

NOTICE OF FILING

Details of Filing

Document Lodged: Affidavit - Form 59 - Rule 29.02(1)
Court of Filing: FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA (FCA)
Date of Lodgment: 27/05/2024 3:03:56 PM AEST
Date Accepted for Filing: 27/05/2024 3:04:04 PM AEST
File Number: VID1023/2023
File Title: MOIRA DEEMING v JOHN PESUTTO
Registry: VICTORIA REGISTRY - FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA



Sia Lagos

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.

The date of the filing of the document is determined pursuant to the Court's Rules.

Form 59
Rule 29.02(1)

Affidavit of Rachael Wong

VID 1023 of 2023

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Victoria
Division: General

MOIRA DEEMING

Applicant

JOHN PESUTTO

Respondent

Affidavit of: **Rachael Wong**
Address: Level 1, 486 Lower Heidelberg Road, Heidelberg, VIC 3084
Occupation: CEO of Women’s Forum Australia
Date: 27 May 2024

Handwritten initials: mg ASB

I, Rachael Wong of [REDACTED] say on oath:

Background

1. I am the Chief Executive Officer of Women’s Forum Australia (**WFA**), an independent bipartisan think tank that undertakes research, education and public policy advocacy on social, economic, health and cultural issues affecting women and girls.
2. WFA’s objectives, as stated on our website, are:
 - (a) to undertake high quality research on issues relevant to women's safety, health, freedom and well-being with particular focus on behaviour that is harmful and abusive to women;

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	Moira Deeming, Applicant
Prepared by (name of person/lawyer)	Patrick George, Solicitor
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Handwritten signature: Ray

Handwritten signature: ASB

- (b) to develop and deliver education on issues relevant to women's safety, health, freedom and well-being with particular focus on addressing behaviour that is harmful and abusive to women;
 - (c) to empower, equip and mentor a coalition of women to be agents of positive cultural change and influence in the home, the community, the paid workforce and public life; and
 - (d) to inform government legislation and policies on issues of relevance to women's safety, health, freedom and well-being through high-quality research.
3. Prior to the WFA, I previously worked with the Law Reform Commission in Samoa to bring about legislative reform to improve the lives of Samoan women and girls.
 4. I also worked as a solicitor in New Zealand, practicing in migration and refugee law.
 5. I hold a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) from the University of Auckland and a Master of Bioethics and Health Law from the University of Otago.

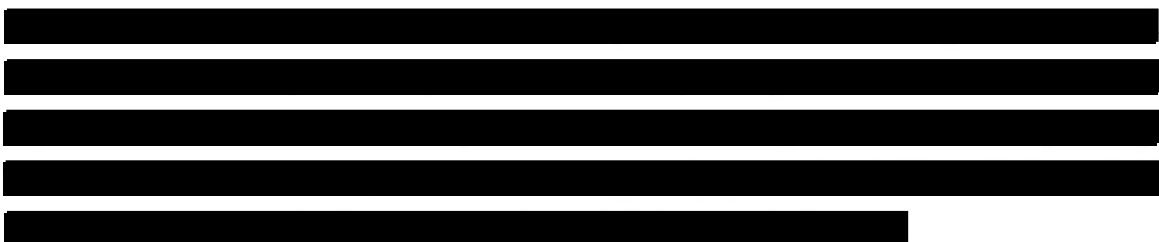
Exhibit RW-1

6. Exhibited to this affidavit is a paginated bundle of documents marked "**Exhibit RW-1**".

Meeting Moira

7. I met Moira online through my work with WFA in mid-2022 after she had been preselected as a candidate for the Upper House. I reached out to her on Facebook in order to send her a copy of a WFA article published on 26 July 2022 under the title 'Liberals Pick Women's Sex-Based Rights Advocate Moira Deeming For Victoria Parliament Seat' (**WFA Article**). A copy of the WFA Article is at pages 1 to 3 of **Exhibit RW-1**. We published the article because I and others at WFA were very optimistic and encouraged by Moira's electoral campaign; we perceived her to be a woman who advocated positively on women's rights issues. Since the WFA Article was published, I have stayed in contact with Moira. We have spoken on the phone and exchanged text messages over the past 2 years.

Moira's Reputation (Prior to 19 March 2023)

8. 
9. I shared an excerpt of a recording of Moira's maiden speech on the social media platform "X" via a tweet that read:



"An absolutely incredible maiden speech @Moiradeeming 🙌🙌🙌 Your unfailing courage and commitment to the rights and safety of women and children is an inspiration to us all. The suffragette colours were the icing on the cake 💜💗💚"

(Maiden Speech Tweet)

10. [REDACTED]
11. The Maiden Speech Tweet:
- (a) received 2,600 "likes";
 - (b) was "reposted" 750 times; and
 - (c) received 77 comments.
12. The comments in reply to the Maiden Speech Tweet were overwhelmingly supportive of Moira, including the following:
- (a) "*Moira for premier!*";
 - (b) "*Absolutely superb 🍷🍷🍷*"; and
 - (c) "*Brilliant speech*".

