



QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT

COMMITTEES

Annual Report 2022-23



Report No. 219, 57th Parliament

Ethics Committee

October 2023

Ethics Committee

Chair Ms Jennifer Howard MP, Member for Ipswich

Deputy Chair Mr Andrew Powell MP, Member for Glass House

Members Mr Linus Power MP, Member for Logan

Mr Daniel Purdie MP, Member for Ninderry

Ms Kim Richards MP, Member for Redlands

Mr Ray Stevens MP, Member for Mermaid Beach

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All web address references are current at the time of publishing.

Acknowledgements

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1 The Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee (the committee) is a statutory committee of the Queensland Parliament established under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* (POQA) and the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly.¹

The committee's areas of responsibility are set out in section 104B of the POQA as follows:

- dealing with complaints about the ethical conduct of particular members, and
- dealing with alleged breaches of parliamentary privilege by members of the Assembly and other persons.

Section 104C of the POQA provides that the committee's area of responsibility in relation to dealing with complaints about the ethical conduct of particular members is to:

- consider complaints referred to the committee about particular members failing to register particular interests, and
- consider complaints against particular members for failing to comply with the code of ethical conduct for members, report on complaints to the Assembly and recommend action by the Assembly.

A complaint about a member not complying with *The Code of Ethical Standards together with The Guide to the Code of Ethical Standards and Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members*² (the Code) may be considered only by the Assembly or the committee.

Pursuant to Chapter 46 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly (Standing Orders)³, the committee also has responsibility for considering submissions referred to it by the Speaker concerning a request for a right of reply by non-members, referred to as the 'citizen's right of reply'.

The committee is to advise the Assembly concerning any requests for a citizen's right of reply.

2 Summary of issues considered during the reporting period

This report provides a summary of the activities of the committee from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

In accordance with section 108 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, this report includes a summary of issues considered by the committee, a brief description of Ministerial responses to committee recommendations, a statement of revenue and spending for the year, and a list of committee meetings and names of members attending or absent from each meeting.

During the reporting period the committee:

- tabled Report No. 211, Annual Report 2021 – 2022
- did not receive any referrals relating to the Register of Members' Interests
- did not deal with any complaints about breaches of the Code, except where they may have also constituted a contempt of Parliament (see section 2.1).

¹ *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, Section 88 and Standing Order 194.

² The Code of Ethical Standards was last updated by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly on 15 June 2018.

³ Chapter 46, Standing Orders 279 to 283.

2.1 Alleged breaches of parliamentary privilege

During the reporting period, the Ethics Committee of the 57th Parliament investigated and reported on the following matters of privilege and possible contempts of parliament:

- Report No. 210 - Matter of privilege referred by the Economics and Governance Committee on 23 February 2022 relating to alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings, tabled on 1 September 2022.⁴
- Report No. 212 - Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 13 October 2022 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Member for Oodgeroo relating to social housing in the Redlands, tabled 30 March 2023.
- Report No. 214 - Matter of privilege referred by the State Development and Regional Industries Committee on 26 May 2022 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings, tabled on 25 May 2023.

2.2 Requests for a citizen's right of reply

Under the right of reply procedure set out at Standing Order 280, persons or corporations named in the Legislative Assembly or by a committee, in a manner that adversely affects their reputation, may make a submission to the Speaker to have a response to those comments incorporated in the Record of Proceedings, or published in some other manner.

The committee reported on the following matter relating to a citizen's right of reply during the reporting period: Report No. 213, Report on a Right of Reply No. 42, tabled on 21 April 2023.

2.3 Ministerial responses to committee recommendations

Section 107 of the POQA provides that where a committee recommends the Government or a Minister should take particular action, or not take particular action, about an issue; or a report of the Ethics Committee recommends a motion be moved by the Assembly to implement a recommendation of the committee, the Minister responsible is required to provide the Assembly with a response.

In the case of a report of the Ethics Committee recommending a motion be moved by the Assembly to implement a recommendation of the committee, the Premier or the Premier's nominee is to provide a response.

