

**THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS OF THE NSW  
AMBULANCE SERVICE**

**Name:** Suppressed  
**Date received:** 26/06/2008

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Partially Confidential

Dear Committee,

Two important points need to be raised.

First, the amount of suicide by ambulance officers reflects the total disregard for employees health and safety by all management levels. In the past year there have been about 20 attempted suicide or actual suicides by ambos. This is 20 in a work force of 4000. The Australian average is 3 per 100,000. I personally know of two suicides and one attempted suicide in the Hunter area in the last year – not to mention the officer who jumped of the Gap and the other only this week who shot his mother and then killed himself. Alarm bells should be sounding loudly when this is happening to our staff. I submit management do not support staff with post traumatic stress and that they ignore warning signs. Officers are not encouraged to talk about problems and are held back for promotion or advanced skill training, if they show any signs of weakness when coping with stressful situations. I grieve for these officers and hold the department fully responsible for these outcomes. I am also told that the ambulance management do not record any of these suicidal deaths as they do not want to be responsible to take action to resolve the errors.

Secondly, the new Ambulance Service of New South Wales Death and Disability (State) Award is compulsory for all operational officers but discriminates against officers, like myself, as I am years of age, by not giving cover for “on duty” death or disability and only giving cover for “off duty” death or disability and still making the officer pay full price for the insurance policy. Officers like me have given decades of faithful service to the Ambulance Service and this is the reward the management extend to their most loyal officers. I also submit that by taking money from my pay and not giving the full benefits of the policy to me, may be misappropriation of my pay.

Management of the service did not look at the service staff age demographics when they formulated this award and based it on a Police document. This in itself shows the incompetence of the senior administrators.

If you pay full price for a car you have a right to get all the car and not half a car.

Staff moral is at an all time low, staff absence is high and no body is concerned. Officers are refusing to do overtime, as they are burnt out. It is routine to be worked all day and not given a meal break. This means 10 to 14 hours straight. Clinical errors are common at the end of shifts as officers are tired, hungry and frustrated. Management's response to this is - “if you don't like it, leave – we can employ many others”. That is not the way to assist and encourage people to work towards making the ASNSW a world class pre hospital care provider.

I trust this submission is taken in full confidence and that I will not be subject me to any reprisal from the service in my future. I request that my submission be kept confidential within the committee.

Thank you for allowing me to submit my concerns.