

NOTICE OF FILING

Details of Filing

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Registry: NORTHERN TERRITORY REGISTRY - FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Registrar

Important Information

This Notice has been inserted as the first page of the document which has been accepted for electronic filing. It is now taken to be part of that document for the purposes of the proceeding in the Court and contains important information for all parties to that proceeding. It must be included in the document served on each of those parties.

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Form 59
Rule 29.02(1)

Affidavit

No. NTD17 of 2024

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Northern Territory
Division: General

LESLEY TURNER

Applicant

JACINTA NAMPIJINPA PRICE

Respondent

Affidavit of: **Warren Williams**

Address: [Redacted]

Occupation: Chair, Central Land Council

Date: 21 March 2025

I, Warren Williams, of [Redacted] ~~say on oath/affirm:~~

1. I am the current Chair of the Central Land Council.
2. I first became a member of the CLC Executive in April 2019. In April 2022, I became the Deputy Chair of the CLC. At that time, Matthew Palmer was the Chair. On 17 September 2024, I was elected Chair of the CLC.

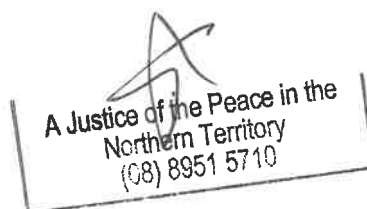
Full Council Meeting at Watarrka

3. The Full Council of the CLC has 90 members. Each member is elected as a delegate for one of the CLC's nine regions. The 90 council members elect the 11-member Executive Committee, which is led by the Chair and Deputy Chair.

Filed on behalf of Lesley Turner, applicant
 Prepared by Victoria-Jane Otavski
 Law firm BlackBay Lawyers
 Tel [Redacted] Fax _____
 Email [Redacted]
 Address for service Level 30, 133 Castlereagh St, Sydney, NSW 2000

A Justice of the Peace In the Northern Territory
 (08) 8951 5700
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4. The Executive Committee meets every 4 to 6 weeks, but the Full Council meets three times per year. Each Full Council Meeting is held at a different location in Central Australia outside Alice Springs.
5. From 16 to 18 July 2024, a Full Council Meeting was held at Watarrka (Kings Canyon). I attended all three days of the meeting.
6. In the afternoon of 18 July 2024, Mr Palmer asked all the female delegates and CLC staff to leave the meeting area. This sometimes happens at our meetings so that Men's Business can be discussed. Men's Business is the knowledge, practices and ceremonies which are reserved exclusively for men in our culture.
7. Once all the female delegates and CLC staff had left, Mr Palmer handed me a document and asked me to read it aloud to the other delegates. I started to read it, but I stopped after the first line when I realised that it was about our CEO, Les Turner, and I refused to keep going. Mr Palmer then asked one of the other men to read it, but he refused too.
8. I had never seen Mr Palmer's document before he asked me to read it out. As far as I know, none of the other members of the Executive had seen it before either. We should have seen it, because proposed resolutions must be included on the agenda, which is sent out to delegates at least two weeks before the meeting. Mr Palmer's proposed resolutions were not on the agenda.
9. It was also wrong for Mr Palmer to ask me to read out the proposed resolutions because the female delegates had been excluded. There was no proper reason to ask the women to leave because nothing about Mr Palmer's resolutions was actually Men's Business. If there was going to be a vote on whether the CEO should be dismissed, the female delegates had the right to vote on it too.
10. The meeting broke up without any motion being moved or put to a vote.
11. The CLC is in possession of a sound recording of the men-only meeting on 18 July 2024. I listened to that recording in August 2024, but I did not re-listen to it again before making this Affidavit.



