



A message from the CEO
Michael Pezzullo

Media reporting and integrity matters

Colleagues

With the conclusion of his trial, I am now able to make a few brief remarks about the situation regarding my brother, former ACBPS officer, Mr Fabio Pezzullo.

For obvious reasons to do with preventing any conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, I have been kept at arms-length from this matter, as Chief Operating Officer prior to September 2012, as acting CEO (September 2012 to February 2013) and as CEO since February 2013.

Successive Ministers have been briefed, and arrangements were put in place when I became CEO to ensure that I was shielded from relevant information concerning the case and would not be placed in a position of having to make any decisions regarding former officer Pezzullo, should it have ever come to that. The fact that such arrangements were to be put in place was advised to the relevant Senate Estimates Committee in February 2013, in public evidence given by the Secretary of the Attorney General's Department.

From an abundance of caution, I was similarly not advised until several days ago that two other [former] officers had also been similarly charged. Now that these matters have been heard in court, and are likely to be fully resolved before the next meeting of the Senate Estimates Committee, I intend to include an appropriate public summary of these matters in any future updates on integrity provided to the Senate.

It is a highly unusual circumstance to have the sibling of a serving statutory officer facing serious charges of this nature. As might be imagined, the Integrity Commissioner and others have had to give much thought and attention to how to avoid the inevitable concerns about perceived and actual conflict of interest. From the outset, I asked and expected to be treated as a detached family member with no official rights, interests or powers in the matter.

This matter has not been easy for a number of people, including for me. Situations such as this test our resilience and resolve, but this case also demonstrates that nothing is going to derail our efforts to clean out corruption and misconduct, and put in place the strongest standards, the best values and the toughest integrity regime in the public service.

While I am a public figure who is obligated to account for his leadership of this great organisation, as and when the time is right, my family members are private citizens and I would ask that their wish for privacy be respected. This case shows that no-one is above the law, and the matter has been dealt with in accordance with the law, as should always be the case.

To all those who have expressed their support to me during this difficult time, I have been touched by your kindness and compassion. I have not been able to respond fully until now, and do so in a general message to all staff, given the significance of the issue.

Matters such as this come along in life as opportunities for the resilience and capacity of the human spirit to reveal itself. I am strengthened not weakened by this experience because of your support and humanity. Thank you for your thoughts and in some cases prayers. The best course for us all now is to continue with the task that we have set ourselves.

Michael Pezzullo
Chief Executive Officer