

Submission  
No 298

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

Name: Name suppressed  
Date received: 27/02/2009

---

Partially Confidential

I would like to start by saying that I am a serving prison officer of some fifteen years. Until recently I have been extremely proud to be a servant to the people of NSW, however the actions and remarks of the Department of Corrective services commissioner have tarnished the reputations and good names of myself and my decent, hardworking colleagues.

I would like to see the following information disclosed to the committee and the following questions answered by those responsible for the position the in which this department now finds itself,

1. Is there a prison bed crisis within the dept?, if not, why do so many prisoners continue to be held at 24hour holding cells? at increased cost to the dept?.
2. Are there approximately 500 bed places throughout the state as claimed by dept in the media? If so why have these beds not been filled by inmates currently held in 24 cells?.
3. Are all correctional centres at full staffing levels as claimed by departmental representatives in the media?. If not, why not?.
4. Are all correctional centres under the departments supervision open to house agreed numbers of inmates?.
5. Who is currently responsible for the appointment of staff on overtime shifts?.
6. Has the public been misinformed through the media at any time regarding the questions above?.
7. Has june correctional centre ever been financially subsidized by the department/taxpayer whilst in contract?.

I and my colleagues will always serve NSWDCS to the best of our abilities, we have sworn to do so.

I do not know of any person whom I have been into contact with throughout my career that is willing to put up with being spat at, abused, assaulted, deal with serious assaults, incidents of self harm, suicide, murder, and risk losing our lives at work as one of our our colleagues unfortunately did recently, for the money I and my fellow base grade officers are paid per fortnight.

We manage the worst of the worst, the most dangerous, the un manageable, those of whom society has chosen to incarcerate because of risk they pose to the society at large.

It should be considered that employees of private service providers may be at increased risk of conducting corrupt activity due to the relative poor wages on offer from the profit driven provider. This may place inmate, staff and civilian safety at increased risk of possible harm.

Public safety is paramount, accountability is extremely important, keeping jobs in the current economic climate is of interest to the state and to the country, privatization can only be a recipe for funneling of money (profit) out of the country by the private provider.

The longer the threat of privatization and the departments incinstance on using casual prison officers to fill short term vacancies risks the professionalism and the future of corrections in this state. The ongoing situation has and will continue to have detrimental effects on the moral and well being of staff and their families, concerned at the possible financial and emotional burden of having to move house, change employers, breaking of ties with friends and families.

To date, the department has dictated privatization and casualization, the moving of staff, the provision of possible redundancies with little or no consideration to peoples personal feelings, we have been ill informed, ill treated, disrespected, disregarded, defamed, and mis managed to the point that we find ourselves today.

I love my job, I trust the people I work with, I want to continue serving the people of NSW by doing what I know I do best to the best of my ability. I am accountable to the public of NSW. Accountability instills confidence, how can the taxpayers and people of NSW be confident of the

same accountability by a private provider desperate to keep it's contract or to gain one in the first place.

Decent people deserve a fair go - prison officers are decent hardworking people overall and despite allegations suggesting otherwise, they deserve a fair go.

Information regarding possible privatization currently before staff with regard to Court Escort Security Unit is non existent. Staff deserve more than to be left hanging, not knowing the extent of possible plans for their future. The full extent of plans should be disclosed to staff, this would be in interest of staff and their families.

Look at the anecdotal evidence from other states and overseas, it is not favorable. Why make the same mistakes.