

19 November 2014



State Services Commissioner
Iain Rennie
Level 10, Reserve Bank of New Zealand Building
2 The Terrace
Wellington

Dear Iain Rennie

Handling of complaint of sexual harassment against Roger Sutton

I am writing to express my concern and to seek an explanation from you about the way in which the outcome of a complaint of sexual harassment against Roger Sutton is being handled.

I am concerned about the woman at the centre of this. I am also concerned about the chilling effect the current situation will have on anyone else in the public sector who is being sexually harassed and wants to make a complaint about that harassment.

My concern for the woman in the current situation, where through no fault of her own details of the matter have become public, is that there is now widespread public debate about her complaint.

The other main concern has to be about the chilling effect on future complaints arising from the current situation.

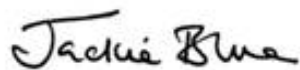
I simply do not understand why the confidential complaint and mediation processes in the Employment Relations Act or Human Rights Act were not used. These processes are designed to achieve confidential resolution of difficult matters like these to the satisfaction of both parties and in a way that preserves the human dignity of all involved.

In the Commission's processes these matters are handled in the strictest confidence by the Chief Mediator and members of her team. Commissioners and other people outside her team do not know anything about a complaint.

I would like to meet with you to understand why the approach that has been taken in this case and to explore how a similar situation could be handled differently in the future.

I will be making my concerns about this public.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Blue". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Dr Jackie Blue
Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner
Kaihautu Oritenga Mahi