

**THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS OF THE NSW
AMBULANCE SERVICE**

Name: Suppressed
Date received: 25/06/2008

Partially Confidential

Ms Robyn Parker,

1. Officer safety is a joke! There is no concept of safe work practices for employees for a job that has such dynamic and diverse working conditions. Our job requires us to go into peoples houses; this is the most dangerous environment for any emergency service. People are unpredictable and often we are placed in potential and real danger from the public. there is no detailed information given to working crews about potential problems or concerns with an address or area. Therefore road crews go into jobs blind, with no knowledge of any previous problems or concerns relating to that location. The system to get a Caution Note on an address is complex and time consuming. Most of the time the caution Note is not put on the system anyway. The service claims legal/confidentiality reasons. Although it must be noted that Hospitals has a reasonable and effective warning system on their patient data bases.

a well informed Paramedic is a safe and effective Paramedic in completing a case. Also, I believe, the Service is in breach of relevant OH & S issues and Work Cover legislation and is either ignorant or ignoring these important work safety issues.

2. I understand you have received lots of correspondence in relation to bullying and harassment. All I can say is, what you have read is true. This job promotes, encourages and rewards work place bullies. The reason is they have to. Staff have low moral, do not trust management of work practices, and are frequently discriminated against. Bullying and harassment is the only way management can get the job done. Because, no other way will staff be motivated to do that extra overtime, drive that long transfer, wait at hospital for hours, miss out on meals etc. I personally have seen multiple cases of staff harassment and been the victim myself; swearing and threats are common place. But management has the perfect environment to continue to harass and intimidate because they control your career. Management approves your leave, completes your roster, approves your transfers, investigates your complaints, basically has the power to make your working life a living hell and they do!!!
3. Workforce development is non existent; once you are a qualified Paramedic you are stuck on the road with very little chance to progress. As a result "burn out" and work stress and fatigue are common. Staff is disillusioned with their position within the Service. They believe they are doing most of the work but seem to get little or no reward. Other services have many work place positions that you can rotate through for a break and to gain experience through the work force.

4. Public relations are also non-existent. Both Police and Fire Brigade have extensive media units and public knowledge is high. We appear to have a "No news is good news" attitude and as a result many opportunities to promote the service are lost. A good public image has many advantages; promotes good health, correct use of "000" and Emergency Services and greatly assists with employment and recruitment campaigns.
5. We are a part of the Health Department and not a true emergency service; therefore we are the poorer cousin to the Police and Fire Brigade. We receive the least amount of funding; have the least amount of training but do considerable amount of work, especially compared to the Fire Brigade. We also have a Health Department bureaucrat as our "Boss", with no uniformed officer as a spokes person or commissioner. The Ambulance Service has to become an Emergency Service and distance itself from health, even if we joined with the Fire Brigade, similar to the North American model of pre-hospital care.
6. Establish reasonable funding from the pre-hospital care market. I believe the Service should develop and make first aid equipment with NSW Ambulance logo, and sell to general public, for another income stream. Profits could directly go to front line Ambulance resources. In other states Ambulance Services teach first aid and this is another popular and effective way of obtaining income. It also greatly improves patient outcome if a qualified first aider is able to render appropriate treatment prior to our arrival. Other Government agencies that are required by law to have first aid training would also be able to use the Ambulance Service for their training. This would result in a uniformed and consistent approach to pre-hospital care in the Government sector. Training of course would be done by road staff on a rotational roster to limit work place stress and fatigue.

I am not scared to put my name to this, although I would appreciate if my details were not disclosed to the Ambulance Service as they WILL attempt to make my working life difficult.

Thank you for accepting this letter and hope it can assist you in your Enquiry.