

SENATE
FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFERENCES COMMITTEE

**SUBMISSION by GREGORY KEVIN MAGUIRE
Regarding the funding of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre**

Reference: Regional Partnerships Program

To inquire into and report on:

1. The administration for the Regional Partnerships program and the Sustainable Regions program, with particular reference to the process by which projects are proposed, considered and approved for funding, including:
 - (a) decisions to fund or not to fund particular projects;
 - (b) the recommendations of area consultative committees;
 - (c) the recommendations of departmental officers and recommendations from any other sources including from other agencies or other levels of government;
 - (d) the nature and extent of the respective roles of the administering department, minister and parliamentary secretary, other ministers and parliamentary secretaries, other senators or members and their advisers and staff in the process of selection of successful applications;
 - (e) the criteria used to take the decision to fund projects;
 - (f) the transparency and accountability of the process and outcomes;
 - (g) the mechanism for authorising the funding of projects;
 - (h) the constitutionality, legality and propriety of any practices whereby any members of either House of Parliament are excluded from committees, boards or other bodies involved in the consideration of proposed projects, or coerced or threatened in an effort to prevent them from freely communicating with their constituents; and
 - (i) whether the operation of the program is consistent with the Auditor-General's 'Better Practice Guide for the Administration of Grants' and is subject to sufficient independent audit.
2. With respect to the future administration of similar programs, any safeguards or guidelines which might be put in place to ensure proper accountability for the expenditure of public money, particularly the appropriate arrangements for independent audit of the funding of projects.
3. Any related matters.

AFFIDAVIT

Gregory Kevin Maguire of Quality Hotel Powerhouse Hotel, Armidale Road, New England Highway, Tamworth, hotelier, states on oath:

Australian Equine and Livestock Centre

1. I am the Chairman of what is commonly referred to as the board of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre at Tamworth. However, it is not really a board as it is not a private corporate

business. Rather it is a sub committee of the Tamworth Regional Council. My role as chairman is voluntary and not paid and I have no financial interest in the project.

2. In fact the Tamworth Regional Council will be the ultimate owner of the complex being sought to be developed on a green field site purchased by the Council for that purpose. The Council has made a formal submission to the Senate enquiry about the centre.
3. The project is of national significance and will have particular benefit for Tamworth and the New England region. Some 18 months ago I took over the chairmanship of the committee at the request of Mr Tony Windsor, MP. The committee was restructured at my request so that it now has sixty percent corporate and business representation and forty percent user representation.
4. The committee then resolved to engage and did engage independent professional consultants to review the project and assist in production of the ultimately successful business case for funding of the project. The financial viability of the project and the unanimous support of competing user interests in the community were identified as critical matters to be addressed. The previous submission had been reviewed by Professor Chudleigh and found wanting.
5. The objective merits and propriety of the current submission have been acknowledged in the public statement concerning the matter in November 2004 by chairman of the local area consultative committee, Mr Kevin Humphries. That committee now has responsibility in relation to the Regional Partnerships Program which has now replaced the previous Regional Solutions Program.
6. The proposal and independent assessment of it establishes, in my view, that the proposed allocation of funds from the Regional Partnerships Program for the establishment of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre at Tamworth is justified on the merits in accordance with the business case now put forward by the current committee.

Federal Police Enquiry

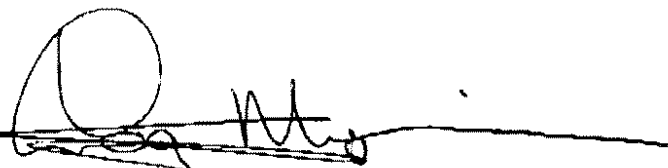
7. On Saturday, 2 October 2004 I was interviewed by two officers from Australian Federal Police (AFP). I was advised that they were:
"making inquiries into an allegation that on or about the nineteenth of May 2004 at Tamworth that:
 - *you offered a benefit, being the offer of a diplomatic posting or a trade appointment, to Tony Windsor, MP;*
 - *in order to influence Tony Windsor not to stand as a candidate in the upcoming Federal election".*
8. On 22 November 2004 after the completion of the AFP inquiries, which included interviewing Mr Tony Windsor, MP, his campaign manager, Mr Stephen Hall, and his campaign secretary, Ms Helen Tickle, the Australian Federal Police released a media statement that the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions had concluded that:
 - *".....none of the versions of the conversations related by any of the witnesses can amount to an "offer to give or confer" a benefit.*
 - *Further there is no evidence in this material of Mr Maguire having conspired with any other person to make an offer to Mr Windsor".*

Attached hereto marked GKM1 is a copy of the AFP media statement of 22 November 2004.

