



Ms Teresa McMichael
Secretary
Standing Committee on Law and Justice
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**REVIEW OF THE EXERCISE OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE WORKCOVER AUTHORITY
PROOF TRANSCRIPT CORRECTIONS & ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE**

4 April 2014

Dear Ms McMichael

On 21 March HCIA gave testimony to the hearing of the NSW Standing Committee on Law and Justice on the 'WorkCover Inquiry'.

I represented HCIA, and other witnesses who supported our testimony were Mr Michael Davis (Consultant, HearingLife) and Mr Graham Holdgate (who appeared as a private citizen as an affected worker with hearing impairment).

This letter provides feedback on the uncorrected proof of the transcript authorized by the witnesses and addresses answers to questions taken on notice at the hearing.

Corrections requested to the proof transcript

Page 53: "MICHAEL DAVIS, technical expert, WorkCover" should be changed to "MICHAEL DAVIS, technical expert on WorkCover, HearingLife" (the current entry appears to imply he is an employee of WorkCover, which he is not).

Page 53: Mr WILSON "I am also the managing director of Hearinglife" should be changed to "I am also the Managing Director of HearingLife...". (A small point I know).

Page 54: Mr Wilson had incorrectly cited the cost of batteries "were compensated at \$107,000.30 per hearing aid" when in fact they were "compensated at \$107.30 per hearing aid. The error was picked up by Mr Shoebridge. "Mr WILSON: Sorry, I stand corrected, I apologise." We suggest that immediately after this comment the following is added: "Batteries were compensated at \$107.30 per hearing aid."

Page 54: Mr WILSON "As of February 2014 the charges were changed to \$5,000..." should be corrected to "As of January 2014 the charges were changed to \$5,000..." (Mr Wilson did say "February" but this was not technically correct).

Page 54: Mr WILSON “and repairs are now compensated up to \$464.70 within the 12 months” when it is in fact, correct for him to say, “and repairs are now compensated up to \$364.70 for the first 12 months.”

Page 55: Mr HOLDGATE “Having help with hearing aids and other services is vital for my quality of life and that you are not in a position to readily pay for new hearing aids when you need them replaced.” This should be corrected to: “Having help with hearing aids and other services is vital for my quality of life and I am not in a position to readily pay for new hearing aids when I need them replaced”.

Page 56: Mr DAVIS “We have put into our section 59A a clause from the Upper House about exempting hearing aids and replacements” should be corrected to, “We recommend a clause drafted by the Upper House that would exempt hearing aids and replacements be put into section 59A of the legislation”.

Page 57: Mr HOLDGATE “It will cost now \$7 for a pack of four batteries.” to “It will cost now \$7 for a pack of four batteries that need replacing every two days.”

Page 59: Mr HOLDGATE “It has completely turned it over” to “It has completely turned it around”.

Questions on Notice

1. Page 56 “CHAIR: You have not made an approach to WorkCover or to WIRO. The Committee has your submission and your comments and it will take those into account in any recommendations that it makes. Would your association consider making some submissions to WorkCover and WIRO as indeed Unions NSW and the Public Service Association have done on certain other issues?

Mr WILSON: Absolutely.

CHAIR: You will go ahead and avail yourself of that opportunity?

Mr WILSON: Certainly.”

Answer: “The Hearing Care Industry Association has since written to the WorkCover Independent Review Office 4 April 2014 and WorkCover 4 April 2014 on this matter. A copy of HCIA’s submission to the WorkCover Inquiry was provided to these organisations with a request that it be considered, and with an offer to follow up with them if required.”

2. Page 58 “Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I think Ms Mitchell’s question was if you allowed for replacements or if there was some discretion there to have replacements up to a certain monetary cap, what would be a reasonable monetary cap?

Mr WILSON: I think we can take that on notice and look into that.”

Answer: “Reflecting on this question, the Hearing Care Industry Association considers it inappropriate for it to recommend amounts for monetary caps within the Scheme, as this is the remit of the Parliament and the Government. Our view remains that those with workplace hearing loss should be eligible for hearing aid replacements, maintenance costs and batteries, compensated by the Scheme as they fall due.”

We trust the information above is of assistance to the Committee. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries.

The Hearing Care Industry Association wishes the Committee well in its deliberations on this Inquiry and we look forward to being informed about the timing of next steps in this process and the Committee's Report.

Yours sincerely

Mr Ashley Wilson
Director