

**INQUIRY INTO APPOINTMENTS OF JOSH MURRAY TO
THE POSITION OF SECRETARY OF TRANSPORT FOR
NSW AND EMMA WATTS AS NSW CROSS-BORDER
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, AND SENIOR EXECUTIVES
AND DEPARTMENT LIAISON OFFICERS IN 2023**

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 30 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

From my experience working in this Office, I find that there is an inherent, underlying conflict of interest between the role of a senior member of a political party and the role of a senior public servant.

I question whether it is acceptable for someone in high office in a political party to have full access to Cabinet-in-confidence material. This means someone who is in the position to influence public policy but who also secretly has political intentions, is seeing the early thinking on legislation and policies from government agencies and is in a position to share that information with others in their own party, and to use that information to influence policy well before it is presented to the Parliament and the public.

The public expectation is that we should be confident that public servants are working in the best interests of the public and providing unbiased, apolitical and evidence-based advice to their senior leaders.

How can someone in the highest circle of a political party possibly fulfil their public service duties, while consciously working to achieve the goals of their own party – particularly if it is in direct opposition to the government of the day?

There have been many things that I didn't understand about the way that our Office has been run, which I now see in a different light, knowing that our Assistant-Commissioner holds high office in a political party.