

**Submission  
No 152**

## **INQUIRY INTO NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME**

**Name:** Mr Grant Casey

**Date received:** 17/05/2012

---

## **Submission to the Inquiry by Grant Casey**

I am employed as a Parole Officer by the Department of Corrective Services.

In February 2009, I was moving an interview room table at work and I hurt my back. I was diagnosed with a disc prolapse. The pain was intense and I was unable to work.

By September 2009, my knees had deteriorated as I was using my knees to compensate for not being able to use my back in the ordinary way. Therefore, I had to have a knee reconstruction.

In about March 2010, I then needed to have bowel surgery due to the medication I was taking for my back.

In July 2010 I had spinal fusion.

After the operation I was still in significant pain. I suspected the operation had not worked properly. I was told there was a lot of nerve damage. I understand that the excessive nerve damage was probably due to the delay in my surgery. If it had been done earlier, my recovery would have probably been a lot quicker. Earlier surgery might also have not caused me to now have ongoing issues throughout my life.

Despite the pain, I wanted to get back to work. I applied to go back to work on light duties in November 2010.

I was all ready to go back to work when Head Office rang and cancelled my return to work. They said I needed to be fully fit to come back. They cancelled my rehabilitation as well. I was scared they were going to medically retire me and I really wanted to work.

I spoke with my GP. He said he would be willing to clear me for full duties but only if I agreed to stop straight away if I was in too much pain.

I agreed and in January 2011 I went back to work full-time. It really wasn't sustainable. I was in significant pain and in June 2011 I collapsed and was hospitalised.

I was told I had a tear in my disc and a prolapse and that further surgery would be needed. I am awaiting this surgery at the moment.

I still have issues with my bowels, due to the medication I have been on and understand I will need another bowel surgery too. However, I want to have the spinal surgery first.

My personal circumstances are that I am married with three wonderful children aged 4, 10 and 12.

I have a mortgage. I am the sole wage-earner in the family as my wife is not in the paid workforce.

I currently receive about \$1350 per fortnight in workers compensation benefits after tax. This is considerably less than I used to earn before I was injured.

We find it hard to make ends meet. We have had to ask the school for concessions with the school fees. Holidays and luxuries are just a dream. My in-laws kindly paid for our last holiday.

If weekly benefits under workers compensation are reduced or even time limited, I don't know how we would cope financially. I also don't know what we would do if my medical treatment was not covered by workers compensation.

I want to return to work as soon as I am able. It would be wonderful if my employer could be forced to provide me with suitable duties, as I am confident such duties exist in the Department.

I suspect I will have on-going medical problems for the rest of my life. These should be covered by workers compensation as they directly arise from my injury at work.

I wish to appear before the Inquiry to further elaborate on my story.