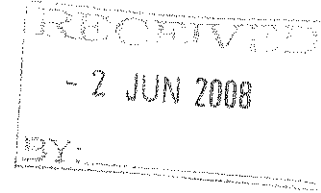


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• australiano wool  
innovation  
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May 30, 2008

Senator the Hon. Bill Heffernan

Email: c/- [keri.huxley@aph.gov.au](mailto:keri.huxley@aph.gov.au)

**Senate Estimates Committee hearing 26/05/2008 and allegations under Parliamentary Privilege by Senator Heffernan questioning my appointment as Company Secretary and Legal Counsel of Australian Wool Innovation Limited.**

Dear Sir;

In response to the sensational allegations made by Senator Heffernan this week during Senate Estimate hearings, I want to clarify the circumstances.

I was admitted to practice as a solicitor in NSW in 1978. In the early 1980's I had my own private law practice specialising in criminal law cases. I represented a number of sex workers whose profession at that stage was legal and who were entitled to legal representation. I had also presented evidence to a NSW Government Joint Parliamentary Enquiry into Prostitution. At that enquiry my clients and I gave evidence of police corruption in the prostitution industry and identified specific Police officers.

Some months later those officers identified were expelled from the Police force. Before their sacking from the Police they brought proceedings against me for breach of the old English common law misdemeanour of "Being the Keeper of the Brothel". When I was charged with this offence in 1987 no-one had been charged with this offence for over 120 years. This offence was used in the 1800s to prosecute anyone who aided or assisted the establishment and maintenance of a brothel, such as landlords renting premises, service providers to a brothel, etc. I had been providing legal advice to sex workers.

A District Court jury in 1992 found me guilty of this misdemeanour and I was sentenced to a good behaviour recognisance for 2 years.

Subsequently, the Law Society of NSW and the NSW Court of Appeal were obliged to investigate the matter and found there to be no reason to cancel my practicing certificate.

The NSW Courts take offences of dishonesty very seriously cancelling barrister's and solicitor's practicing certificates for any offence of dishonesty including tax evasion, fare evasion, and the like. The allegations against me in relation to bank accounts, false business names and running a brothel were not found to be established to the satisfaction of the Court and I retained my practicing certificate.

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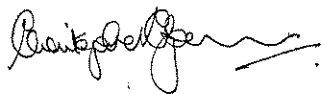
I am content that I properly represented, defended and acted as solicitor for these marginalised members of our community, and indeed, contributed to the reform of corrupt elements of the NSW Police Force.

Unfortunately some members of the now disbanded Vice Squad were very unhappy with my participation in their exposure and I was targeted with threats to, and harassment of, me and my family by the Police and a police prosecution for a common law misdemeanour.

The judges of the NSW Court of Appeal were critical of me for getting too involved in my client's cases but found no reason to cancel my practicing certificate.

I joined AWI in October **2003**. In early 2004, an individual AWI Board member asked that these matters from nearly 20 years earlier, be examined by the Board. The Board having studied all the facts was unanimous in their support for me in my appointment as Company Secretary and Legal Counsel and agreed that these past matters had no bearing on my ability to discharge my duties to the Company.

These matters would appear to be totally irrelevant to the concerns of Australian wool growers, AWI shareholders and AWI.



Christopher Chapman

Barrister and Solicitor NSW

DipLaw, DipCD, DipCM, FCIS, FAICD, MBA (UNE)

May 2008

# Australian Wool Innovation grilled by Senators

JUCY SKUTHORP

7/05/2008 6:50:00 PM

The corporate management and excessive costs of legal and media fees at Australia Wool Innovation (AWI) have been called into question at a Senate hearing in Canberra this week.

led by Liberal Senator Bill Heffernan, AWI was questioned for more than two and a half hours on its corporate management and operating costs outside of what it actually spends on research.

It emerged the company's new chief executive officer, Craig Welsh, enjoys a salary of more than \$500,000 a year, and despite being a relatively small company with an operating income of about \$50m a year there are more than three company secretaries and 180 staff, which chew up about \$12m every year in the company's income.

An estimated \$20m is spent on actual research, according to Mr Welsh, while a special taskforce established in 2004 to respond to animal rights attacks on the sheep and wool industry has cost more than \$3.6m.

A lot of woolgrowers are concerned about what we've got to show for the hundreds of millions of dollars that's been spent, and especially the attitude of "see you in court"...." Senator Heffernan said.

Senator Heffernan levelled a barrage of questions to AWI board member, Chris Abell, Mr Welsh, and company secretary Les Targ over the appointment of one of the company secretaries and in-house legal counsel, Christopher Chapman, who previously ran a brothel, set up an account under a fake name and was named as an "unsuitable person to be practicing law in NSW" by the Law Society of NSW.

It was confirmed the board was aware of Mr Chapman's past and convictions when he was appointed by AWI about five years ago, but Mr Abell said Mr Chapman was seen to be suitable for the position and his qualifications were examined in light of his past conviction.

While Senator Heffernan alleged clips being developed by AWI had a failure rate and were therefore not going to work commercially, Mr Abell argued to the contrary that the clips had been through some successful trials and were still in the development phase.

He acknowledged though that the long term solution to a mulesing alternative was in fact in genetics, or breeding sheep which don't need to be mulesed.

AWI representatives took up to 20 questions on notice and will have to provide the committee with a detailed costing on media and legal bills, staff salaries, research expenditure and more.

Rural Press National News Service, Parliament House Bureau, Canberra  
<http://www.farmonline.com.au>

## Comments

It's about time the executives were questioned.

AWI has and still seems to have a bottomless pit for wages and projects that never seem to get anywhere.

Posted by **Marc** on 27/05/2008 4:24:33 PM

It's about time the executives were questioned. AWI has and still seems to have a bottomless pit for wages and projects that never seem to get anywhere.

Posted by **Marc** on 27/05/2008 4:44:58 PM

Not unlike the AWC, AWB, and any other farmer funded organization.

They take the view, like government, that farmers exist to be ripped off.

Posted by **Brindi** on 27/05/2008 7:49:49 PM

So what is new, it is still a hangover from the old AWC.