

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS

REVIEW OF THE FOUR MAJOR BANKS (THIRD REPORT)

Commonwealth Bank of Australia

CBA35QW:

Mr Mathews wrote to Labor members of the committee saying;

‘My complaint against Commonwealth Bank, for the way it dealt with my mortgage hardship assistance application while my wife was dying from cancer, was raised by Pat Conroy MP first review of the banks...I still have concerns about the way my family was treated by Commonwealth Bank.

When my family’s circumstances were outlined by Mr Conroy in the public hearing of 4 October 2016, Commonwealth Bank acknowledged that our hardship assistance application had not been dealt with properly. For example, Mr Cohen stated:

‘It is an awful situation. I can only imagine that Mr Mathews getting news like that from the bank at a time of such dire need would have been absolutely horrific. What I can say is that no, that is not how we seek to deal with our customers at all, and that I am very sorry that it did happen in this case.’

In its written response to Mr Conroy’s question Commonwealth Bank acknowledged it had made mistakes and attributed its failures to the actions of two junior officers, who had subsequently attended further training.

Why didn’t bank acknowledge its failures earlier?

Answer:

As a result of this very regretful incident, Bankwest implemented a rigorous review of its processes and implemented changes to ensure key decisions on sensitive hardship cases are escalated rapidly and directly to senior leaders.