A response tabled in accordance with section 107 must set out any recommendations to be adopted, and the way and time within which they will be carried out, and any recommendations not to be adopted and the reasons for not adopting them.

The POQA requires the relevant Minister to table the response within three months after the report is tabled. If the Minister cannot comply with this requirement, they are required to table an interim response within three months and a final response within six months.

The committee tabled Report No. 214 which recommended 'that the Minister for Local Government considers proposing an amendment to the *Local Government Act 2009* to include parliamentary privilege as an exemption under section 170A, any proposal to be considered by the House as soon as practicable.'

On 25 August 2023, the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure tabled an interim response to the committee's report, noting that the Government's final response to the recommendation will be tabled by 25 November 2023, as required under the POQA.

⁴ Report No. 210 was tabled in the 2022-2023 reporting period, however, it was investigated during the 2021-2022 reporting period.

3 Committee expenditure

The committee had no revenue during 2022-23. The committee is funded from the appropriation made to the Legislative Assembly. The expenditure of the committee for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 is shown in the table below.

Item	\$
Employee expenses ⁵	–
Meeting expenses	612
Technology	4,666
Legal advice	4,000
Expenditure Total	\$9,278

4 Meeting attendance record

The table below shows the attendance of committee members at committee meetings and other activities during the reporting period.

Standing Order 202(1) provides that in the case of a committee members' illness or inability to attend, another member may be appointed to attend that meeting or stand in for a particular inquiry.

Standing Order 272 provides:

(1) Any member of the ethics committee who is directly concerned in a matter referred to the ethics committee or who has made any statements in the House revealing a prior judgement in the matter shall not be involved in any consideration of that matter.

(2) The Speaker shall appoint another member to replace a member who has stood down in accordance with (1) and shall notify the ethics committee in writing.

Meeting Date	Ms J Howard MP	Mr A Powell MP	Mr L Power MP	Mr D Purdie MP	Ms K Richards MP	Mr R Stevens MP
31-08-22 at 1:17pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
31-08-22 at 1:35pm	✓	✓	A	B	✓	C
04-10-22 at 10:15am	✓	✓	✓	D	✓	✓
12-10-22 at 1:16pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
26-10-22 at 1:15pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	E

⁵ The committee's staffing resources are shared between the Office of the Deputy Clerk and the Committee Office.

Meeting Date	Ms J Howard MP	Mr A Powell MP	Mr L Power MP	Mr D Purdie MP	Ms K Richards MP	Mr R Stevens MP
30-11-22 at 1:22pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ ⁶
30-11-22 at 1:55pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	F	✗ ⁷
13-01-23 at 9:30am	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
22-02-23 at 1:18pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
22-02-23 at 2:07pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	F	✓
7-03-23 at 1:31pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15-03-23 at 1:15pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15-03-23 at 1:32pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	F✗	✓
29-03-23 at 1:15pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29-03-23 at 1:45pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	F	✓
19-04-23 at 1:15pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4-05-23 at 12.00pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
24-05-23 at 1.17pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
24-05-23 at 1.38pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14-06-23 at 1.17pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗

- A. Ms Corrine McMillan MP, Member for Mansfield, replaced Mr Power MP under SO 272(2)
 B. Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, Member for Kawana, replaced Mr Purdie MP under SO 272(2)
 C. Mr John-Paul Langbroek MP, Member for Surfers Paradise, replaced Mr Stevens MP under SO 272(2)
 D. Mr James Lister MP, Member for Southern Downs, replaced Mr Purdie MP under SO 272(2)
 E. Mr Michael Crandon MP, Member for Coomera, replaced Mr Stevens MP under SO 272(2)
 F. Mr Jason Hunt MP, Member for Caloundra, replaced Ms Richards MP under SO 272(1)

⁶ Mr John-Paul Langbroek MP, Member for Surfers Paradise, replaced Mr Stevens MP under SO 202

⁷ Mr Michael Crandon MP, Member for Coomera, replaced Mr Stevens MP under SO 202