



HON REBECCA WHITE MP
LABOR LEADER

Dear Premier

I write to request a formal investigation into breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct by Roger Jaensch.

Mr Jaensch is accused of misleading Parliament during Question Time on September 24, 2020.

Mr Jaensch was asked to confirm “that a decision was made by you and the Government you are part of to change the Residential Tenancy Act to make it easier to evict tenants without genuine or just reason?”

He responded by saying:

“Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Greens for her question. I am not aware of any changes proposed or undertaken...

and

“I do not know what decision Ms O'Connor might be referring to.”

However, a leaked Cabinet paper reveals that a decision was made to remove the “genuine or just” requirement for evictions from public housing properties, but was overturned on 24 August.

While you have attempted to redefine the meaning of the word “decision” to attempt to absolve Mr Jaensch of guilt, but in Parliament Mr Jaensch denied that changes had even been proposed.

On any interpretation, the statement that changes were not proposed is patently untrue.

The Ministerial Code of Conduct is clear on the matter of misleading statements:

“Ministers must not mislead Parliament or the public in statements they make and are obliged to correct the Parliamentary or the public record in a manner that is

appropriate to the circumstances as soon as possible after any incorrect statement is made.”

Mr Jaensch did not correct the record at the earliest opportunity, in fact, he compounded the lie.

At the very least the question of whether Mr Jaensch has breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct should be independently investigated, at arms’ length from Government.

The public need to have confidence that the statements made by Ministers of the Crown are truthful at all times.

“In the Westminster system of government, there is no more serious charge than that of misleading the Parliament.”

They are not my words; they are yours from a press statement issued in 2009.

At one point in your career you were concerned with upholding Parliamentary standards.

Now that you are Premier, it is your responsibility to ensure that your Ministers display the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Roger Jaensch has fallen far short of those standards.

If you allow this matter to go unresolved it will cast a shadow over the integrity of your entire government.

I formally request that you direct an arm’s length and independent assessment of this breach to ensure the Ministerial Code of Conduct is upheld.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca White', written in a cursive style.

Rebecca White MP
Leader of the Opposition

27/09/2020