

## Ombudsman confirms Victorian Parliament has referred new investigation to her

**Thursday 9 August 2018**

Victorian Ombudsman Deborah Glass has received a letter from the Legislative Assembly of the Victorian Parliament referring a matter for investigation and report under section 16 of the Ombudsman Act 1973.

The referral requires Ms Glass to investigate matters concerning invoices current and former Liberal and Nationals MPs certified for payment by the Department of Parliamentary Services.

Where any matter is referred to the Ombudsman by a House of Parliament or a Committee of Parliament, the Ombudsman is required to “forthwith investigate that matter and report thereon”, according to the Ombudsman Act. Ms Glass will be making enquiries to determine the status of any other investigations into this matter, including with Victoria Police. She will report to Parliament in due course and will not be making further public comments on this matter.

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### **Additional information:**

The matter referred to the Ombudsman is outlined in this excerpt from the *Votes and Proceedings* of the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday 8 August 2018:

REFERRAL TO OMBUDSMAN — Motion made and question proposed — That, under s 16 of the *Ombudsman Act 1973*, this House refers for investigation the following matters:

- (1) All invoices rendered by Melbourne Mailing and submitted to the Department of Parliamentary Services for payment;
- (2) The identity of all members of Parliament endorsed as candidates by Liberal Victoria and the Nationals Victoria certifying as to the legitimacy of those invoices;
- (3) Whether any goods or services were provided in connection with the rendering of those invoices; and if so, whether there is any evidence that the goods and services provided fairly reflected the value and description of items as outlined in the invoices;

- (4) Whether members certifying as to the accuracy of the invoices knew, or ought to have known, whether the goods and services referred to in the invoices were provided adequately, or at all;
- (5) Whether members certifying as to the accuracy of the invoices knew, or ought to have known, whether the goods and services referred to in the invoices were charged at a fair commercial rate, or an inflated rate;
- (6) Any kickbacks and levies received by members of Parliament, or by or on behalf of Liberal Victoria, associated with Melbourne Mailing and the deal struck by convicted criminal and former Liberal Victoria State Director Damien Mantach;
- (7) Any practice of falsification of invoices by members of Parliament endorsed as candidates by Liberal Victoria and the Nationals Victoria, in particular the current Member for Lowan, to obtain payment for goods, services or advertising, while circumventing Department of Parliamentary Services oversight rules and the Parliament of Victoria *Members' Guide* pertaining to payment of invoices submitted by members during the 2014–15 financial year, and from 1 June 2018 to the date of this motion;
- (8) The relevant members and former members for the purposes of this investigation include:
  - (a) the current Members for Bass, Bayswater, Benambra, Box Hill, Brighton, Bulleen, Burwood, Caulfield, Croydon, Eildon, Evelyn, Ferntree Gully, Forest Hill, Gembrook, Hastings, Hawthorn, Kew, Lowan, Malvern, Mornington, Mount Waverley, Narracan, Nepean, Ringwood, Ripon, Rowville, Sandringham, South Barwon and Warrandyte; and
  - (b) the former members Hon Ted Baillieu, Donna Bauer, Hon Nick Kotsiras, Hon Andrew McIntosh, Elizabeth Miller, Hon Terry Mulder, Hon Denis Naphine, Clem Newton-Brown, Geoff Shaw, Hon Ken Smith and Lorraine Wreford