

Maritime NZ Referred to Privileges

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The Speaker has today referred a complaint regarding Maritime New Zealand to the Privileges Committee.

The Speaker's ruling is as follows:

“I have received a letter from the Hon David Cunliffe raising as a matter of privilege the alleged action taken by Maritime New Zealand in relation to the managing director of Maritime Management Services Ltd following evidence she gave to the Regulations Review Committee. It is suggested that this action could amount to a contempt of the House in that the managing director may have been disadvantaged on account of giving that evidence. When a matter of privilege is raised, the Speaker determines whether a question of privilege exists. The Speaker does not inquire into the validity of the evidence presented, or fully inquire into the matter raised. Rather, he or she appraises the evidence provided with the complaint, to determine whether it points to a reasonable, not a remote, possibility that a breach of privilege or a contempt occurred. It is for the Privileges Committee to investigate the matter and report its findings to the House. The matter of privilege raised is a significant one. An allegation that a State sector agency used its power against a person on account of evidence given to a select committee requires serious attention, given the importance of free speech to this House. Consequently, I rule that a question of privilege does arise from the action taken by Maritime New Zealand in relation to the managing director of Maritime Management Services Ltd following her giving evidence to the Regulations Review Committee. That question, therefore, stands referred to the Privileges Committee.”