

Public Statement

CHARGES LAID AGAINST MP

Friday, 19 February 2021

Statement by the Hon. Ann Vanstone QC Independent Commissioner Against Corruption

On 7 September 2020, shortly after commencing in the role as Independent Commissioner Against Corruption, I announced that I would continue an investigation commenced by my predecessor, the Hon. Bruce Lander QC, into the possible misuse of the Parliamentary Country Members Accommodation Allowance. In December last year I referred a brief of evidence to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

On Wednesday afternoon the Director filed an Information in the Adelaide Magistrates Court charging Mr Fraser Ellis MP with 23 counts of Deception, contrary to s 139 of the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act (SA)*.

I would not ordinarily name a person charged as a result of an investigation by me but in light of Mr Ellis's statement in Parliament this morning, it is appropriate that I do so on this occasion.

It will be alleged that between 13 May 2018 and 12 June 2020, Mr Ellis made 78 fraudulent claims for the Country Members Accommodation Allowance, totaling more than \$18,000.

The Country Members Accommodation Allowance is available to Members of Parliament whose usual place of residence is more than 75 kilometres from Adelaide, and who are required to stay in Adelaide overnight to attend to Parliamentary or other relevant duties. It will be alleged that Mr Ellis claimed the allowance for nights he did not spend in Adelaide.

Yesterday Mr Ellis was served a summons to appear in the Adelaide Magistrates Court at 10am on 31 March 2021.

My investigation into claims by other Members continues.

For media enquiries please contact 0428 389 493 or media@icac.sa.gov.au.

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