

Appendix 2

Dr Geoffrey Robinson

Pursuant to Resolution 5(7)(b) of the Senate of 25 February 1988

Reply to speech made by Senator Brian Burston

(6 December 2017)

I wish to bring to your attention a speech by Senator Brian Burston on 6 December 2017, that included false accusations against myself.

I wish, as allowed for under Resolution 5(1)(B), to correct the record in order to protect my professional reputation, and I also wish to express my disappointment that a Senator has used parliamentary privilege to spread false allegations. All allegations are denied by myself.

The reality of my encounters with the individual that he refers to as victim is very different to the sensational claims made by Senator Burston.

I am not guilty of the accusations put forward in the Senator's speech and would have welcomed the opportunity to demonstrate my innocence to Mr Burston.

Senator Burston's speech has had the effect of seriously defaming me and causing me considerable personal anguish and professional harm.

These allegations were made under the protection of parliamentary privilege, and later published as a video to Senator Burston's public Facebook page, where it has been shared 11 times and viewed over 1200 times.

I seek the right of reply and ask that my response be published by the Senate or incorporated in Hansard.

Response to Senator Burston:

The Senator's speech on 6 December 2017 included false allegations against myself.

One of these allegations was that I am a troll '...who attack mostly innocent people to pander to a celebrity.'

The Oxford English Dictionary definition of 'troll' is:

A person who makes a deliberately offensive or provocative online post
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/troll>

Earlier in the Senator's statement he referred to un-named 'trolls' and accused them of creating false social media accounts as part of a campaign of harassment against an individual.

As I am identified as a 'troll' later in the speech this implies that I am guilty of this action. This would amount to misusing a carriage service as per S474.17 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth).

This claim, which is completely untrue, has had an adverse impact on myself in terms of the resolution:

1. I am a university academic. My employer has a strict social media policy and in recent years one Deakin academic has lost their employment as a consequence of violating this policy. The allegation that I am a 'troll' is a direct threat to my occupation.
2. The suggestion that am I a 'troll' suggests fundamental character deficiencies that would render me unfit to be a university teacher.
3. The Senator claims that as one of the trolls which he identifies I am guilty of the criminal offence of misusing a carriage service which render me liable to dismissal by my employer.