QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT
COMMITTEES

Matter of privilege referred by the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee on 30 October 2025 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings

Ethics Committee

Report No. 241

58th Parliament, December 2025

Ethics Committee

Acting Chair	Dr Christian Rowan MP, Member for Moggill (appointed to replace Mr Ray Stevens MP pursuant to SO 272(2))
Deputy Chair	Mr Peter Russo MP, Member for Toohey
Members	Mr Michael Crandon MP, Member for Coomera
	Ms Jennifer Howard MP, Member for Ipswich
	Mr Jon Krause MP, Member for Scenic Rim
	Hon Leanne Linard MP, Member for Nudgee

Committee Secretariat

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Functions and procedures

The Ethics Committee (the committee) is a statutory committee of the Queensland Parliament established under section 102 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*. The committee of the 58th Parliament was appointed by resolution of the Legislative Assembly on 28 November 2024.

The committee's area of responsibility includes 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. The committee considers and reports on matters of privilege and possible contempts of parliament referred to it internally by the Speaker, the Registrar, a committee, or the House. This is an important element of the Parliament's exclusive cognisance over its own affairs, which enables it to fulfil its functions.

The committee has established procedures and practices for dealing with referrals which ensure procedural fairness and natural justice is afforded to all parties. These procedures are set out in chapters 44 and 45 of Standing Orders. The committee is also bound by the instructions regarding witnesses contained in Schedule 3 of the Standing Orders.

The committee applies the civil standard of proof, on the balance of probabilities, in making a finding of contempt. This is a lower standard than the 'beyond reasonable doubt' standard required for criminal matters. However, proof of a very high order is required to make a finding of contempt, consistent with the test applied in relation to misconduct charges at common law.

All references and webpages are current at the time of publishing.

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Introduction and background

1. On 30 October 2025, the Chair of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee (PCCC), Hon Mark Furner MP, advised the House that the PCCC had determined to refer to the Ethics Committee (the committee) a matter involving the unauthorised disclosure of the PCCC's confidential proceedings by Mr Troy Thompson.[1]

2. In accordance with Standing Order 268(1) the matter was referred to the committee and, later that day, the Chair of the PCCC wrote to the committee and provided details of the alleged unauthorised disclosure of its correspondence by Mr Thompson.

3. The committee received correspondence from Mr Thompson on 30 and 31 October 2025.

4. The PCCC wrote to the committee on 20 November and 10 December 2025 regarding further alleged unauthorised disclosures to certain bodies and on various social media pages, one of which has since been deactivated.

Mr Thompson

5. Mr Thompson was mayor of Townsville in 2024 for a very short period before being suspended. He later resigned, triggering a mayoral by-election. His conduct was the subject of a Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) investigation.

6. Mr Thompson made a complaint to the PCCC regarding the CCC's handling of his matter. It is that complaint, and the correspondence associated with it, which is alleged to have been disclosed without authorisation.

7. On 15 November 2025 Mr Nick Dametto was elected as Townsville Mayor at the by-election.

8. On 27 November 2025, the CCC report relating to Mr Thompson was tabled.

Conflict of interest

9. The member for Mermaid Beach, and Chair of the committee, Mr Ray Stevens MP, declared a conflict of interest in the matter. In accordance with Standing Order 272(2), Mr Speaker appointed the member for Moggill and Leader of the House, Dr Christian Rowan MP as substitute Chair for the duration of the matter.

Contempt

10. Section 37 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* (POQA) defines the meaning of 'contempt' in the Assembly as follows:

    (1) "Contempt" of the Assembly means a breach or disobedience of the powers, rights or immunities, or a contempt, of the Assembly or its Members or committees.

[1] Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2025, p 3475.

(2) Conduct, including words, is not contempt of the Assembly unless it amounts, or is intended or likely to amount, to an improper interference with—

(a) the free exercise by the Assembly or a committee of its authority or functions; or

(b) the free performance by a Member of the Member's duties as a Member.

11. Standing Order 266(12) provides that an example of a contempt is:

Divulging the proceedings or the report of a committee or a subcommittee contrary to Standing Orders.

