

Tabled by
Sylvia Hale
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PRIVATISATION OF NSW PRISONS

Members would be aware that the NSW Government has announced plans to privatise Parklea and Cassnock jails in the November 2008 mini-Budget. Following this announcement the New South Wales Legislative Council is holding an inquiry into the prisons privatization plans and your Association has made a written submission to the inquiry. Our submission can be found at www.pansw.org.au.

The Police Association has a fundamental objection to the privatisation of the State's prisons, prisoner transport and functions currently being performed by Corrective Service Officers in police cells throughout NSW.

Since this proposal has been announced members have raised significant concerns in respect to all three aspects of the proposed privatisation. In particular there are considerable Occupational Health and Safety issues in respect to any changes to the role currently being played by Corrective Services Officers in police cells both in metropolitan and country areas of the state.

Our members have regular interactions with personnel in the private security industry and as a consequence have considerable concerns in regard to their accountability, training, integrity and competency as compared to professional prison officers employed by the Department of Corrective Services. These issues are in our view beyond resolution. Members are concerned for their own safety, the safety of other staff and the public who may be utilising the police stations and importantly the security of prisoners. These same issues apply to both the prisoner transport function and the prison environment itself.

I have taken the opportunity to write to the Minister for Police, Tony Kelly and the Minister for Corrective Services, John Robertson and:-

1. provided them with a copy of our submission and
2. informed them of our members concerns and
3. requested that the Police Association of NSW be properly consulted in respect to the proposal

Members can support the Corrective Services, Public Service Association campaign by logging onto the website www.stoothecelloff.org.au, finding out more information, and signing the petition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Weber'.

Scott Weber
Vice President

www.keepourcops.org.au