

LIBERAL IAN QUICK THREATENED WITH EXPULSION OVER CRITICAL NEWSLETTER

SAMANTHA HUTCHINSON VICTORIAN THE AUSTRALIAN - POLITICAL REPORTER

A senior Victorian Liberal member has been threatened with expulsion after circulating a series of private newsletters that were critical of the party and legal action taken against its fundraising arm, the Cormack Foundation.

In the same week former premier Jeff Kennett said party elders were concerned the Victorian division was headed in the wrong direction, *The Australian* has learned Ian Quick, an administrative committee member, has been threatened with expulsion if he releases another newsletter slamming party decisions.

As revealed by *The Australian* in April, Mr Quick's newsletters, Quick News, sent to members between December and March, raised concerns about the mounting cost of court action against the Cormack Foundation, and delays in federal preselection's.

Fears over branch stacking, as well as a growing culture in which members were afraid of speaking up for fear of getting a response that was "childish, not rational, and in some parts potentially defamatory" from party officials.

The state administrative committee attempted to censure Mr Quick in December after he released the first edition of his newsletter, titled "Is this the party I joined?" The move failed, however, when the meeting did not meet quorum. But sources revealed Mr Quick had come under fresh pressure after being reappointed to the committee in May.

Mr Quick did not return calls from *The Australian*. Other committee members and party members confirmed the ultimatum, some calling the move heavy-handed. "The guy was always really careful not to cross any real lines that brought the party into disrepute, and you could say the questions he put forward were worth asking," one long-time party member said.

The news comes as the party awaits a ruling tomorrow over its long-running stoush with the Cormack Foundation, which has functioned for more than 30 years as the party's main funder.

While party president Michael Kroger and senior members have attempted hose down reports of escalating infighting in the party as it awaits the critical judgment, high-profile members including Jeff Kennett have portrayed a party riven by bitter rivalries and unease.

Opposition Leader Matthew Guy yesterday denied that internal party issues and infighting in the lead-up to Thursday's decision were sapping energy from the party and its election efforts.

Source: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/state-politics/liberal-ian-quick-threatened-with-expulsion-over-critical-newsletter/news-story/bc4dc08ecfb94538ea11aa6cc916ea70>