

NATIONAL QUEENSLAND

# What is the Heiner affair?

---

By **Chris Barrett**April 28, 2009 – 8.30pm

---

The Heiner affair is the long-running controversy surrounding the Goss cabinet's 1990 shredding of documents relating to child abuse - including the rape of a 14-year-old Aboriginal girl - after it aborted an inquiry into the former John Oxley Youth Detention Centre.

The documents had been compiled during an inquiry headed by former magistrate Noel Heiner that was set up in the final days of the Cooper conservative government in 1989.

The complaint to the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee (PCMC) was lodged by former union official Kevin Lindeberg in February 2008 and concerned the handling of the Heiner affair by the main corruption watchdog, the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) and its predecessor body, the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC).

Attached to the application for review was a nine-volume audit produced by Sydney QC David Rofe that contains details of 68 alleged prima facie charges that he believes could be brought against public officials past and present.

They include Prime Minister Kevin Rudd - Mr Goss's former chief-of-staff - the Governor-General Quentin Bryce, who took no action after requesting and receiving a report on the affair from then Premier Peter Beattie in 2003, and six serving Queensland judicial officers.

The review application to the PCMC also included a statement of concern sent to Mr Beattie in 2007 from legal heavyweights, including the former Chief Justice of Western Australia David Malcolm.

The former Chief Justice of Australia, the late Sir Harry Gibbs, had previously aired his concerns at the destruction of documents.

Most recently, Premier Anna Bligh received a letter from Buckingham Palace, dated November 26, 2008, noting the Queen's request for "consideration" to be given to matters raised in letters to Her Majesty by Mr Lindeberg.

---