A copy of a selection of replies to the Maiden Speech Tweet are at pages 5 to 22 of **Exhibit RW-1**.

13. Before 19 March 2023, Moira's reputation in my professional circles, and among WFA supporters, was that she was courageous and a person of great integrity who stood up for what she thought was right. My professional circles include women who identify themselves as feminists and are from the left wing of politics. To me, the most striking aspect of this was that Moira was clearly respected by people from opposite sides of the political spectrum, which in my experience is very rare. I observed that Moira was able to work with people who had different political beliefs from herself; she could put politics to the side in order to engage in reasonable and meaningful debates about these issues. Within my professional circles, before 19 March 2023, Moira was greatly respected for this attribute.

The Publications

14. I have been provided with a copy of Mr Pesutto's statements about Moira which I am informed are defined in the Statement of Claim as:
- (a) the Media Release;

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- (b) the 3AW Interview;
 - (c) the ABC Interview;
 - (d) the Press Conference; and
 - (e) the Expulsion Motion and Dossier.
- (collectively, the **Publications**)

Trip to the UK

15. In October 2023, I travelled with Moira in the United Kingdom. During this trip, we met with numerous people in the UK, particularly public office holders, policy makers and advocates, for the purpose of exploring and understanding what they perceived to be successful legislative, policy and other initiatives in favour of sex-based rights and child safeguarding.
16. During this trip, we met with two MPs in Scotland, being, to the best of my recollection, Rachael Hamilton and Permjit "Pam" Gosal. Moira asked each of them whether she could take a photo with them. They both looked concerned about the request, and reluctantly agreed to allow Moira to take the photo but told her they did not want her to publicly share the photograph until her name had been cleared in relation to the Nazi accusations. That afternoon, we caught a train back to London. Moira was very quiet throughout the journey and I recall seeing her cry. I recall she told me that this was an incredibly hurtful and humiliating encounter and it was just one of many instances where this has happened to her since the Publications.

Impact on Moira

17. I have observed in my interactions with Moira over the past year that the Publications have been emotionally damaging to Moira and have weighed heavily on her. The allegations in the Publications have been akin to a trauma event that has consumed her for over a year. Moira has expressed to me that it has been incredibly stressful to simultaneously fight back against the false allegations made against her by Mr Pesutto whilst also attending to her day-to-day obligations as a member of the Upper House in the Victorian Legislative Council. I recall Moira saying to me on more than one occasion that "*it's all too much*". Since the Publications, during our conversations she has sounded down and has been less responsive to my messages than usual.
18. Moira has told me that she needs to address the false accusations against her (that she has associated with Nazis) for the benefit of her family; that is her main concern.
19. She has said she needs to vindicate herself as soon as possible for her own mental health and the wellbeing of her family.



Online Materials

20. Since the Publications, I have seen numerous posts on social media, primarily on X, that were disparaging of Moira. I recall seeing tweets that called her a Nazi or accused her of associating with Nazis.

21. I myself published several tweets that featured Moira or expressed support for her. Many of these tweets would receive a large number of negative comments in reply. For example:

(a) On 4 May 2023, I published a tweet in which I said:

"@MoiraDeemingMP only agreed to @LiberalVictoria 's absurd 9mth suspension to clear her name of false Nazi claims

@JohnPesutto has still not made statement to this effect, disputing what was agreed

*Moira has given him UNTIL 2PM TODAY to make statement or face legal action
***"*

A copy of this tweet is at page 23 of **Exhibit RW-1**.

(b) Comments in reply to the tweet include the following:

i. *"You can't stand with Nazis and not expect to get treated like one."*

ii. *"Why do Nazis hate being called Nazis so much?*

It's almost like they know what they're doing is deeply wrong & potentially disastrous.

But no, of course it's something 'new' 🤔"

A copy of these tweets are at pages 24 to 25 of **Exhibit RW-1**.

(c) On 12 May 2023, I published a tweet in which I said:

"BREAKING | @MoiraDeemingMP has disgracefully been expelled from @LiberalVictoria and @ReneeHeathMP has been sanctioned - she is no longer party Secretary.

#IStandWithMoiraDeeming

#IStandWithReneeHeath"

A copy of this tweet is at page 26 of **Exhibit RW-1**.

(d) Comments in reply to the tweet include the following:

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- i. *“Moira Deeming disgraced herself by being at a rally which was attended by members of the National Socialist Movement who repeatedly performed the Nazi salute. People who share views with neo-Nazis really aren't suited to working in politics in a free country like Australia.”*
- ii. *“Maybe they found Moira Deeming a bit too Nazi-adjacent?”*

Copies of these tweets are at pages 27 to 28 of **Exhibit RW-1**.

Sworn
 at Sydney
 in NSW
 on ²⁷ ~~26~~ May 2024
 Before me:

Ry *AK*

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Ry

Signature of deponent

AK

Signature of witness

Adam Kadmon, Solicitor
 Name and qualification of witness

Ry

AK