 55th Parliament. I refer to the matters of privilege referred by the Speaker of the 55th Parliament to the Ethics Committee of that parliament on 27 October 2015 in respect of an alleged unauthorised disclosure of PCCC and Ethics Committee proceedings by persons unknown; and, in the process of asking questions without notice, failure to comply with standing order 271 and a Speaker's direction regarding the same by the former members for Southern Downs and Indooroopilly and the members for Surfers Paradise, Clayfield and Kawana; and an alleged breach of the privileges of the PCCC and Ethics Committee in rising on a matter of privilege and other points of order by the former member for Callide.

On the dissolution of the 55th Parliament the Ethics Committee of that parliament was dissolved. Under section 105 of the Parliament of Queensland Act, the Ethics Committee of the 56th parliament has resolved not to continue to investigate this matter and will therefore not be tabling a report; however, this decision does not represent any finding in respect of the matter. The matter related to the alleged unauthorised disclosure of PCCC and Ethics Committee proceedings.

Standing orders 211, 211A and 211B relating to confidentiality of committee proceedings are one expression of a greater principle of parliamentary law and practice; that is, the proceedings of parliamentary committees are confidential until the committee reports those proceedings to the House or otherwise orders their release or publication. The rule is designed to promote better functioning of the committee process and to affirm that the House is entitled to the first advice of the conclusions of its committees.

Previous ethics committees have stressed that any unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings represents an attack on the integrity of the parliament. If a committee member finds him or herself in a situation where they feel unable to raise a concern about a possible breach of the confidentiality of that committee within the relevant committee, an appropriate course of action would be to write to the Speaker reporting the concern.

On 1 September 2016 the then Speaker made a statement to the House noting a recent increase in allegations relating to breaches of committee confidentiality and urging members to familiarise themselves with the requirements of those standing orders. I reiterate that request.