



PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE

REPORT NO. 1

REPORT ON PERSONS REFERRED TO IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

DR ANANTH PULLELA

Laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly
22 September 2005

REPORT

The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee a letter from Dr Ananth Pullela seeking to use Standing Order 114 to respond to comments made on 25 August 2005 by the Attorney General, the Hon. Jim McGinty, MLA.

The Committee has agreed to the attached response proposed by Dr Ananth Pullela.

In accordance with Standing Order 114 the Committee has not considered or judged the truth of any statements made in the Legislative Assembly or in the submission.

Recommendation

Your Committee recommends –

That a response by Dr Ananth Pullela in the terms specified in the Appendix to this report, be incorporated in *Hansard*.

HON. FRED RIEBELING, MLA
CHAIRMAN TO THE COMMITTEE
22 September 2005

APPENDIX

Response by Dr Ananth Pullela
Agreed to by Dr Ananth Pullela and the Procedure and Privileges Committee
Pursuant to Standing Order 114

My name is Dr Ananth S. Pullela and I am a forensic psychiatrist who is currently employed by the Department of Health. I was initially employed as a Senior Forensic Psychiatrist in a joint capacity by both Departments of Health and Justice in 1995/96.

In my role as a forensic psychiatrist, I treat and assess (among others) sex offenders serving terms of imprisonment in this State. I have done this since about 1996.

On the afternoon of Thursday 25 August 2005 at about 2.54 pm, I was named in the Legislative Assembly by the Attorney General during the debate on the mishandling of sex offenders in Western Australia.

In fact, my professional reputation was sullied and my privacy was compromised. Particularly, the following statements:

- (1) “When the decision was made about (Mr Thomas), it was made on the basis of the psychiatric report of Dr Pullela ... The Parole Board expressly relied on the advice of the **so-called expert psychiatrist** who recommended that Mr Thomas posed a low risk of reoffending and on the basis of that psychiatric advice, the decision was made.”
- (2) “(Dr Pullela) is currently under **performance management** because of Department of Health concerns about **substandard performance**. In summary, those concerns fall into 4 broad groups.”
- (3) The 4 broad groups identified were:
 - Failure to recognise and treat psychosis.
 - Inappropriate prescribing of stimulants.
 - Inappropriate prescribing of Acuphase.
 - Mistakes in writing prescriptions for medications.

- (4) Additional instances of substandard performance identified were:
- Substandard quality of reports to the Courts.
 - Substandard quality of discharge summary forms.
 - Deficiencies in the standard of care, as identified by the Coroner during an inquiry.
 - Failure to comply with conditional release order directions of the Mentally Impaired Accused Review Board.
 - Inadequate knowledge of the administration of the Mental Health Act 1996.
- (5) These (above) incidents are only a representative sample of the ongoing problems that the director of the State Forensic Mental Health Service, Dr Steve Patchett, has with Dr Pullela's performance!
- (6) "Under the Public Sector Management Act (Dr Pullela) has been placed under performance management ..."

In addition, other matters going to the psychiatric reports I wrote on 2 prisoners – Mr Thomas and Mr Ciciora are not correct. As to both, no reference was made to the Addendum to my last reports, written after receipt of additional information, in which I expressed the view that each prisoner posed a high risk and recommended he not be released.

At the time that the Attorney General made the statements to the Legislative Assembly, I was not under performance management under the auspices of the Public Sector Management Act because of Department of Health concerns about substandard performance, or at all.

In fact, some of the matters raised I have no knowledge of and, without particulars, am unable to respond to them. As to others, for example, the reference to the Coroner's Report, this is false as the Coroner identified systemic problems in the prison system and expressly said she was not being critical of any individual.

And yet others, are matters which were raised some time ago and were dealt with.

In fact, as at the date of writing this submission, I am not under performance management under the Public Sector Management Act.

My privacy has been unreasonably invaded, my reputation has been adversely affected and I have been injured in my occupation in circumstances where I have no recourse other than to make this request that I be permitted to incorporate an appropriate response in Hansard in accordance with Standing Order No 114.

If you consider it appropriate, I would be happy to address the Procedure and Privileges Committee on my submission.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Ananth S Pullela

13th September 2005