9. I co-operated fully with the Federal Police inquiries without the benefit of or the need for legal representation as I had done nothing wrong in my dealing with Mr Windsor nor in my chairmanship of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre. I consider that my position has

been vindicated by the outcome of AFP investigations and that Mr Windsor's claims have been found to lack substance.

10. At no stage was it suggested to me by the Federal Police or any other person, at that or any other time, that funding for the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre required or would be facilitated by Mr Windsor's resignation from Parliament either prior to the Federal election in 2004 or otherwise.
11. Further, it was never suggested to me that the project would not be funded if Mr Windsor was associated with it. I have personally always acknowledged Mr Windsor's support for the project over the last 12 years.
12. Attached hereto as a bundle marked "GKM2" are copies of three media statements released by me in November 2004 in relation to the objectionable and unfounded allegations made about me and the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Anderson and National Party Senator, Mr Sandy McDonald, by Mr Windsor under Parliamentary privilege. The statements made on my behalf in attachments GKM2 are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
13. As set out in those statements, and as I told the Federal Police, neither Mr Anderson or Mr McDonald requested or instructed me to put any offer to Mr Windsor along the lines now alleged by him or in terms of the matter the subject of the Federal Police investigation. However, I believe that the allegations by Mr Windsor are based, at best, on an erroneous recollection and, at worst, on an intentional misrepresentation about some personal remarks which I made to him at a meeting which I had with him on 19 May 2004.
14. In general discussions by me with Mr Anderson prior to that meeting I told Mr Anderson that in my view:
 - *some people in the town had maybe started to think that Tony was not effectual;*
 - *that Tony was not doing the job we thought he could do; and*
 - *that he had seemed to be more effective and did a great job in State Parliament.*
 - *That he [Mr Anderson] had caused their own problem in not having a government representative here because they [the Nationals] did not run with Tony but ran with someone else.*
15. At the meeting with Mr Windsor on 19 May 2004 I said to him (in relation to my view that he was not being effectual) words to the following effect:
 - *look, you know, I have been a supporter, I have been with you for a long time;*
 - *I think it is time you rolled over and went and talked to the Liberal Party or the National Party;*
 - *I think if you were to go and approach the Libs or the Nationals I reckon you could write your own deal.*
 - *I reckon you could probably get a ministry, you could probably do whatever you wanted to, even an overseas posting;*
 - *over the years, there have been deals done in politics that probably, you know, there would be jobs for the boys or whatever.*
16. In response Mr Windsor told me that he would not do what I suggested. I then said to him words to the effect of:



- *look what you should do is go and talk to them. At least go and talk to them, you know. Go and talk to the Liberals or go and talk to Anderson.*
- *go and talk to someone because at the end of the day, you know, we are not kicking the goals we should be kicking.*

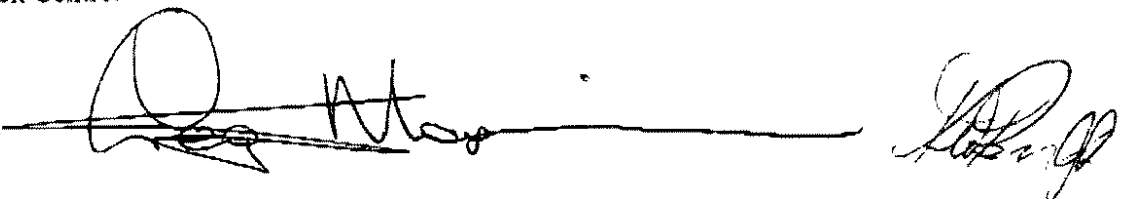
17. At the meeting with Mr Windsor on 19 May 2004 at which Mr Hall and Ms Tickle were also present, I did not at any stage represent or suggest that I was acting for Mr Anderson or Mr McDonald. At this inquiry, Mr Hall and Ms Tickle (but not Mr Windsor) acknowledged that I did not even mention Mr Anderson's name at the meeting. In any event, my remarks at that meeting were my own personal views.

