

Submission
No 297

INQUIRY INTO THE PRIVATISATION OF PRISONS AND PRISON-RELATED SERVICES

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 2/03/2009

Partially Confidential

I am writing to voice my opposition to the privatisation of Cessnock and Parklea prisons.

Everyday I worry about my parents and many of their friends futures, health and state of mind, as both my parents work a Cessnock Correctional Centre, my father as an officer and my mother as a nurse for Justice Health. My father has given the last 23 ½ years serving the community and keeping it safe, while protecting the general community he has faced many dangers during this time, as has my mother. I have also grown up with a large number of the officers and their children as there has only been 1 ½ years of my life that my father has not worked at Cessnock Correctional Centre.

I find it very unfair that the government due to their incompetence and money managing skills are trying to force my parents and many of our friends to either move to another part of the state or be made redundant. I love the fact that my parents are within walking distance of my home and that their almost 4 year old granddaughter can see them whenever she wants to as long as they are not at work. I do not see how a company can run the prisons to the same standards for less money and make a profit, how can this work? Officers working overtime is by far safer than putting in casuals who are trained to the same standard as a probational guard but are not there each day to hear the whispers in the corridors and general vibe of the place so that they know what is going on in the facility.

The privatisation effects both of my parents earning capacity and the life they have built for themselves. They have both worked hard to serve the community. Every day they deal with people that most people would never associate with in their life but they do it day after day in my mothers' case providing medical care for these people.

I know that this does not just effect my family but also many of the other officers families, to move to another facility they are going to have to move out of their homes, take their children out of school and force them to start a new school, not only this but many of the officer have teenage children that in addition to moving and changing schools they will have to give up their part time jobs as they will not be able to transfer them because they have to move, their partners will have to give up their jobs as well to follow their husband/wife to wherever they are sent how can this be fair. I would like to ask the Commissioner how he would feel if this was put to him?

This is only the tip of the iceberg, has anywhere it been factored in the amount of stress and mental anguish that this is placing on the officers, nurses and their families? I do not want the privatisation to go ahead but please be fair and make a decision on this matter so that the officers and nurses know what is going on and can either make a start on making a new life in a new town or know that their jobs are safe and let them get on with the job at hand of keeping dangerous and violent offenders of the streets.