

STATEMENT BY WAG PRESIDENT: MR COLIN DILLON
RE: SENATE REPORT ON WHISTLEBLOWING

The Senate Inquiry report on Public Interest Whistleblowing released today highlights the extent of systemic corruption in post-Fitzgerald Queensland and the lack of protection for whistleblowers.

The Queensland Whistleblower's Action Group (WAG) believes effective protection for whistleblowers depends on the government NOT destroying documents which are pertinent to the legal process in the areas of wrongdoing and whistleblower reprisals.

WAG President, Col Dillon, said whistleblowers cannot be protected in Queensland if the government starts setting up "no-go" areas for investigating misconduct. "Destruction of public documents which provide evidence of wrongdoing should be prohibited, Mr Dillon said, "It is the first symptom of the systemic corruption that has been able to continue in Queensland whereby the system allows justice to be thwarted by the destruction of evidence".

"Watchdog agencies which as the Criminal Justice Commission should be able to follow the tracks of any investigation into misconduct wherever those tracks may lead -- even if those tracks lead to Ministers or to Cabinet", Mr Dillon said.

Mr Dillon said the Senate has been unanimous in calling for an inquiry into the disclosures of Queensland whistleblowers. This includes the Kevin Lindeberg case. Kevin Lindeberg alleges documents pertinent to his case have been shredded (the Heiner shredding incident).

Mr. Lindeberg's case highlights two important issues:

1. Whether public documents related to legal proceedings can be destroyed with impunity;
2. Whether Ministers and the Cabinet are "no-go" areas for the CJC to investigate any corruption.

"WAG is concerned that the failure to address Mr Lindeberg's disclosures places a question mark on the political independence and integrity of the CJC", Mr Dillon said. "This question should also be a motivation for the national press to take an interest in the Heiner shredding incident. It also raises serious doubt as to the openness and accountability of the Goss government".

"The Kevin Lindeberg case is the litmus test for the post-Fitzgerald administration in Queensland", Mr Dillon said, "The findings of the Senate Inquiry strongly reinforce the importance of this case and the implications for the protection of whistleblowers in this state".

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