

Submission
No 346

**INQUIRY INTO THE PRIVATISATION OF PRISONS AND
PRISON-RELATED SERVICES**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

The Director,
GPSC No3

This submission is in regard to the privatisation of Cessnock, Parklea and the Court Escort Security Unit.

If we are to believe what has been peddled out into the media by our very own Commissioner then the department is certainly in turmoil. But the reality of this situation is much worse especially for those at the aforementioned centres. The reason for the position the Department finds itself in must be the Mis-management that has occurred from the upper echelon of managers.

Why is it that Officers at the coal face have to be restructured and privatised when the number of positions for managers and above have increased and the ground staff have stagnated if not lessened. This is due to the non hiring of full time staff for the security and safety of all, which has been minimised in favour of "It is cheaper to do it on Overtime" as explained by Management. Should not the Management of the Department have "some explaining to do", not to just try and wash their hand of a situation of their own making by privatising.

It has been constantly stated from the Commissioner that we are one of, if not, the most professional and well trained Corrective Services Departments in the country. If this is the case why do we need to privatise when we are the best at our jobs.

To have all hard working Officers names sullied through the media by the Commissioner stating that we are "rotters" due to some of the salaries that staff have taken home with the amount of overtime worked, is an absolute travesty against all Officers who work in a job that not everyone in society can or would like to do. The Overtime is APPROVED through Regional Commanders and General Managers and Managers of Security before staff are called in for the shift. The overtime is then dealt out through procedures that are equal and fair to all. How is it then that WE rot the system.

There are Officers that have transferred to my centre to be closer to Cessnock as they already have their families living and working there in hope that they will one day be able to transfer (on a long list) to Cessnock. These Officers, who drive well over an hour if not more, have now had their hopes and dreams dashed by the tick of a pen, instead of the Department sitting down with the Unions and coming up with options together(like Kempsey, Dillwynia and Wellington centres). These Officers and those at the other centres are now in a state of anxiety and limbo, as are their families who are under just as much strain. How do you explain to young children that they have to move from all their friends because a Department and Minister says so.

I also refer to Mr Kerry Hickey(member for Cessnock) in his address to the Legislative Assembly on the 28th October 2008 and his reference to the organisational flowcharts of the Department and the blow out in management positions. Mr Hickey also states that there are approximately 7000 employees in the Department, of which 3800 are FRONT LINE OFFICERS. "What are the other 3200 doing?". Are these the managerial staff that are sitting in places like the Henry Dean Building head office and Regional offices?

The previous Minister would not even follow his own Party's policy of being against any privatisation, again looking for the quick way to wash his hands of the situation. They obviously did not listen to the Publics' support against Electrical privatisation, ask Morris Iemma how popular it was.

The Officers only hope is for Common Sense to prevail from the outcomes of Committees where all points of view are taken into account not just the lucky few who can make decisions with the stroke of a pen at hundreds if not thousands of peoples expense.

Thank you for your time.