Mr Tony Windsor, MP

18. In the circumstances I consider that the subsequent uncalled for and unsubstantiated attacks on me personally in the House of Representatives (some six months later), in November 2004, by Mr Windsor and again, before this Senate Committee by Mr Windsor, Mr Hall and Ms Tickle, really have nothing to do with the propriety of the funding under the Regional Partnerships Program for the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre.
19. In fairness to Mr Windsor, as appears from the AFP media release attached, no complaint was originally made by Mr Windsor to the AFP or the Electoral Commission. Nevertheless, the matters since raised by Mr Windsor and his political campaign executives seem to be associated with some personal agenda concerning Mr Windsor's standing and profile in the community, particularly from the political view point.
20. Those issues, in my view, have nothing to do with the propriety for the funding of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre under the Regional Partnerships Program. I consider they were all about Mr Windsor personally and his broader political agenda in harnessing a collective of independents in the Federal arena to the detriment of his former National Party colleagues. I also consider it to be part of the ongoing personal vendetta between Tony Windsor and John Anderson.
21. There is nothing in the evidence given by Mr Windsor and his associates, Mr Hall (and I reject their recent expanded recollections about my alleged willingness to lie) and Ms Tickle, that causes me to change my views about Mr Windsor only being interested in Mr Windsor's personal political position. I do not consider that Mr Windsor is genuinely concerned about the administration of the Regional Partnerships Program, nor is he any longer genuinely concerned about the funding for the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre. This is now all about Tony Windsor and his vendetta against John Anderson and his wish to be seen as the leader of the independents taking over from the National Party.
22. From my own perspective I consider that Mr Windsor's erroneous and offensive allegations about me are being used as a political football and a witch hunt against the Deputy Prime Minister. The inquiry's terms of reference, on their face, do not specifically contemplate or require a continued investigation by this committee or Mr Windsor into his erroneous and offensive bribery allegations. This is despite the independent investigation by the AFP and the clear determination reached as a result of those investigations.

Senate Enquiry

23. I have advised the secretariat to the committee at all stages that I am willing to assist the committee in its inquiry in accordance with its terms of reference. I have previously not provided a submission to the inquiry about Mr Windsor's allegations. This was because, apart from them being untrue, I did not consider them relevant to the funding of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre.



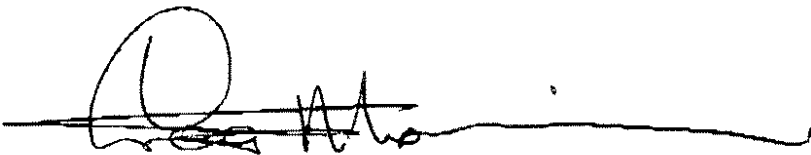
24. Were it not for the advice given to me from the secretariat as to the possible ambit of the questioning at these inquiries and also because of the leeway already afforded Mr Windsor and his associates by the committee in terms of the content of submissions and evidence concerning Mr Windsor's repudiated and unsubstantiated allegations, I would not have sought to place any further submissions on the public record nor voluntarily made myself available to give evidence.
25. I would nevertheless seek the committee's support in focusing and directing any further oral evidence or questions to me to the nature and propriety of the funding of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre in accordance with the Regional Partnerships Program and the committee's terms of reference. I became involved in the project originally because of my desire that this worthwhile community asset be put in place as a national centre with immediate benefit for the New England region and the city of Tamworth.
26. I would also seek the committee's support in providing for adequate means of redress for ordinary citizens in the community, such as myself, and now others drawn into the quagmire of political point scoring by the minute examination of every project under the Regional Partnerships Program. Unlike the whiteboard of former times where what is written can readily be erased, the damage done to me by my former mate, Mr Windsor, aided and abetted by the Parliamentary process in both Houses, is very unfair to me, very un-Australian and cannot be so readily erased or atoned for.

