

## Statement

By the Chairperson, NSW Electoral Commission

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26 March 2018

### **Charges laid against George Anastasopoulos and the RMI Group Pty Ltd over third-party campaigners offences**

The NSW Electoral Commission has laid charges against George Anastasopoulos and the RMI Group Pty Ltd for operating as unregistered third-party campaigners during the local government expenditure period leading up to the 10 September 2016 Local Government Election.

The Commission alleges that during the local government expenditure period for the 10 September 2016 Local Government Election, Mr Anastasopoulos or the RMI Group Pty Ltd had flyers printed and distributed in the Shoalhaven area. The flyers sought to influence the vote at the forthcoming election. It is alleged neither Mr Anastasopoulos nor the RMI Group Pty Ltd had registered as a third-party campaigner, neither had an official agent, and consequently payments for electoral expenditure were not made by that agent.

Charges have been laid by the Commission, under s.96I of the *Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981*.

The offences carry a maximum penalty of \$44,000 or imprisonment for two years or both.

The New South Wales Crown Solicitor's Office is prosecuting this matter on behalf of the Commission.

The Court Attendance Notices have been served and the matter is listed before the Downing Centre Local Court on Wednesday 28 March 2018.

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#### **ABOUT THE NSW ELECTORAL COMMISSION**

In December 2014, the three member Electoral Commission was constituted. It is separate to the agency led by the Electoral Commissioner. The Commission is an independent, statutory authority. It approves public funding to the political parties and others and enforces the provisions of four NSW Acts. These provisions govern electoral funding, expenditure and disclosures, the conduct of State and local government elections and the lobbying of government officials. The Commission's Chairperson is the Hon Keith Mason AC QC, a former President of the NSW Court of Appeal (1997 to 2008). Information about this independent Commission's work can view viewed at: [www.elections.nsw.gov.au/about\\_us/work\\_of\\_the\\_commission](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/about_us/work_of_the_commission)