

Submission
No 72

INQUIRY INTO ISSUES RELATING TO REDFERN/WATERLOO

Organisation:

Name:

Telephone:

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Theme:

Summary

Committee Social Issues - Redfern

From: [REDACTED]
To: <socialissues@parliament.nsw.gov.au>
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Subject: Redfern

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION: Name be kept confidential. Can be released to public

I am a current serving NSW Police Officer and have served approximately 8 years at the Redfern LAC. During this period of service I have seen numerous incidents and changes within the community and the NSW Police.

I have worked at other inner metro stations in Sydney and I find that Police working at Redfern are daily subjected to abuse and assaults.

When you patrol the block area it is not uncommon to see children playing around near syringes or persons overdosing with a syringe sticking out of their arm.

How is it that if a overdose occurs that police have to escort the ambulance into the area in fear of them being assaulted or the equipment stolen from there vehicles.

Where is the Department of Community Services who are supposed to remove children who are in need of care or are in neglect. It is pretty obvious that the children are in neglect.

I am not saying that other police in other commands are not subjected to this but I can say on a personal note that whilst working the street at Redfern I can guarantee that I will be abused at least twice during the shift.

It is not uncommon to be driving the Police Vehicle through the block and be rained upon by bricks and bottles.

If you attempt to make an arrest in the block area you will expect to be assaulted or missiles thrown at you and your colleagues.

Of just recent a colleague attempted to make an arrest and he had his glock pistol removed from his holster in a struggle to restrain an offender. If the general public saw this they would be outraged in the way police are treated by or what I call these "thugs" in the area.

I have personally attempted to make an arrest in the area years ago and was surrounded by people of the "block area" luckily enough I got out unscathed. Yet it years on it still occurs. Where are the resources for Police to handle these situations in a highly volatile area.

* Why is there a needle exchange van in the block area that hands out needles to junkies. Why isn't there a return system. You hand a syringe in you get a clean one in return. Not lets hand you five or ten and receive no dirty syringes. I though it was an

exchange. Why is police have been told and I have personally been told when the exchange was in caroline lane not to search or speak to users in the laneway. I was told to wait till the leave the lane area away from the van, I could then search them under the provisions of Stop Search and Detain. Even if they are wanted for a bagsnatch and go to van. Police are then harrassed or even hindered by operators of the van for harrassing these people or arresting them.

* The Elizabeth Street Waterloo disturbance approximately two years ago when bus routes had to be diverted due to youths throwing stones at buses. Taxis were afraid to pass through, pick up or drop off in the area in the fear of being assaulted or rob or the vehicle damage. This occurred over a period of two nights with police powerless to do nothing. Police were and are in fear if they did act and force the youths off the streets then the media and political backlash would deem police using standover tactics. If this was a North Sydney Suburb or another exclusive suburb and this occurred, would the disturbance be allowed to occur.

The same has occurred in the February Riot, this should have not occurred or police should have been better equipped after being through other incidents of the same. The Government should have funded the police more. Where are the Youth Services that are supposed to be helping these children. Yet again they are silent or insist it is the fault of the Police or there responsibility. Where does it stop. I feel it is about time they take some accountability for there inaction.

* Why hasn't the New South Wales Police form a permanent core of Public Order Police. There is a part-time unit that is fully functional however a permanent unit would be much more beneficial to Police.

* Why is Redfern LAC understaffed and under resourced. The need for more general duties police and detectives is a must. How can police respond to violent crime with only four uniform police on a shift. This occurs especially on a Sunday night or day when there is only two car crews working. Detectives need to be increased to investigate these crimes and put the criminals away.

* There is no incentive for police to go to Redfern, the conditions Police put up on the street is terrible. The conditions of the station is atrocious with cramped conditions and flea ridden carpet. Airconditioning often fails, holes in the ceiling with water dripping over wires. Why hasn't the government allowed for more police and better conditions. The Police should provide incentive for Police at Redfern perhaps serving your tenure and be allowed a choice of there next placement.

As I stated earlier the conditions are terrible and the Police at Redfern are professional, keen and very competent in there job and they should hold there head high in these times. However it is about time Police at Redfern get the resources they deserve and sorely needed.

--- 25/05/04 06:56 --- Sent to -----
-> socialissues@parliament.nsw.gov.au

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