Conclusion

27. I personally have always had considerable reservations about party politics in this country and the limitations because of this on both sides of politics. In many ways, I thought Mr Windsor was above that and personal political agendas and that his paramount concern was the interests of the community and our area. This was why I supported him as an independent at both State and Federal level.
28. I now consider Mr Windsor unworthy of the previous trust and confidence I and others had placed in him. For my part this was as both a friend and supporter for the reasons set out in this submission. I now regard him as an individual who is only interested in protecting and promoting his own political career despite the cost to others. Parliamentary privilege has allowed him to attack me and others unfairly and at no risk to himself for the normal consequences of such action in the community.
29. For the reasons set out in this submission and for the further reasons as set out in my opening remarks to this enquiry I consider Mr Windsor to be a person whose credibility should no longer be accepted by Parliament and the New England electorate.

SWORN by GREGORY KEVIN
MAGUIRE on this 9th
day of March, 2005 at Sydney
in the presence of:


A Justice of the Peace / Solicitor /
Commissioner for Declarations



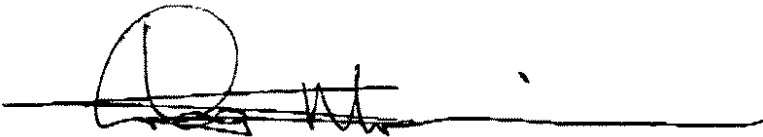
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FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFERENCES COMMITTEE

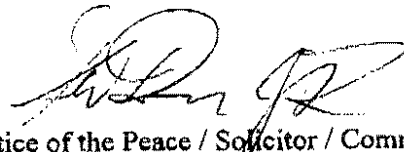
Reference: **Regional Partnerships Program**

Exhibit GKM 1 to the affidavit of GREGORY KEVIN MAGUIRE

sworn : 9th March 2005



Deponent



A Justice of the Peace / Solicitor / Commissioner
for Declarations



Media Statement



22 November 2004

AFP concludes electoral bribery investigation

The AFP has finalised its investigation in relation to an allegation of electoral bribery regarding the Member for New England, Mr Tony Windsor MP.

As a result of advice from the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) no charges will be laid in relation to this matter.

The AFP began its investigations after it received a referral from the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) on 21 September 2004. This referral was based on an allegation initially raised during a radio interview by Mr Windsor.

Following investigations, the AFP sent evidentiary material to the CDPP on 7 October for advice in relation to whether a prima facie case could be substantiated in relation to allegations of an inducement being offered.

Having assessed this material the CDPP has advised that the evidence will not sustain a charge.

The CDPP concluded that "...none of the versions of the conversations related by any of the witnesses can amount to an "offer to give or confer" a benefit. Further there is no evidence in this material of Mr Maguire having conspired with any other person to make an offer to Mr Windsor."

The AFP has assessed the information provided by the CDPP and has finalised its investigations as a result of that assessment.

The AEC has been notified of this outcome. It would be inappropriate for the AFP to provide any further detail in relation to this matter.

Media enquiries:

AFP Media

02 6275 7100

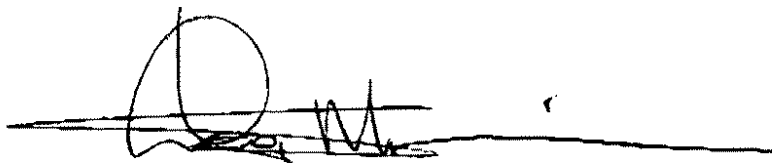
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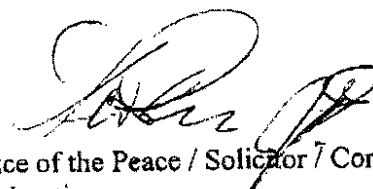
Reference: **Regional Partnerships Program**

Exhibit GKM 2 to the affidavit of GREGORY KEVIN MAGUIRE

sworn *9th March 2005*



Deponent



A Justice of the Peace / Solicitor / Commissioner
for Declarations

PRESS RELEASE GADENS LAWYERS; MAGUIRE TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2004

