Legislative Assembly
Privileges Committee

Person referred to in the Legislative Assembly—Deon Coote

Report
October 2026

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Committee membership



CHAIR
Hon Lily D'Ambrosio
Mill Park



DEPUTY CHAIR
James Newbury
Brighton



Hon Melissa Horne
Williamstown



Danny O'Brien
Gippsland South



Hon Danny Pearson
Essendon



Richard Riordan
Polwarth



Hon Mary-Anne Thomas
Macedon

About the Committee

Functions

Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, No 8 — Thursday 23 February 2023.

> **3 Committee Membership** — Motion made, by leave, and question — That:
>
> (8) A select committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon complaints of breach of privilege referred to it by the House, right of reply applications referred under SO 227 and any other matter referred to it by the House; and Lily D'Ambrosio, Melissa Horne, James Newbury, Danny Pearson, Mary-Anne Thomas, Peter Walsh and Kim Wells be members of the Privileges Committee
>
> put and agreed to.

On 26 November 2024 Hon Peter Walsh resigned from the Committee and on 27 November 2024 Danny O'Brien was appointed in his place.

On 29 July 2025 Hon Kim Wells resigned from the Committee and on 31 July 2025 Richard Riordan was appointed in his place.

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Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION: That the response by Deon Coote in Appendix A be published with this report. **1**

Person referred to in the Legislative Assembly—Deon Coote

On 2 October 2026 Deon Coote made a submission to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly seeking redress under Standing Order 227 relating to the protection of persons referred to in the Legislative Assembly.

The submission referred to a statement made by the Member for Nepean, Anthony Marsh MP, during statements by members on 30 July 2026. The Speaker accepted the submission and referred it to the Committee on 5 October 2026.

The Committee met in a private session on 19 October 2026 and resolved to consider Mr Coote's submission and write to him requesting he prepare a draft response in consultation with the Committee secretariat.

On 22 October 2026 Mr Coote submitted a draft response for the Committee's consideration. The Committee met again in a private session on 26 October 2026 and resolved to accept his response. The Committee met in a subsequent private session on 28 October 2026 and resolved to publish his response with this report.

The Committee draws attention to Standing Order 227(9) which requires that, in considering a submission under this Standing Order and reporting to the House, the Committee shall not consider or judge the truth of any statements made in the House or in the response.

RECOMMENDATION: That the response by Deon Coote in Appendix A be published with this report.

Adopted by the Legislative Assembly Privileges Committee
Parliament of Victoria, East Melbourne.
28 October 2026

Appendix A
Response by Deon Coote under SO 227

I, Deon Coote, seek to respond to statements made by the Member for Nepean, Anthony Marsh MP, in the Legislative Assembly on 30 July 2026 concerning my character, integrity and my conduct in business.

The Member stated that I was a "criminal", a "criminal environmental offender", and alleged that I had engaged in corruption and criminal conduct in connection with the operations of my company, Elite Roads Pty Ltd.

I categorically reject those baseless allegations. I have never been convicted of any criminal offence, and I have never engaged in corrupt or criminal conduct. The allegations were made without any proper factual basis and have caused significant damage to my personal and professional reputation.

As the founder and managing director of Elite Roads, my personal reputation is closely connected to the reputation of the business. Since the allegations were made, I have been required to respond to repeated questions from clients, contractors, suppliers, employees and others in the road construction industry about allegations of corruption and criminal conduct. The allegations have become a common topic of discussion in industry circles and on sites where Elite Roads performs work.

The allegations were then republished and reported more broadly, including in a newspaper article published by The Age, resulting in further scrutiny of my character, integrity and business activities.

The consequences for me extend beyond the parliamentary record itself and have continued through subsequent public discussion and media reporting. The cumulative effect has caused me significant distress and adversely affected my personal and professional reputation. These events have placed strain on longstanding commercial relationships that are critical to my business, and impacted my employees.

I respectfully seek that this response be published as a correction to the false allegations made about me in Parliament.

Appendix B
Extract from Standing Orders

227 Citizen's right of reply procedure

(1) Where a person (the applicant) has been referred to in the House by name, or in such a way as to be readily identified, he or she can send a written submission (the submission) to the Speaker asking for an appropriate response to be incorporated into the parliamentary record.

(2) The submission must include a claim that, as a result of the reference:

(a) the applicant has been adversely affected:

(i) in reputation; or

(ii) in relation to dealings or associations with others; or

(b) the applicant has been injured in connection with his or her occupation, trade, office or financial credit; or

(c) the applicant's privacy has been unreasonably invaded.

(3) The Speaker will refer the submission to the Privileges Committee (the Committee) if the Speaker is satisfied that:

(a) the subject of the submission is not so obviously trivial, or the submission so frivolous, vexatious or offensive in character, as to make it inappropriate that it be considered by the Committee; and

(b) that it is practicable for the Committee to consider the submission under this Standing Order.

(4) When a submission is referred, the secretary of the Committee will contact the applicant to draw his or her attention to the Committee's guidelines for preparing a brief draft statement in a correct form for incorporation.

(5) The Committee may decide not to consider a submission referred to it if:

(a) it considers that the subject of the submission is not sufficiently serious; or

(b) it considers that the submission is frivolous, vexatious or offensive in character; or

(c) the submission was received more than six months after the relevant comments were made in the House and the applicant has not shown exceptional circumstances to explain the delay—

and will report any such decision to the House.

(6) If the Committee decides to consider a submission, it may hold discussions with the applicant and any member who referred to the applicant in the House.

(7) The Committee will meet privately when considering a submission.

(8) The Committee will not publicly release a submission, or its proceedings in relation to a submission, but may present to the House minutes of its proceedings and all or part of a submission.

(9) In considering a submission and reporting to the House, the Committee will not consider or judge the truth of:

  (a) any statements made in the House; or

  (b) the submission.

(10) In its report to the House, the Committee may make either of the following recommendations:

  (a) that no further action should be taken by the House in relation to the submission; or

  (b) that a response by the applicant, set out in the report and agreed to by the applicant and the Committee, should be published by the House or incorporated in Hansard.

(11) The Committee will not make any other recommendations.

(12) A document presented to the House under paragraphs (8) or (10):

  (a) in the case of a response by an applicant, will be succinct and strictly relevant to the questions in issue and will not contain anything offensive in character; and

  (b) will not contain any matter, the publication of which would have the effect of unreasonably:

    (i) adversely affecting or injuring a person; or

    (ii) invading a person's privacy, in the manner referred to in paragraph (2); or

    (iii) adding to or aggravating any such adverse effect, injury or invasion of privacy.

(13) The Committee may agree to guidelines and procedures relating to its consideration of submissions, providing they are consistent with this Standing Order.