



The Hon. Greg Piper MP
Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly
Member for Lake Macquarie

5 March 2025

Mr Alex Greenwich MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics
Legislative Assembly of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Greenwich

Thank you for your letter, dated 3 March 2025, affording me an opportunity to provide information to the Committee in relation to its current referral from the House on orders for the production of papers held by the Executive, which pertain to the operations of the Speaker's office.

As you are aware, I made a statement to the House on 20 February 2025 concerning the Legislative Council's order for papers made on the previous day in relation to Ministerial Vehicle logbooks and related material. I wish to advise the Committee that I subsequently wrote to the Premier on 26 February formally providing a copy of my statement and the terms of the House's referral to your Committee. I drew the Premier's attention to *Egan v Willis* (1998) 195 CLR 424 and the power upheld in that judgment for either House to order papers for the purpose of scrutinising the Executive and holding it to account.

I noted my constitutional status as the independent and impartial representative of the Legislative Assembly, being the House to which I am accountable. I also noted recent discussions by the Legislative Council in its own committee reports of the importance of comity between the two Houses.

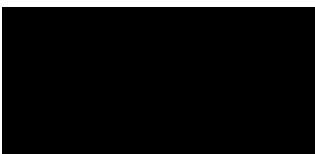
My letter concluded with a request to the Premier that, any records covered by the order for papers that related to me or my predecessors, not be provided to the Legislative Council as part of the return but that they instead be provided to me, so that I may make them available to members of the Legislative Assembly as indicated in my statement.

The Premier has advised me in a letter, dated 4 March 2025, that he appreciates my concerns and I can confirm that the Departments concerned will provide to me any records held by them and covered by the order for papers, which relate to me and my predecessors, by 12 March 2025. This is the date that the papers covered by the Legislative Council's order were due to be returned to the Council. The Premier further confirmed that the relevant records relating to the Speaker *would not* be produced to the Legislative Council in response to the order for papers.

I am grateful to the Premier for his response, which appropriately reflects the principle of comity and mutual respect between the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, as equal and sovereign Houses of Parliament. It is a practical solution to a difficult situation. This aspect of the Legislative Council's order for papers was unprecedented to the best of my knowledge and had the very real potential to undermine the position of the Legislative Assembly in the management of its internal affairs, including its administration and financial independence. I will in due course, on the resumption of the sittings, fulfil my undertaking to the House to provide the information furnished to me by the Premier to the Legislative Assembly and its members, accounting for my expenditure and the use of this resource to the House of which I am the elected Speaker.

Please let me know if the Committee has any questions about my correspondence or if there is anything further I can assist with in relation to the current referral.

Yours sincerely



The Hon. G. Piper MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly