

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**STATEMENT IN THE MATTER OF: Op Dasha****NAME: Giuliano Vaccari****DATE: 4 November 2016****States: -**

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence which I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in Court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

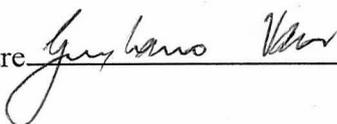
2. I am 54 years of age.

3. In January 2015, I was the Mayor of Strathfield Council. In that month I read certain media relating to a Mr Spiro Stavis who was to be employed at the Director Planning at Canterbury City Council.

Exhibit 1: I produce and hereto attach Letter from Giuliano Vaccari to ICAC dated 30 January 2015.

4. I knew Mr Stavis from his employment at Strathfield Council, where he had held the role of Senior Planner.

Signature



Witness



STATEMENT IN THE MATTER OF: **Op Dasha**
NAME: **Giuliano Vaccari**

5. I was aware that after Mr Stavis left Strathfield Council I received a number of phone calls from various property developers concerned the developments which had been in the hands of Mr Stavis when he had left council, and were about to be approved at that time, were still not approved. Comments were generally favourable about Mr Stavis and how facilitative he had been in his time at Strathfield Council.
6. I was made aware from these conversations that Mr Stavis had a facilitative approach towards development. I am not aware of any allegations that Mr Stavis sought or was provided any corrupt assistance of any kind from these developers.
7. About the time when Mr Stavis was seeking employment at Canterbury Council for the position of Director of Planning, I received a call from Councillor Michael Hawatt.
8. I have known Councillor Hawatt for a number of years through the Liberal Party of NSW and other council related matters. Councillor Hawatt said words to the effect of *"We are hiring a new Planning Director here at Canterbury and we have an application from a former employee at Strathfield- Spiro Stavis. What can you tell me about him?"*

Signature



Witness



STATEMENT IN THE MATTER OF: Op Dasha
NAME: Giuliano Vaccari

I said words to the effect of *“Spiro has a facilitative approach towards development and I think is pro development, as are the officers at Strathfield generally, but Mr Stavis apparently more so.”*

9. I did not think at that time the questions by Councillor Hawatt were unusual or improper considering the seniority of the person being hired and my role as Mayor of Strathfield. I considered the call and subsequent conversation to be a professional courtesy between 2 councillors

10. I had no evidence of any wrong doing by anybody at the time of my letter to ICAC in January 2015, I wrote the letter of concern as a result of reports regarding the removal of Mr Stavis’ from Canterbury Council after being initially employed. I believed it may be in some way related to his ‘facilitative’ approach to considering development applications.

Signature 

Witness 

Cr Giuliano (Gulian) Vaccari
Mayor of Strathfield
[REDACTED]
Strathfield NSW 2135

30th January, 2015

ICAC
GPO Box 500
Sydney NSW 2001

Re: Protected Disclosure- Spiros Stavos (former planning employee Strathfield Council)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to you to pass on some thoughts on this former staff member of Strathfield Council, following on from recent media to do with the appointment of a new planning director at Canterbury City Council.

I understand that it may be this same Spiros Stavos who was offered the job at Canterbury City Council. Media reports indicate that an applicant for the job at Canterbury City Council was hired, following an assessment process (including a panel) and that subsequent to this the job offer was withdrawn by the General Manager of Canterbury City Council, for reasons of which I am not aware.

What may (or may not) be relevant to this matter are a number telephone calls I received from people with development applications before Strathfield Council in the period following the departure of Mr Stavos from Strathfield Council. The theme of each call was the same- Mr Stavos is gone, he had a facilitative approach to development applications, your new planner is being obstructionist in his interpretations of your planning instruments. There was NO claim from any of the 'complainant applicants' that inducements had been offered to (or sought by) Mr Stavos.

If it is this same Mr Stavos who was employed at Canterbury City Council, my concern here is that the General Manager of Canterbury council may be in possession of information which has informed his decision to terminate the contract. If this is the case, a review of Mr Stavos' employment at Strathfield Council, and in particular of his deliberations on development applications may be warranted.

I should also disclose at this time that I did receive a telephone call from Cr Michael Hawatt from Canterbury City Council seeking to reference Mr Stavos as part of the process of hiring a planning official at his council. At that time I knew that Mr Stavos was no longer in the employ of Strathfield Council, and I had come to know that Mr Stavos had a facilitative approach in his interpretation to Strathfield Council's planning regulations. I said as much to Cr Hawatt. I have subsequently found out that Cr Hawatt was part of Canterbury Council's panel in their quest to fill this position.

The General Manager of Strathfield Council, Mr David Backhouse, has been on leave in January so I have not had the opportunity to discuss this matter with him. I intend to do so at the earliest opportunity in February.

So, in conclusion, if it is relevant to any investigation ICAC may be conducting into the hiring and subsequent firing of the planning official at Canterbury City Council, it may be that it would be appropriate to review the Development Applications handled by Mr Stavos whilst he was employed at Strathfield Council.

Yours sincerely

Cr Giuliano (Gulian) Vaccari
[REDACTED]

