

## **Question**

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Ms Watts, in terms of the advertised role that you applied for in about March 2021, who were your referees for that role?

EMMA WATTS: I believe—I would like to be able to check with two of them.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: You can take it on notice.

EMMA WATTS: Yes. I'm happy to provide that. I can confirm that one of them is—none of them have a relationship with the National Party, and they're all executives of some standing.

## **Answer**

I have contacted the referees and advised them of these questions. To protect their privacy, I would value their names being suppressed but note that Ms Gallagher has identified herself as a long-term referee. The referees I provided in my CV to the Department in March 2021 are:

### **Lynne Gallagher**

Board Member

Australian Energy Regulator

Role in March 2021: CEO, Energy Consumers Australia

## Question

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Do you recall how much money you gave to the National Party in 2018, leading into the 2019 election?

EMMA WATTS: I think it was in the order of—for everybody's benefit, I was travelling yesterday when it became apparent that these questions might get answered. But it's just under \$4,000, I believe. I'm happy to provide—

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: Surely, that's not membership fees—\$4,000. Jeez, no-one would join!

EMMA WATTS: No, it's not. It's dinners and other things.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: That's a significant amount of money, given the evidence we heard yesterday from the other inquiry.

EMMA WATTS: Sure.

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: So is the rate of the position.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Exactly. It's about a third of the pay.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: So \$4,000. Any other donations on top of that?

EMMA WATTS: I'm confident there are. I'm happy to provide that information on notice.

## Answer

My records indicate the following payments to The Nationals since the 2017-2018 disclosure period.

	Membership	Donations (including functions and raffle tickets)
2018-2019	\$ 120.00	\$ 100.00
2019-2020	\$ 120.00	\$ 80.00
2020-2021	\$ 120.00	\$ 200.00
2021-2022	\$ 120.00	\$ 500.00
2022-2023	\$ 120.00	

Please note – membership fees are considered donations for the purposes of the rules in NSW

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** And the final determinant on your position was the executive director of economics. Is that correct?

**EMMA WATTS:** I would have to take that on notice.

**Answer**

The Executive Director – Strategy and Economics was the Hiring Manager for the Director, Strategy and Reform.

I received advice from the Department of Regional NSW recruitment team on 4 May 2021 that:  
*“Based on the capabilities you displayed throughout the recruitment process we would like to invite you to be a part of our recruitment pool. A place on our recruitment pool means that you may be considered for roles that become available across the NSW public service prior to advertising, and the place is valid for 18 months from today.”*

**Question**

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: Just a simple yes or no, Ms Watts: Do you formally know that there is a review, as was publicly stated in The Daily Telegraph?

EMMA WATTS: I'll have to take that on notice, and I'll provide some information later.

**Answer**

No

**Question**

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: Do you think it would run into the thousands? So if this was a \$4,000 base level—

EMMA WATTS: In the past four years?

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: Yes.

EMMA WATTS: I don't know. I'll have to take that on notice.

**Answer**

My records indicate the following payments to The Nationals since the 2017-2018 disclosure period.

	Membership	Donations (including functions and raffle tickets)
2018-2019	\$ 120.00	\$ 100.00
2019-2020	\$ 120.00	\$ 80.00
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Please note – membership fees are considered donations for the purposes of the rules in NSW

**Question**

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: In fact, this was the subject matter of a lot of yesterday's hearing, and we're talking about bigger sums of money now. Can I ask you, Ms Watts—

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: That's talking about a different position—secretary—for goodness sake.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: We're talking about a much lower role, appointed in a different way.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: Well, whilst we're on those interjections, Ms Watts, what remuneration does the role pay?

EMMA WATTS: Look, I'll have to confirm that, but it's—I'm a band 1.

**Answer**

Total remuneration package as of August 2021: \$219, 028 (inclusive of 10%superannuation)

Total remuneration package as of August 2023 due Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Tribunal (SOORT) determinations \$223,409 (inclusive of 11% superannuation)

### **Question**

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINÉ: In preparing for being here today, did you speak with any current or former Opposition members of Parliament about the inquiry?

EMMA WATTS: I have had phone calls as to my wellbeing. I haven't spoken to them about my testimony or anything.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINÉ: Sorry, when you say "them", who have you spoken with?

EMMA WATTS: Current and former MPs?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINÉ: Yes. Could you list them, please?

EMMA WATTS: I'll have to give you a list.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Can you recall any that you've spoken to?

EMMA WATTS: Well, Mr Barilaro called me last week inquiring as to my wellbeing. Mr Barilaro and I had not spoken to each other for at least 18 months until there was some engagement within some, let's call us

old-timers, in the Queanbeyan branch about the death of a stalwart in our party, and that was two weeks ago.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINÉ: And any current MPs?

EMMA WATTS: Yes.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINÉ: Could you name any of them?

EMMA WATTS: I think I'm uncomfortable naming them in—

The Hon. WES FANG: That's fine.

EMMA WATTS: I'm happy to provide that list but—

### **Answer**

I have not spoken to any current or former Members of Parliament about my testimony or preparation for the Inquiry.

I have appreciated the direct contact and concern expressed for my well-being by a number of people from across the Greens, Liberals, Nationals and Labor movements

Since targeted articles appeared in the Daily Telegraph at the beginning of August a number of current or former Members of Parliament of the Nationals have contacted me to enquire as to my well-being and to reassure themselves that I am taking steps to manage my well-being

- John Barilaro
- The Hon Wes Fang
- The Hon Sam Farraway
- Jenny Gardiner
- Kay Hull
- The Hon Sarah Mitchell
- Melinda Pavey
- The Hon Bronnie Taylor