

PERTH CASINO ROYAL COMMISSION — HON NEVILLE OWEN

272. Hon Brad Pettitt to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the Perth Casino Royal Commission, and I ask:

- (a) who first nominated or suggested the Hon Neville Owen as a potential commissioner;
- (b) which Ministers were involved in the selection process;
- (c) who confirmed the selection of the Hon Neville Owen;
- (d) what personal and business interests did the Hon Neville Owen declare, prior to the start of the Perth Casino Royal Commission, and will the Attorney General table this conflict of interest declaration;
- (e) did the Hon Neville Owen declare his Directorship role of Clabon Pty Ltd and Redlake Enterprises as part of his conflict of interest disclosure to the State Solicitor's Office (SSO), prior to his selection as Commissioner;
- (f) when did the Hon Neville Owen first disclose his personal and business relationships with Mr Kerry Stokes to the SSO;
- (g) Why did the SSO not provide the information referred to in (f) to the Attorney General prior to August 2021;
- (h) to whom has the SSO provided the information referred to in (f), and when was this provided;
- (i) was the Attorney General aware of the relationships referred to in (f), prior to being informed by the SSO in August; and
- (j) if the Attorney General was made aware of the Hon Neville Owen's past and existing personal and business relationships prior to the start of the Perth Casino Royal Commission, would the Attorney General still have considered Hon Neville Owen to be a suitable candidate:
  - (i) if no to (j), why not; and
  - (ii) if yes to (j), why?

**Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:**

- (a)–(j) The Hon Neville Owen was appointed by the Governor in Executive Council following a process conducted by the State Solicitor's office.

The former justice was an obvious choice. He is perhaps the most qualified West Australian for the role, having sat on the HIH Royal Commission following a long career as one of the State's most senior judges.

All three of the royal commissioners are exceptional West Australians who have lived and worked in Perth for decades and would have managed countless perceived conflicts of interest during their distinguished careers.

The attacks on Commissioner Owen should cease. He and his fellow commissioners are undertaking important work on behalf of the West Australian public and that work should be judged on its merits when the inquiry has handed down its report.