



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA

24 May 2012

Senator Helen Polley
Chair
Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator Polley

I am writing to correct the record of a matter discussed at your Committee's Estimates hearing on 21 May 2012.

The discussion, raised by Senator Ronaldson, concerned an investigation by the Parliamentary Service Commissioner into allegations made by a former Parliamentary Service employee about the then Secretary, DPS, and Parliamentary Librarian. I advised the Committee that this matter had been finalised.

There are in fact two separate sets of allegations that were referred to the Parliamentary Service Commissioner.

The first set, which I was referring to in my answers to Senator Ronaldson during the hearing, is separate from the set of allegations relating to the then Secretary and Parliamentary Librarian that the former employee referred to in his letter to Senator Ronaldson.

I took the allegations made by the former employee about the then Secretary, DPS, to be the matter raised by Senator Ronaldson at the hearing.

While the first set of allegations has been finalised, as I informed the Committee, the second set has not. I am advised that the second set is close to finality and that the Commissioner will provide a report to the Speaker and myself about them. I will advise the Committee of the outcome in due course.

In discussion during the hearing, the Acting Secretary, DPS, said that the former employee concerned had initiated a number of actions against the department and that, in settlement of these, he had signed a deed of release,

a condition of which was the discontinuation of all actions he had on foot at the time.

Further inquiry indicates that actions the former employee had begun are not discontinued by the deed. Instead, the employee's undertaking is to not commence any new actions, further agitate any existing actions, or volunteer involvement in any actions, unless compelled to do so by law.

I have also been advised since the Estimates hearing that there are several further actions that the former employee has initiated with the Parliamentary Service Commissioner and the Parliamentary Service Merit Protection Commissioner. These are not matters for the Presiding Officers.

Under the terms of the deed, the handling of any actions the former employee has initiated with the Parliamentary Service Commissioner or Merit Protection Commissioner is a matter for those office holders to decide.

I have provided a copy of this letter to Senator Ronaldson.

Yours sincerely

JOHN HOGG