

MEDIA RELEASE

4 September 2019

Statement from the Corruption and Crime Commission

The Corruption and Crime Commission (the Commission) is investigating allegations of serious misconduct in relation to electoral and other allowances.

In August 2019, the Commission executed search warrants. As a result of a chance discovery, a Department of the Premier and Cabinet laptop computer (which had been retained by the former Member of Parliament and not returned at the end of their term of office) was seized. Preliminary examination of this laptop computer indicates it contains information material to the Commission's investigation.

Today, 4 September 2019, the Procedure and Privileges Committee of the Legislative Council recommended the Commission surrender the laptop to the Committee.

The Commission has always acknowledged that Parliamentary Privilege is fundamental to democracy but it has never been intended to shield serious misconduct or corruption if it exists. Parliamentary Privilege applies to no public officer, other than a Member of Parliament.

The Commission has repeatedly stated to the Committee that it has no interest in material that is subject to Parliamentary Privilege.

The Commission will, of course, comply. This will delay the Commission's investigation. The burden of prompt and expeditious resolution of what material can be released for the purpose of the Commission's investigation now rests solely with the Legislative Council.

There are thousands of documents for which no possible claim of Parliamentary Privilege could be made and which the Commission is entitled to access. The Commission is now awaiting the decision of the Committee.

The *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003* has strong secrecy provisions to prevent sensitive and personal material, not relevant to an investigation, being disclosed. The Commission is mindful of the rights of all persons subject to its investigations. The burden now falls entirely on the Legislative Council to protect those rights.

The Commission will continue its investigation, confident that Parliament, government and the community expect that allegations of corruption are investigated promptly and fairly to ensure that public officers, including Members of Parliament, act at all times with probity.

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