



Select Committee on Victoria's Recreational Native Bird Hunting Arrangements

Hearing Date: 29 June 2023

Question[s] taken on notice

Directed to: George Buchhorn

Received Date: 18 July 2023

1. Bev McARTHUR Page no. 80

Question asked:

Bev McARTHUR: Anyway, you dispute the compliance and enforcement actions at the time of your presence at the GMA and before and afterwards?

George BUCHHORN: I have not got the figures in front of me, so I cannot make comment on that.

Bev McARTHUR: Well, can you take it on notice?

Response:

When I appeared at the hearing it was my understanding I was there to detail my time and my observations when I was the manager of game compliance. I did not follow the GMA after resigning. I recall when I was there that I compiled the figures for the annual report. I recall that I noted the drop in figures so I decided to check the year before for accuracy. I reported to the director that I believed the figures from the previous year were incorrect and elevated. He told me not to worry. The figures were still low and I always felt given the time 'patrolling' they should be a lot higher anyway. The team were reluctant to plan and prepare operations and I was told I was asking them to do too many reports. I would be asking for a full breakdown of the figures and then do a check for accuracy.

Additional Question on notice from Committee members:

2. Bev McARTHUR Page no. 80

Question asked:

Details of meeting with the Hon Lisa Neville MP, Minister for Police (Background, attendees, purpose, outcomes, notes).

Response:

The meeting with Ms Lisa Neville was arranged through Andy Meddick, MP, animal justice party. I outlined my concerns regarding the bias against protesters, the interference of the CEO (not permitted to apply for search warrants, not to make reference to cruelty, etc) the failure to disclose the second pit of ducks (apparently he had information from a former GMA board member) the failure to investigate that pit, the failure to investigate the person who posted on Facebook footage of shooting and over bagging, the failure to prosecute any of the briefs of evidence I handed personally to the Prosecutions unit even just issuing warning notices. The briefs seemed to have just disappeared. The fact the CEO wrote to the then minister Jalaa pulford who had also been sent the footage by Animals Australia that it was unlikely anyone would be prosecuted even before an investigation was started. I also expressed concerns over the waste of money of buying 3 boats worth an estimated \$350,000 when Fisheries had boats and coxswains available. The GMA just wanted their own toys.

I refute she was the wrong minister to talk to as I believe the conduct by the GMA was corrupt. Her advice was to report it to the ombudsman. Unfortunately the girl I spoke to could not have been less interested and only sent them a report to answer and didn't ask for an independent review of the briefs to see if they reached the required standard to prosecute. She didn't do this.

As I said at the hearing I also told IBAC who were interested on the phone but then said it didn't meet their threshold.

I appeared on the 7.30 report hoping the media might be able to exert some pressure.

This has taken a personal toll. When I went there I thought it was going to be my dream job and fairly enforce the rules but the GMA was being run in the interests of hunters and not the wildlife we were supposed to protect.

I'll be out of contact again after this morning until next week.