

**Submission  
No 20**

## **INQUIRY INTO JUVENILE OFFENDERS**

**Organisation:**

**Name:** Mr Mark Fitzpatrick

**Telephone:**

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**Subject:**

**Summary**

Dear Sir/ Madam/ Panel

I am urging the committee members to please consider hearing those displaced workers of Kariong Juvenile Justice Centre, in regards to the effects the transfer of the Centre to Correctives have had on them.

Firstly, it must be said that nearly all ex-Kariong workers are eagerly prepared to come to parliament and convey the detrimental effects the decision has had upon them. Many find themselves depressed and gutted to the extent of marriage strains and breakdowns of their family unit.

Others find themselves out of work, struggling to pay their mortgages, taking part time work anywhere just to make ends meet. I am mainly talking about the casual staff or ex-casual staff who basically had full time employment with the Department. A majority of these casual workers were used in the troubled Carinya Unit which housed the most dangerous of all juveniles in the state. These same workers were the subject of bashing and abuse during these troubled times. The very same workers who constantly warned management of the failing system they were subjected to work in. All their written and oral warnings were ignored by these very same managers who have now moved on to other positions within the Department. Warnings that the minister of Juvenile Justice herself ignored six months before the transfer.

These casual staff members indeed want their say. They have been left to pick up the pieces of their life which have left their demeanour fragmented. We are currently taking up a collection for one worker. Another has just split with his wife of twenty tree years, all because of the strain this has had on the family.

The permanent ex-Kariong workers are fairing no better, put into the Baxter Centre with promises of all slotting into a permanent position there. This turned out to be all lies. Only three positions were available for all the permanents. The others were all given letters of temporary positions at Baxter, some have ten years service. The temporary positions are only up until the 30th of June. Then we are all put on salary maintenance for twelve months. Then our future is uncertain. I'm talking about middle aged people who will find it almost impossible to find another job after the twelve months. This alone is placing enormous pressure on them and their families. These same people also have the legacy of Kariong's failings and the blame they feel have been thrown their way. When they in fact held the place together during the horrific system change and inevitable downfall of Kariong. These permanent staff members indeed want their say.

Our performance so far at Baxter has been praised by some managers. The transition has been difficult, in as far as dissension by some Baxter staff, who feel Kariong workers are taking their jobs. We, the ex-Kariong workers, can feel this every time we turn up for our shift. But we are coping. Suffice to say Kariong's closure is also effecting the Baxter workers.

The parliamentary inquiry has also taken its toll on these dedicated workers. For instead of making public the evidence given, it was suppressed. Further frustrating us because we know the truth. This is also fuelled by guilt we have been made to feel by some Baxter workers. However, our professionalism and approach to our work is slowly dispelling their views.

It is important for all those ex-workers at Kariong to have their say on the effects all this is having on them. Especially the closure of Kariong Juvenile Justice Centre itself.

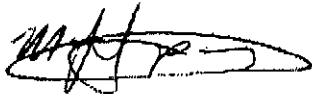
We will abide by any system you place on us in order to have our say. This could be way of-

- \* Hearing each person for maybe ten minutes each, totalling a three hour hearing.
- \* Hearing maybe nine people for twenty minutes each, totalling three hours.
- \* Hearing only six representatives twenty minutes each, totalling two hours only.

We will be guided by the decision made by the panel.

Before closing I must thank you for taking the time to read this letter and look forward to your reply.

Kindest regards



Mark Fitzpatrick