

## **Attachment G**

**Two statements by Mr Cook re Dr Williams and Mr  
Green**

**23 March 2007**





## Crown Solicitor

23 March 2007

Chairman  
Senate Standing Committee  
on the Environment Communication  
Information Technology and the Arts  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Attention: Mr I Holland

Dear Senator Eggleston

**Allegations of harassment of witnesses appearing before the Senate Standing Committee  
on the Environment Communications Information Technology and the Arts**

I refer to correspondence in relation to this matter and attach the Statements of Mr Clive Cook and Mr Geoff Meadows in response to your various requests concerning the allegations made by Dr Paul Williams and Mr David Green.

Yours faithfully

RW Campbell  
Deputy Crown Solicitor  
ENV023/2171:1492844

**RESPONSE OF MR CLIVE COOK TO ALLEGATIONS OF HARASSMENT  
MADE BY DR PAUL WILLIAMS - SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
THE ENVIRONMENT COMMUNICATIONS INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS**

**The allegations**

Dr Williams alleges that:

- (i) in a letter to him, I stated: "I also take the opportunity to remind you of your obligations under Principle 1 ... in avoiding publicly criticising Agency procedures or colleagues";
- (ii) at the time of the Committee hearing on 30 June 2006, "[Dr Williams] was removed from an interview panel"; and
- (iii) he has been subject to "continued accusations that [he has] a history of criticising the department."

See: Attachments to Letter, *Eggleston to Cook*, 15 March 2007.

No other allegations have been levelled against me by Dr Williams.

**Response**

Dr Williams is a junior officer of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service ("QPWS") in North Queensland.

I am the senior officer of the QPWS in North Queensland.

In respect of (i) concerning the letter of 6 October 2006 sent to Dr Williams, that letter arose as a consequence of his inappropriate behaviour towards and in the presence of

the Queensland Minister for the Environment, and in the presence of other senior QPWS officers, on 28 September 2006.

That Dr Williams' behaviour on this occasion was clearly inappropriate emerges from his own description of the events. Simply put, no junior officer in any system of public administration in Australia, Commonwealth or State, permissibly behaves in the manner admitted to by Dr Williams on this occasion.

In its terms and intent, the letter of 6 October 2006 reminded Dr Williams of the obligations of his employment as a State servant. The letter was unrelated to Dr Williams having given evidence to the Committee some three months previously.

Under this allegation of harassment, Dr Williams has made several other general assertions with respect to my conduct. None of these assertions are supported by substantive evidence.

In respect of (ii), concerning the removal of Dr Williams from an interview panel, at the outset, it must be understood that in the normal and unexceptionable workings of government and public administration, the composition of selection panels can be and often is changed for reasons of gender equity, experience, relativity to the vacant office and the like. These were the reasons which informed the change of the composition of the selection panel on this occasion.

The change in panel composition bore no relationship whatsoever with Dr Williams having given evidence to the Committee on 30 June 2006.


Again, under this allegation of harassment, Dr Williams has made several other unparticularised assertions with respect to perceived "blatant harassment" and then to an "inference" Dr Williams received from his supervisor "that it was a mistake to attend the Cairns hearing".

Again, none of these assertions are supported by substantive evidence.

In respect of (iii) concerning accusations as to Dr Williams having "a history of criticising the department", I am disadvantaged by not having been present at the meeting of 1 February 2007 cited by Dr Williams. Accordingly, I cannot and do not propose to offer any further comment in this regard.

In summary then: I unreservedly reject Dr Williams' allegations of harassment as a consequence of his having given evidence to the Committee in June 2006. To the extent that Dr Williams may hold a belief or perception to the contrary then he is entirely mistaken or, possibly, misguided to some extent by what would appear to be his inadequate understanding of the processes of normal and unexceptionable public administration and his role within it.

No substantive evidence supports Dr Williams' allegations against me. Rather, those allegations appear to reflect no more than his perceptions and beliefs, untroubled by evidence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Clive Cook', written over a horizontal line.

Clive Cook  
Director  
QPWS Northern Region

**RESPONSE OF MR CLIVE COOK TO AN ALLEGATION OF  
HARASSMENT MADE BY MR DAVID GREEN – SENATE STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT COMMUNICATIONS  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS**

**The allegation**

Mr Green alleges that, on the morning of 30 June 2006, in Cairns at a public hearing of the Senate Standing Committee on the Environment Communications Information Technology and the Arts ("the Committee"), I met him and advised that the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service ("QPWS") "would be reading his evidence and to be careful in his presentation". Mr Green "took this as a veiled threat to influence his presentation and evidence to the Committee". See: Letter, *Eggleston to Cook*, 8 February 2007 at 1.

No other allegation has been levelled against me by Mr Green.

**Response**

Mr Green is a junior officer of the QPWS in North Queensland. I am the senior officer of the QPWS in North Queensland.

On the morning of 30 June 2007, I was present near the Committee hearing room to meet another witness who was to give evidence to the Committee. This was the only occasion on which this witness was in Cairns and the only occasion on which we could meet.

Mr Green and other QPWS employees were seated outside the Committee room. I spoke with Mr Green and other QPWS employees, and asked them whether they had previously given evidence to a Senate committee. It emerged that they had not.

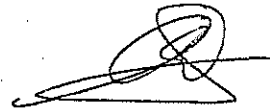
With a view to reassuring them in respect of what can be a difficult experience, I indicated to Mr Green and to others that it was important to listen carefully to the questions asked; and to answer clearly and concisely.

It should be emphasised that, as the senior officer of the QPWS in Cairns, the remarks made on this occasion were made with a view to supporting QPWS staff and to counsel them to be thoughtful in their presentation and the giving of evidence to the Committee.

I unreservedly reject Mr Green's general allegation of a "veiled" threat having been made to him on 30 June 2006. At no time, did I seek to influence Mr Green's presentation or evidence to the Committee. To the extent that Mr Green may hold a belief or perception to the contrary then he is entirely mistaken.

In this regard, I think it important to note that perceptions and beliefs, however genuinely held they may be, are not the same as and are not to be equated with substantive evidence.

No substantive evidence supports Mr Green's allegation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clive Cook', with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Clive Cook  
Director  
QPWS Northern Region