- Tamworth businessman, Mr Greg Maguire, categorically rejects as untrue further statements made yesterday by independent New England MP, Mr Tony Windsor, under Parliamentary privilege in relation to an alleged phone call between Mr Maguire and Mr Windsor supposedly concerning the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Anderson:
- In Parliament, Mr Windsor alleged that Mr Maguire told him in a phone call a few days after 20 September 2004 that the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Anderson made a phone call to Mr Maguire. Mr Windsor alleged that the message conveyed in that call was:
"Get your mate to pull back" – "This is bigger than all of us"
- Mr Maguire had no phone call with Mr Windsor in which he made any such statement as now alleged by Mr Windsor concerning the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anderson. Further, neither in September 2004, nor at any other time, did Mr Anderson convey any such message as now alleged by Mr Windsor to Mr Maguire.
- Mr Maguire also said that at no stage did Mr Anderson or any one else on behalf of the Government convey to Mr Maguire that funding for the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre was subject to or dependant upon "political strings" or other inappropriate conditions.
- On the contrary, Mr Anderson made it abundantly clear that funding for the Centre at the Federal level was dependant upon the project being supportable on the merits. The New South Wales State Government approach to the matter was the same.
- Mr Maguire said that against that background some 12 months ago when he took over the chairmanship of the board of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre, at Mr Windsor's request, the Board was restructured so that it had sixty percent corporate and business representation and only forty percent user representation.
- Mr Maguire, also stated that the Board then resolved to engage and did engage independent professional consultants to review the project and assist in production of the ultimately successful business case for funding of the project. The objective merits and propriety of this submission are acknowledged in the public statement concerning the matter released last week by the local area chairman, Mr Kevin Humphries.
- Mr Maguire regrets the ongoing and unfair attacks on him by Mr Windsor under Parliamentary privilege in pursuit of what appears to be, not only an ongoing political beat-up but a continuation of the ill will and apparent personal vendetta by Mr Windsor against Mr Anderson which Mr Maguire has been unwillingly and unfairly dragged into

Consistent with Mr Maguire's previous public statements and legal advice on this matter given that it is the subject of debate in the Federal Parliament, Mr Maguire does not wish to comment further on the matter at this stage. Any enquiries concerning the matter should be directed to the Brisbane office of Mr Maguire's legal advisers, Gadens Lawyers, for the attention of Mr Ken Rose. Contact details phone (07) 32311505, fax (07) 32295850, email krose@qld.gadens.com.au.

PRESS RELEASE BY MR GREG MAGUIRE

TUESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2004

Mr Greg Maguire, the Tamworth businessman, unwillingly dragged into the centre of the political controversy between independent Federal MP for New England, Mr Tony Windsor and Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Anderson, and National Party Senator, Mr Sandy MacDonald, has expressed ongoing disappointment, disgust and concern with the ongoing actions of Mr Windsor and other Federal politicians despite independent investigations and clear findings on the issue by Federal authorities.

Mr Maguire's public comment on the matter last week has been fully vindicated by the somewhat unusual and categorical public statements released on behalf of the Australian Federal Police and the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions yesterday. Specifically, those AFP investigations and their review by the Commonwealth DPP concluded that:

- (a) *"none of the versions of the conversations related by any of the witnesses can amount to an 'offer to give or confer' a benefit"; and*
- (b) *"further there is no evidence in this material of Mr Maguire having conspired with any other person to make an offer to Mr Windsor"*

Regrettably those unambiguous conclusions cannot in any adequate or meaningful way reinstate the unfair and unwarranted attack on Mr Maguire under Parliamentary privilege whilst these investigations were still underway. This has left a permanent slur on Mr Maguire's personal reputation and standing in the community. At the same time it has also invaded the personal privacy of and caused considerable anguish and upset to Mr Maguire, his family and friends.

Surprisingly, despite the result of those independent investigations into Mr Windsor's complaints and the conclusions which exonerate the parties named by Mr Windsor under Parliamentary privilege, neither Mr Windsor nor any other Parliamentarian who has jumped on the political band wagon, has shown any remorse or regret, less alone offered an apology, private or public to Mr Maguire or to Mr Anderson or Mr MacDonald.

Mr Maguire rejects outright the latest suggestion put forward by Mr Windsor and the leader of the Greens, Senator Bob Brown, that there is need for some form of Parliamentary enquiry as to whether the multi-million dollar Federal and State funding for the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre was somehow dependant upon there being no reference to or acknowledgement of Mr Windsor's support for the project. Mr Maguire said this is complete red-herring and nothing more than a further specious attempt at an ongoing political beat-up of the whole issue.

