

78B(2)(c)

21 November 2012

Personal and Confidential

Hon G W Elmes MP
Member for Noosa
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister
Assisting the Premier
PO Box 1849
NOOSAVILLE DC QLD 4566

**RE: a) Police find nothing to investigate in 'anonymous dirt file'
b) Queensland Lobbyist Register**

Dear Minister

I write regarding the above two matters, which are currently receiving considerable media attention and debate, both in the Parliament and in the media.

You may have read recent reports in the media about an 'anonymous dirt file' referred to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) by the LNP.

I am pleased to confirm that I have been cleared of any wrongdoing by the QPS. A report by Assistant Police Commissioner Mike Condon states that the Fraud and Corporate Crime Group (FCCG) within the Queensland Police Service has concluded *"a criminal offence has not been identified"* among the smear and innuendo contained within the anonymous dirt file. Further, they found that *"there was insufficient information to warrant an investigative response by the QPS."*

These allegations were never raised with me directly and despite repeated requests to the LNP, to this date, I have not been made aware of any particulars in relation to them. However, newspaper reports refer to claims about fundraising for the 2009 Queensland election campaign. Presuming these are the allegations referred to, I categorically deny any wrongdoing in relation to this, or indeed any other fundraising matter and I am reassured that the police support this assessment.

I attach a media release from [redacted] lawyers in relation to this.

As a [redacted] I have the privilege of assisting the Federal Secretariat in fundraising to help your Federal colleagues fight the Gillard Labor Government at the next election. I have of course been willing to assist with State fundraising, but the LNP Secretariat has declined my offers of assistance.



Ultimately, this whole episode has been a complete waste of Police time and money because someone wanted to play political games and damage my reputation and character in the eyes of people like you. I hope that you won't allow them to be successful.

In relation to the second matter, there has been much excitement recently from the Opposition and some sections of the media, in relation to the Queensland Lobbyist Register.

As 78B(2)(c), I wanted to record my absolute commitment to upholding the highest standards expected by the *Integrity Act*, the Lobbyists Code of Conduct, and ultimately, the people of Queensland in relation to all of my dealings with government representatives like yourself.

Much of the recent debate and reporting that has occurred in relation to the work of lobbyists seems to be based on a foundation that there is something inherently undesirable about the profession of lobbying and government relations, and by implication, those involved.

Debate of this kind has the significant potential to demonise those named, with the chief outcome being to the detriment of their reputation and business, regardless of whether there is even any alleged wrongdoing. Further, the new and unwelcome obsession with the random requests to table ministerial registers of lobbyist meetings is very unhelpful, undermining the entire system by politicising it.

I intend to work with the Government Relations Professionals Association (GRPA) to identify ways of increasing accountability and transparency, while reducing the politicisation of lobbyists and their role in our system of government.

Fundamentally, the Lobbyist Register should be an accountability tool, not a weapon for the Opposition. Again, there is an attempt to demonise me and some of my colleagues in the government relations industry and here too, I hope that you won't allow them to be successful.

Attached please find a relevant media release for your information.

I welcome any questions you may have or an opportunity to discuss them with you at a mutually convenient time.

Yours sincerely

MEDIA STATEMENT

Reference is made to the article in The Australian dated 2 November 2012 titled "Probe into Liberal 'slush fund'" concerning alleged donations to the Liberal National Party (LNP) that were declared by the donor to the Queensland Electoral Commission but not by the LNP.

During the 2009 campaign, Coo'ee - the company responsible for installing the billboard referred to in the article - was an integral part of the central campaign effort organizing all of the media buying for the LNP. This included the television spots, radio advertisements and billboard locations. Coo'ee also prepared the artwork for billboards approved by the State Director LNP, one of which was the billboard for the Chatsworth Campaign - the subject of the article.

The Treasurer of the local campaign committee (who was not Mr Caltabiano) ensures that all donations are properly listed in the committee's declaration submitted to the State Director. For reasons unknown to Mr Caltabiano, it appears here that the donation in question was not included in the State Director's final declaration made to the Electoral Commission.

Where a donation (for whatever reason) is inadvertently omitted from a declaration, as sometimes happens in all parties, an amended return is submitted to correct the record. Any such discrepancy would presumably have been notified to the State Director in 2009 following the submission of the declaration to the Electoral Commission.

The donation in kind of \$20,400 for payment of the billboard by Brescia Investments was not made to Mr Caltabiano but rather to Coo'ee who reported directly to the State Director. In this instance the donor properly declared the in-kind donation, the State Director was aware of the expenditure in question, and it was not Mr Caltabiano's responsibility to make the necessary declaration.

16th November 2012.

MEDIA STATEMENT

SANTORO CLEARED OF WRONGDOING BY QUEENSLAND POLICE

Federal Liberal Vice-President and LNP Life Member, Santo Santoro, has welcomed the Queensland Police Service's finding that he has not been involved in criminal activity and that no further investigation is warranted in relation to the anonymous dirt file sent to them by the LNP in relation to alleged fundraising allegations.

"I trust that the journalists and media organisations which leapt upon the referral of this anonymous dirt file to the police will now report with equal enthusiasm, vigour and prominence that the Queensland Police Service has rightly thrown it into the waste paper basket," Mr Santoro said today.

A report by Assistant Commissioner Mike Condon states that the Fraud and Corporate Crime Group (FCCG) within the Queensland Police Service, concluded that "a criminal offence has not been identified" among the smear and innuendo contained within the anonymous dirt file. Further, they found that "there was insufficient information to warrant an investigative response by the QPS."

"From the moment that I was made aware of the referral of an anonymous file, I have always maintained that this file was a political stitch up job. This whole episode has been a complete waste of Police time and money because someone wanted to play political games." Mr Santoro said.

"I should have been afforded the opportunity to explain to the LNP President's Committee and/or the State Executive of the LNP, any unsubstantiated and anonymous allegations made to them and which they referred to the Queensland Police Service.

"Had I been afforded natural justice and due process from the time that this file was received by LNP Headquarters, I could have quickly debunked/dismissed the contents obviously compiled by people who do not have the courage to stand by their untrue and defamatory allegations.

"I again claim with absolute conviction and without any hesitation that I have never done anything that could even remotely prompt people to think that I should be referred to the police, let alone be referred to the police on the basis of unsubstantiated, anonymous allegations.

"It is a disgrace that I still do not have a copy of the so called 'dossier' received by the LNP and forwarded to the police - details of which were leaked to the media - or the Queensland Police Service's response to the LNP or anyone else subsequent to the Police Service's investigation of the allegations contained in the anonymous dossier.

"This whole exercise smacks of malicious intent, defaming me in a personal and professional sense, with a view to doing me significant harm. The people responsible for this should be ashamed of themselves."

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