



17 November 2022

Committee of Privileges  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: [priv.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:priv.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Secretary,

**Re: Inquiry regarding possible contempt**

Thank you for your letter dated 28 October 2022 requesting my submission to the Committee of Privileges. My statement and response to the specific questions put by the committee follow.

I became a member of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement on 2 February 2021 as the Greens Justice portfolio holder, and stepped down from the Committee at the conclusion of the 46th Parliament as I no longer held the portfolio after the election.

As I said in my statement to the Senate on 25 October 2022, Mr Dean Martin and I met through Blak activism and briefly dated. Specifically, we met on 26 January 2021 at an Invasion Day rally and dated in March 2021. Since then, we have remained friends and have collaborated on our shared interest: advocating for the rights of First Nations people.

As I outline below, I treated in confidence all confidential information I received as part of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement. However, I should have disclosed my connection to Mr Martin to the Joint Committee and to my Party Leader, Adam Bandt. I regret the mistake I made and as a result I resigned as the Greens' Deputy Leader in the Senate.

***What arrangements did you and your office have in place for the handling of confidential committee documents?***

All confidential documents relating to the inquiry in question were handled by my former Chief of Staff, David Mejia-Canales, who had responsibility for shredding or disposing of them in designated confidential document bags once read. Any confidential documents I received from him were returned for the above process to occur.



More generally, all staff in my office understood the importance of confidentiality in relation to the Joint Committee and they disposed of confidential documents appropriately in relation to all committee inquiries.

***Who in your office was responsible for committee related matters during the time you were a member of the joint committee? Who in your office would have had an awareness of committee activities, during the same period, including current and former staff members?***

My former Chief of Staff, David Mejia-Canales, was the main contact and responsible for the Joint Committee and the inquiry in question for the duration of my Committee membership. My policy adviser, Anica Niepraschk, prepared for the meetings of the Committee between May and December 2021, however not for any inquiry-related matters. During the period between May and December 2021 Mr Mejia-Canales continued to be the main contact point for the Committee in the office and continued work on all committee inquiries, including the inquiry in question. From December 2021 Mr Mejia-Canales resumed responsibility for all matters relating to the joint committee again.

My Office Manager, Dan Cook, was aware of Committee meeting times through management of the public inbox and diary. My former Chief of Staff, Georgia Webster, also had access to committee papers in her role until she finished in May 2021. She followed the same processes in relation to confidential document handling as Mr Mejia-Canales.

***Did you discuss any matters related to the joint committee with Mr Dean Martin? If so, what matters were discussed?***

No.

***Did you provide Mr Martin with any committee documents or transcripts? If so, what documents did he have access to?***

No.

***Did Mr Martin ask you to pursue any matters through the committee? If so, did you pursue those matters at a committee hearing or briefing, or through any other proceeding of that committee?***

No.

***Is there any other information you can provide to assist the Committee of Privileges with its inquiry?***

No, not as far as I'm aware.

# LIDIA THORPE

SENATOR FOR VICTORIA



Should you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lidia Thorpe', written in a cursive style.

**Lidia Thorpe**  
Senator for Victoria