



Legislative Council Standing Committee On Economy and Infrastructure

Parliament House, Spring Street, East Melbourne Victoria 3002
Telephone 61 3 8682 2817 Facsimile 61 3 9651 6799

5 July 2012

Mr Grant Hehir
Secretary
Department of Treasury and Finance
1 Treasury Place
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Mr Hehir

Re: Victorian Government Submission to the Economy and Infrastructure References Committee's Inquiry into Commonwealth Payments to Victoria

The Committee's Secretariat received the Victorian Government's submission to the Inquiry into Commonwealth Payments on Thursday 28 June 2012, almost three weeks after submissions had closed.

The Committee has not yet had an opportunity to meet to consider the submission, however, it has come to my attention that an article written by John Ferguson was published in *The Australian* newspaper on Monday 2 July 2012 which discusses and quotes extensively from the Government submission, as well as offering quotes from the Treasurer on the matter of Commonwealth payments to Victoria.

It is very discourteous to the Committee that information provided in the submission has been made public prior to it being accepted as a submission. It is particularly disappointing given that the information was received late from your Department but has then almost immediately been released publicly by the media, prior to the Committee being able to consider the submission.

As Chair of this Committee, I seek your advice as to whether anyone in your Department released the submission to *The Australian* prior to it being published by the Committee. If so, I request that you advise me who authorised the submission being released to the media and provide an explanation as to why this was done.

The Committee will consider in due course whether to accept the Government's submission or treat it as correspondence, given it was provided after submissions had closed. I look forward to receiving your response on the matters outlined above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jaala Pulford', written over a white background.

Jaala Pulford, MLC
Chair
Economy and Infrastructure References Committee



Department of Treasury and Finance

1 Treasury Place
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Jaala Pulford MLC
Chair
Economy and Infrastructure References Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

27 JUL 2012

Dear Ms Pulford

**RE: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SUBMISSION TO COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY
INTO COMMONWEALTH PAYMENTS TO VICTORIA**

Thank you for your correspondence of 5 July 2012 regarding the Victorian Government's submission to your Committee's Inquiry into Commonwealth Payments to Victoria. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify the position of the Department and Treasury and Finance (DTF).

A whole of Victorian Government submission to the Inquiry was selected to provide the most considered possible input to the Committee's work. It is regrettable that delays in finalising this coordinated response meant the submission could not be provided to the Committee until after the requested date for provision. I understand that DTF officials made contact with the Committee Secretariat to highlight and explain these delays.

I note that the submission was provided to the Committee on 28 June, and was referenced in The Australian newspaper on 2 July. The submission was later placed on the DTF website, which is the regular practice of the Victorian Government when making submissions to external inquiries. However, I can advise that no DTF official was authorised to release the submission to The Australian newspaper, and to my knowledge no DTF official has had any contact with the media on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Grant Hehir
Secretary



Legislative Council Standing Committee On Economy and Infrastructure

Parliament House, Spring Street, East Melbourne Victoria 3002
Telephone 61 3 8682 2817 Facsimile 61 3 9651 6799

5 July 2012

Hon. Gordon Rich-Phillips
Assistant Treasurer
Level 5
1 Macarthur Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Minister

Re: Victorian Government Submission to the Economy and Infrastructure References Committee's Inquiry into Commonwealth Payments to Victoria

The Committee's Secretariat received the Victorian Government's submission to the Inquiry into Commonwealth Payments on Thursday 28 June 2012, almost three weeks after submissions had closed.

The Committee has not yet had an opportunity to meet to consider the submission, however, it has come to my attention that an article written by John Ferguson was published in *The Australian* newspaper on Monday 2 July 2012 which discusses and quotes extensively from the Government submission, as well as offering quotes from the Treasurer on the matter of Commonwealth payments to Victoria.

I find it discourteous to this Committee and more broadly to Committees in general, their processes and their important work that this submission has been made public almost immediately after being provided to the Committee. As you have been a member of numerous parliamentary committees, I am sure you will agree the release of this information is not helpful to the proper conduct of this important inquiry.

I have written to the Secretary of the Department of Treasury and Finance seeking his advice as to whether anyone in his Department released the submission to *The Australian* prior to it being published by the Committee. I similarly seek your advice as to whether anyone in the office of the Assistant Treasurer provided the submission to the media, and if so, I request that you advise me who authorised the submission being released to the media and why this was done.

The Committee will consider in due course whether to accept the Government's submission or treat it as correspondence, given it was provided after submissions had closed. I look forward to receiving your response on the matters outlined above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jaala Pulford'.

Jaala Pulford, MLC
Chair
Economy and Infrastructure References Committee



Assistant Treasurer

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9 AUG 2012

Ms Jaala Pulford MLC
Economy and Infrastructure References Committee
Chair
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE 3002

Dear Ms Pulford,

Thank you for your letter of July 5 2012.

I understand the Secretary of the Department of Treasury and Finance has responded on behalf of the Treasurer to you in detail on this matter.

Yours sincerely

THE HON GORDON RICH-PHILLIPS MLC
Assistant Treasurer