12. Section 9 of the POQA provides:

9 Meaning of proceedings in the Assembly

Proceedings in the Assembly include all words spoken and acts done in the course of, or for the purposes of or incidental to, transacting business of the Assembly or a committee.

Without limiting subsection (1), proceedings in the Assembly include—

…

(f) preparing, making or publishing a document (including a report) under the authority of the Assembly or a committee.

13. Standing Order 211A reads, in part:

211A Confidentiality of proceedings for Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee

(1) The proceedings of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee or a subcommittee of that committee that is not open to the public or authorised to be published remains strictly confidential to the committee until the committee has reported those proceedings to the House or otherwise published the proceedings.

…

(4) A committee in (1) may elect for the Standing Order to not apply to a particular proceeding or a particular inquiry of the committee, and adopt its own rules in relation to the confidentiality of its proceedings for that proceeding or inquiry.

The committee's considerations

14. Section 8 of the POQA specifically prohibits the proceedings of the Parliament and its committees from being questioned in any court or other place out of the Assembly.

15. Standing Order 211A maintains the confidentiality of PCCC proceedings until such a time that the committee reports on, or otherwise publishes, the matter.

16. This rule is designed to promote the better functioning of the committee process.[2] It also affirms the principle that the House is entitled to receive the first advice as to the deliberations of its committees.[3]

17. Previous Ethics Committees have stressed that 'any unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings represents an attack on the integrity of the Parliament' and that 'the premature or unauthorised release of committee proceedings is a contempt of Parliament'.[4]

18. The functions of the PCCC include to monitor and review the performance of the CCC's functions.[5] The PCCC performs this function in part by receiving and considering complaints against the CCC.[6] The committee notes the important work undertaken by the PCCC in overseeing the CCC on behalf of the Parliament and the people of Queensland.

19. In referring the matter to the committee, the PCCC provided a copy of the correspondence the subject of the alleged unauthorised disclosure. While this committee has determined to not publish the relevant PCCC correspondence with this report, it clearly detailed the confidentiality of the correspondence and included an excerpt of Standing Order 211A(1).

20. The committee understands that Mr Thompson provided the PCCC correspondence to various integrity bodies.

21. We note that, in his correspondence to the committee, Mr Thompson acknowledged that he was aware and understood that SO 211A applied, and that he acknowledged that he provided PCCC correspondence to the aforementioned bodies.

22. There is no external review mechanism for decisions of the PCCC and the PCCC made clear to Mr Thompson, on multiple occasions, that the correspondence to and from the PCCC was confidential in accordance with SO 211A.

23. The complaints processes of the PCCC will undoubtedly result in some complainants being dissatisfied with the determinations of the committee. Dissatisfaction with an

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[2] David McGee, Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand (4th ed, Online), p 324.

[3] Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee (MEPPC), Report No. 42, Report on a matter of privilege — Unauthorised release of correspondence between a committee and ministers, Queensland Legislative Assembly, p 1.

[4] MEPPC, Report No. 42, Report on a matter of privilege — Unauthorised release of correspondence between a committee and ministers, Queensland Legislative Assembly, p 1; MEPPC, Report No. 48, Report on a Matter of Privilege—Unauthorised Disclosure of Committee Proceedings, p 2; Ethics Committee, Report No. 223, Matter of privilege referred by the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee on 6 March 2024 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings, p 4.

[5] *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*, s 292.

[6] Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee webpage, accessed 30 October 2025: https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-Committees/Committees/Committee-Details?cid=171.

outcome does not amount to authorisation to disclose confidential committee proceedings without prior authorisation from the committee itself.

24. In his correspondence to the committee, Mr Thompson claimed the disclosure was not malicious and was a good-faith act to enable scrutiny of the PCCC's decision.

25. The Ethics committee has previously considered justifying the wilful disclosure of confidential proceedings of a portfolio committee purportedly on moral grounds as futile:[7]

> *Ms Walsh's attempts to justify her conduct on moral grounds as a community advocate were futile. Her refusal to accept the legal implications of her conduct despite being made aware of the status of the transcript was not a case of wilful blindness; it was a case of undoubted defiance.*

26. We agree with the former committees that the unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings amounts to an attack on the integrity of the Parliament.