Specifically, Mr Maguire points out that the application in support of the project was put together by independent consultants engaged by the Centre. In turn the application had to go to the local independent Area Consultative Committee for assessment against the required nation-wide funding guidelines. The

political affiliations or need for acknowledgment or non acknowledgment of local State or Federal members of Parliament or members of the Board of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre do not form part of that independent criteria and assessment process. Furthermore, no such suggestion or requirements along those lines as are now being sought to be alleged against Mr Anderson or Mr MacDonald was made to Mr Maguire in his capacity as chairman of the Board.

- Mr Maguire suggested that it would be of more benefit to the Australian public if pursuit of this red herring and continuing political witch hunt was not embarked upon. Rather, Mr Windsor, Senator Brown and the Opposition could more constructively promote and support a Parliamentary enquiry to provide a more level playing field for members of the public. Mr Maguire said that ordinary Australians who were unfairly attacked under Parliamentary privilege were not being given a "fair-go". They could not resort to the Courts (even if they could afford to) and there was no effective process in place for them to be able to adequately and cost effectively respond to and defend themselves on the floor of Parliament.
- Mr Maguire said that from his personal perspective he had no problems in placing on the public record, the pro-active support for the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre by Mr Windsor at both State and Federal level over the last 10 years. Indeed, it was through Mr Windsor's involvement with the Centre and his concurrent friendship with Mr Maguire over that period that Mr Maguire was prevailed upon, some 12 months ago, to take on the chairmanship of the Centre.
- In the result however, the reward to Mr Maguire for the success of his and other Tamworth community members in securing the promise of State and Federal funding to make the Centre financially viable, has been to receive a poisoned political chalice. This was delivered to him under Parliamentary privilege by a person whom he considered a friend and a mate.
- The resultant damage to Mr Maguire and to his family and friends who have stood by him is a price that no member of the community should have to pay. Mr Maguire said that it remains to be seen whether there is the political will on all sides of Parliament to try and address this imbalance and short-coming in our democracy at not only Federal, but also State level.
- Mr Maguire acknowledged that free and robust debate in Parliament should not be stifled. Equally, however, it should be conducted with some even handed and fair constraints to protect ordinary citizens. Mr Maguire said that when the Australian expectation of a "fair-go" is shown, as here, not to have occurred, then it behoves Parliament itself, and not the Courts, to provide an adequate means of re-dress.

Consistent with Mr Maguire's previous public statements and legal advice on this matter given that it is the subject of ongoing conjecture and likely debate in the Federal Parliament when it resumes, Mr Maguire does not wish to comment further on the matter at this stage.

Any enquiries concerning the matter should be directed to the Brisbane office of Mr Maguire's legal advisers, Gadens Lawyers, for the attention of Mr Ken Rose. Contact details phone (07) 23211505, fax (07) 32295850, email krose@qld.gadens.com.au.

PRESS RELEASE

Tamworth businessman, Mr Greg Maguire rejects outright the offensive and untrue allegations made against him and the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Anderson and National Party Senator, Mr Sandy MacDonald. These allegations were made under parliamentary privilege by independent New England MP, Mr Tony Windsor, on 17 and 18 November 2004. Unfortunately, Mr Windsor has chosen not to put these allegations to Mr Maguire "face to face" despite Mr Maguire's request to discuss the matter with him.

Mr Maguire is not a member of any political party. His contact with Mr Anderson and Mr MacDonald came about solely through Mr Maguire's chairmanship of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre. In turn, that position came about at the direct request of Mr Windsor as Mr Windsor accepted that he was being ineffectual in securing the necessary federal funding for the project. The Centre is important for the Tamworth and New England community and also has national significance attracting state and federal government regional partnership funding.

Over the past several months, Mr Maguire and other local business people who support the establishment of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre, have met Mr Anderson or Mr MacDonald on a number of occasions. However, Mr Windsor's claim of a meeting between those persons and Mr Maguire having occurred on 18 May 2004 is incorrect. A meeting of those parties did take place five days earlier but again, Mr Windsor's claims about that meeting (which he did not attend) are incorrect.

