

Submission  
No 289

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date received:** 2/03/2009

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Partially Confidential

Dear Committee Members

I am a front line prison officer and have been for nearly 8 years. I have also been a union delegate for two years. My partner has worked at Cessnock for 16 years and has also been heavily involved in the union.

I believe that change is inevitable in any work place, but should be done with consultation taking into account all affected parties. To make a decision to privatise just to reduce overtime and break the unions is not an acceptable excuse to the people of New South Wales.

#### Overtime

1. All overtime is approved by Management and is offered through a card system to ensure that everyone is offered overtime fairly.
2. There is more overtime in gaols where the gaols staffing is under its establishment numbers not just when sickies occur.
3. Prior to the introduction of casuals, when new officers completed their training they were not necessarily sent to the gaols with the staff shortages which meant that some gaols were running under their establishment and filling the shortages with overtime whilst other gaols had reserves rostered on, sometimes up to ten officers per day, rostered on as extras without a post to fill.
4. How many officers have been disciplined for roster "rotting". If it is so prevalent in Corrective Services enough for the Commissioner to tell the media that we are "roster rotters", then there must be a history of disciplinary action having been taken.

#### Unions

1. Mr. Woodham is quoted as saying, "I am not particularly targeting the unions, it is their members". The unions are their members.
2. Union delegates have a duty and an obligation to ensure that the safe working conditions we have fought for are adhered to.
3. My experience has been that whilst management are aware of the systems of work that have been put in place, they are prepared to compromise that at times due to staff shortages. The role of the union is to ensure that short cuts aren't made and our safe system of work is maintained.

#### Privatisation

When making the decision to privatise I believe the following issues should be taken into consideration

1. For a private company to run the gaol and also make a profit for their shareholders something has to give. Cost savings can only come from:
  - Reduced wages – impacting on the local economy and creating a greater risk of officers being compromised
  - Reduced work conditions – low staff morale
  - Reduced programmes – inmates have less coping skills and more chance of reoffending leading to no reduction in recidivism.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion against the privatisation of our gaols.