27. However, the committee considered that in some instances achieving any pragmatic outcome is unlikely, particularly where the discloser's primary goal appears to be prolonged public relevance under a guise of integrity.

28. Therefore, the committee determined to not consider the matter further and accordingly makes no findings in this report.

Conclusion

29. As such, the committee determined to take no further action on this matter in accordance with Standing Order 270(1)(a).

Recommendation

Recommendation

The committee recommends that the House take no further action in relation to this matter.

Dr Christian Rowan
Acting Chair

December 2025

[7] Ethics Committee, Report No. 223, Matter of privilege referred by the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee on 6 March 2024 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings, p 5.

ETHICS COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

Standing Order 211B(3) provides that when the Ethics Committee makes its final report to the House on a matter, the committee shall at the same time, table in the House:

(a) The minutes of its proceedings relevant to the matter; and

(b) Any submissions received or evidence taken in respect of the matter (including transcripts of hearings) unless the committee resolves that some or all of its proceedings remain confidential.

The relevant minutes and evidence in respect of this matter are attached to this report. Duplicated attachments have been removed.

EXTRACT OF MINUTES –

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE REFERRED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE ON 30 OCTOBER 2025 REGARDING THE ALLEGED UNAUTHORISED DISCLOSURE OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS BY MR TROY THOMPSON

Ethics Committee

Meeting No. 23
Wednesday, 10 December 2025, 1.30pm
Parliamentary Annexe, Room 5.30

Present Dr Christian Rowan MP, Leader of the House, member for Moggill (substitute under SO 272(2)), Chair
Mr Peter Russo MP, member for Toohey, Deputy Chair
Mr Michael Crandon MP, member for Coomera
Ms Jennifer Howard MP, member for Ipswich
Mr Jon Krause MP, member for Scenic Rim
Hon Leanne Linard MP, member for Nudgee

In attendance Ms Amanda Honeyman, Committee Secretary
Ms Tamara Vitale, Executive Secretary

Declarations of conflicts of interest

Mr Stevens has declared a conflict in relation to this matter and Dr Rowan is appointed under 272(2) as noted previously.

Matter of privilege referred by the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings by Mr Troy Thompson

A secretariat's briefing was circulated.

Correspondence received from the PCCC, dated 10 December 2025, was circulated at the meeting.

Discussion ensued.

Resolved

That the committee:

1. summarily dismiss the matter pursuant to SO 270(1)(a)
2. directs the secretariat to prepare a draft report for consideration at the next meeting, and
3. write to the PCCC to advise of its determination.

Moved: Mr Krause

Ethics Committee

Meeting No. 25
Thursday, 11 December 2025, 12.31pm
Parliamentary Annexe, Room 5.30A

Present Dr Christian Rowan MP, Leader of the House, member for Moggill (substitute under SO 272(2)), Acting Chair
Mr Peter Russo MP, member for Toohey, Deputy Chair
Mr Michael Crandon MP, member for Coomera
Ms Jennifer Howard MP, member for Ipswich
Hon Leanne Linard MP, member for Nudgee
Mr Jon Krause MP, member for Scenic Rim

In attendance Ms Amanda Honeyman, Committee Secretary
Ms Rebecca Meehan, Legal and Compliance Officer

Declarations of conflicts of interest

Mr Stevens has declared a conflict in relation to this matter and Dr Rowan is appointed under 272(2) as noted previously.

Matter of privilege referred by the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings by Mr Troy Thompson

The Chair's draft report was circulated.

Discussion ensued.

Agreed

The committee made minor amendments to the draft report and draft letter.

Resolved

That the committee adopt the draft report, as amended, as report no 241 of the Ethics Committee and authorises its tabling and publication.

Moved: Mr Russo

Resolved

That the committee determine, pursuant to 211B(3) to keep the correspondence received in this matter confidential to the committee.

Moved: Ms Howard

Resolved

That the committee agree to send the draft letter, as amended, to the PCCC.

Moved: Mr Crandon

Extracts certified correct on 15 December 2025

Dr Christian Rowan MP
Acting Chair