More importantly, during a subsequent meeting between Mr Maguire and Mr Windsor, along with his campaign chairman, Mr Stephen Hall, and his campaign secretary, Ms Helen Tickle, no claims of impropriety as subsequently raised or as now alleged under parliamentary privilege, were made at any time during that supposedly critical meeting.

- Even though the disputed allegations go back to May 2004, they were only brought to light in September 2004. This occurred due to the media reporting a “throw away” comment by Mr Windsor prior to the recent federal election. Significantly, no formal complaint was made to the authorities by Mr Windsor then, nor in the past, in respect of similar alleged approaches by others to Mr Windsor during his time in parliament.
- The formal complaint was, in fact made by the Australian Labour Party to the Commonwealth Electoral Commission during the lead up to the recent federal election. Strangely, given the events this week, it was not thought necessary to by Mr Windsor to raise the issue, and no debate was initiated by him in the parliament during that critical lead up time to what was thought to be a finely balanced federal election. Rather, the complaint led to an investigation by the Australian Federal Police. This then resulted in Mr Windsor being interviewed by them and being forced to try to justify the unfortunate and invidious position he had placed himself in.
- Mr Windsor’s description of events as an “act of political stupidity” is considered to highlight the improbability and perceived stupidity of the claims now supposedly made in the presence of not only Mr Windsor but two of his senior campaign directors. That scenario beggars belief and the claims made are considered to show Mr Windsor’s concern in bolstering his own political credibility whilst opportunistically seeking to score points against his former National Party colleagues. However, the bitterness remains as this week’s events show.
- Mr Maguire’s response to the allegations stand in marked contrast to that evolving story. Upon first being approached by the Federal Police on 2 October 2004, Mr Maguire immediately participated on a voluntary basis in a detailed record of interview with two Federal Police officers. This was done without the benefit or perceived need for legal representation. Mr Maguire had nothing to hide or apologise for then or now.

- Furthermore, despite Mr Maguire's lack of any political affiliation, he had developed a close personal relationship with Mr Windsor and respect for him. This included Mr Maguire and his companies having supported and worked directly with Mr Windsor's election campaigns over several years prior to Mr Maguire assuming his recent role as chairman of the board of the Australian Equine and Stock Centre. That support having been withdrawn before the last election, it appears Mr Maguire became an expendable ally despite his long term association with and support of Mr Windsor.
- The reality of the meeting at the centre of the controversy, is that Mr Windsor has responded badly to personal comments and criticism by Mr Maguire about how Mr Windsor was becoming ineffectual in his representation of the New England area. Mr Maguire, on his own initiative, suggested to Mr Windsor that he ought to reconsider his future options regarding his political career and effectiveness. The resultant allegations now placed permanently on the parliamentary record to Mr Maguire's detriment, have no foundation in fact. Nor do or did those allegations or the actual discussions have any linkage as alleged to Mr Anderson or Mr MacDonald. The actual comments, which will no doubt emerge in time, were Mr Maguire's personal views expressed to a friend.
- Mr Maguire nevertheless understands that the unfair attacks on him by Mr Windsor under parliamentary privilege (where Mr Maguire cannot defend himself on the floor of the parliament) has most likely come about due to the political imbroglio from which he is now trying to extricate himself. Despite that, in time, Mr Maguire looks forward to receipt of an apology and frank explanation from Mr Windsor for his actions. However, he accepts that this may not occur while Mr Windsor remains in politics. In the meantime, the most regretful aspect from Mr Maguire's perspective will be the confirmation that politics has been put ahead of 10 years of mutual respect and mateship.

- In the circumstances, Mr Maguire does not wish to make any further comment about the matter. He is content for the authorities to complete their investigations in the normal course. Hopefully this will occur without any further distortion of the facts or attempts at political point scoring under the privilege of parliament or otherwise. Regardless of any action taken or not taken by the authorities, Mr Maguire is confident that in either the short or longer term, the allegations will be shown to lack substance and his position will be fully vindicated.

Mr Maguire appreciates that the media has a job to do but having provided this public statement, he and his family would appreciate if their future privacy could be respected.

Any further enquiries should be directed to his legal advisers, Gadens Lawyers, Brisbane, for the attention of Mr Ken Rose, whose contact details are phone (07) 3231 1505 and

email: krose@qld.gadens.com.au.