Mr Palmer's media release

12. Two days later, on 20 July 2024, I heard on the news that Mr Palmer had made a statement about the Full Council Meeting and about Les.
13. Mr Palmer's statement shocked me, because it said that Les had lost the confidence of CLC delegates, and that a motion of instant dismissal had been moved at the Full Council Meeting. These things were completely untrue.
14. I knew nothing about Mr Palmer's statement before I heard about it on the news, and as far as I am aware, none of the other CLC Executive members or staff knew about it either. Ordinarily I would be informed before a media release was made on behalf of the CLC.

Senator Price's media release

15. On 22 July 2024, I heard on the news that Senator Jacinta Price had also made a statement about the Full Council Meeting and about Les.
16. Before Senator Price published her media release, nobody from her office ever contacted me to ask me about Mr Palmer's media release, or to ask about what happened at the meeting. If anyone from her office had asked me, I would have told them that Mr Palmer's media release was not authorised by the CLC and that what it said was untrue. I would have described what actually happened on 18 July 2024 in the way I have described it in this Affidavit.
17. As far as I am aware, nobody else on the CLC Executive or CLC staff was contacted by Senator Price's office either.
18. I am aware that soon after Senator Price published her media release, the CLC's communications team published a short statement on behalf of the CLC to say that Senator Price's media release and the news reporting were inaccurate. I was not involved in publishing this statement.
19. Even after that statement was published by the CLC, nobody from Senator Price's office ever contacted me.

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(08) 8951 5710

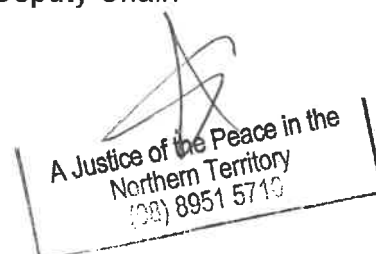
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Dismissal of Mr Palmer

20. On 7 August 2024, the CLC Executive held a meeting in Alice Springs to discuss what had happened at the Full Council Meeting on 18 July 2024 and what had happened in the media afterwards. We passed two resolutions at that meeting.
21. First, we agreed a statement of facts about what happened on 18 July 2024 and we agreed that this should be provided to Les, because we felt that he was entitled to an explanation about what had happened.
22. Second, we resolved to convene a special Council meeting in order to consider Mr Palmer's conduct and whether any disciplinary action should be taken against him. It was the Executive's view that Mr Palmer's behaviour on 18 July 2024 and publishing his media release breached the CLC's Code of Conduct.
23. On 9 August 2024, I wrote to Les to inform him of the resolutions passed by the Executive on 7 August 2024, and to provide him copies of the agreed statement of facts, Mr Palmer's proposed resolutions from 18 July 2024, and Mr Palmer's media release.
24. On 28 August 2024, the special Council meeting took place at Tennant Creek. I attended that meeting. There was discussion about what had happened on 18 July 2024 and about the media reporting. It was resolved to call a second special meeting, which Mr Palmer's lawyer would attend.
25. On 17 September 2024, the second special Council meeting took place, again at Tennant Creek. I attended that meeting. At the meeting, it was resolved that Mr Palmer had breached the CLC Code of Conduct and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. It was further resolved that the Council had lost confidence in him as Chair, and that he should be removed as a delegate of the CLC.

My election as Chair of the CLC

26. At the 17 September 2024 meeting, I was elected as the new Chair of the CLC, and Barbara Shaw was elected as the new Deputy Chair.




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- 27. Following my election, somebody from Senator Price's office contacted me to ask for a copy of my CV. This was the first time that anyone from Senator Price's office had ever approached me to request comment about anything.

- 28. Since I was elected Chair, Senator Price has publicly attacked me and called for my removal as Chair. I believe this is because I supported Les and did not support Mr Palmer.

Sworn/affirmed by the deponent
at Alice Springs
in the Northern Territory
on 21 March 2025
Before me:

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Signature of deponent


Signature of witness

A Justice of the Peace in the
Northern Territory
(08) 8951 5710

Local Courts Alice Springs
10 Parsons Street
PO Box 1394
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0870