



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

**INQUIRY INTO THE APPOINTMENT OF MR JOHN BARILARO AS  
SENIOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMMISSIONER TO THE  
AMERICAS**

**Questions from the Hon Daniel Mookhey MLC, with the agreement of the  
committee**

**Mr Mike Pratt**

Please provide a statement which sets out all your knowledge about:

1. The selection process which led to the selection of Mr Paul Webster as the preferred candidate for the role of NSW Agent-General to the United Kingdom.
2. The selection process which led to the replacement of Mr Paul Webster as the preferred candidate for the role of NSW Agent-General to the United Kingdom with Mr Stephen Cartwright.
3. All conversations you had with the Treasurer and/or the Deputy Premier about the above two processes.
4. The negotiations had with Mr Stephen Cartwright over his total remuneration package with Investment NSW for the Agent-General in London role.

**THE HON DANIEL MOOKHEY MLC, TOGETHER WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. JOHN BARILARO AS SENIOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMMISSIONER TO THE AMERICAS**

**CONTEXT**

I have done my best to answer your questions below, which relate to the appointment of Mr Stephen Cartwright as NSW Agent-General to the United Kingdom.

I ask the Committee to understand that I do not have access to any documentation such as emails, file notes, diaries etc therefore cannot state specific dates. I am able to comment on broader timelines. Having said that, I am presently in Melbourne attending to my dying mother. I am not going to pretend that my recollection in these impaired circumstances is crystal clear.

The date I do remember well is 8 March 2021. I was attending Budget Estimates with then Treasurer Perrottet when I received an email from Ms Amy Brown, enclosing a Brief from Ms Brown to Premier Berejiklian. The Brief requested the transfer of all Global NSW responsibility to Investment NSW in the Department of Premier & Cabinet. This included all components of the strategy, people and budget. The Brief had been approved by the Premier. Whilst I thought the means of communicating the transfer was somewhat unusual (i.e. no prior discussion, no meetings, no phone conversations etc), I respected the right of the Premier as Head of State to be the designated leader of trade and investment in NSW.

The transfer of Global NSW occurred during March/April of 2021. The only task which remained within my portfolio (and by agreement with Investment NSW and Premier & Cabinet) was for the selection panel to complete the selection process for the Agent-General in the UK & Europe and the Senior Trade Commissioner in North East Asia/Japan. The panel comprised myself, Mr Tim Reardon, Secretary, Premier & Cabinet and Mr Warwick Smith, recognised expert in all matters Trade at an executive level. I recollect that the panel completed the process towards the end of March/early April and the panel decisions were:

- Mr Stephen Cartwright for Agent-General UK & Europe
- Mr Mike Newman for Senior Trade Commissioner North East Asia and Japan

Both of these approvals were then passed to Investment NSW for remuneration negotiation and their appointments. The panel had completed their job and I had no further engagement beyond this point.

**Q1. The selection process which led to the selection of Mr Paul Webster as the preferred candidate for the role of NSW Agent-General to the United Kingdom**

I was a member of the selection panel. I am not clear on what this question asks. Preferred by whom, and when? Mr Webster was a strong candidate with deep experience in transactional trade and administration, however the selection panel questioned whether Mr

Webster was ready to step up to the Agent-General role which carried significantly higher levels of executive representation, influencing and stakeholder management.

**Q2. The selection process which led to the replacement of Mr. Paul Webster as the preferred candidate for the role of Agent-General to the United Kingdom with Mr. Stephen Cartwright**

The premise of the question is incorrect as there was no “replacement” of Mr Paul Webster with Mr Cartwright as set out in Question 1. Both candidates were put through the selection process.

**Q3. All conversations you had with the Treasurer and/or the Deputy Premier about the above 2 processes**

In respect to the Deputy Premier, I can only recollect that he recommended Mr Cartwright into the process. I do not recollect the terms of the specific conversation. However, he was the Trade Minister and had every right to recommend candidates into the selection process provided he had no further involvement in the process and did not seek to influence selection panel members in any way. To the best of my recollection, he had no further engagement beyond recommending Mr Cartwright. Mr Cartwright went through the selection process with each of the other candidates.

In respect to the then Treasurer, I do not recollect that he had any involvement other than that I updated him from time to time on progress as I did with all matters “across my desk”. I do not recall any specific conversations.

**Q4. The negotiations had with Mr Stephen Cartwright over his total remuneration package with Investment NSW for the Agent General in London role**

I had no role in the negotiations of remuneration with Mr Cartwright as this was the responsibility of Investment NSW.

Michael Pratt AM

9 September 2022