

Submission
No 40

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

Name: Suppressed
Date received: 22/06/2008

Partially Confidential

Dear panel

I would like to place a submission into the inquiry of the Ambulance service NSW. I am a Qualified ambulance officer of years and

Management and Structure.

The current lack of ability in the senior level of management has left the service in the same position as a rudderless ship. We currently have no direction, drifting between goals and drowning under a sea of work with crew abandoning the ship faster than they can be replaced, and all the time rust is eroding our establishments to the point of collapse.

- The service continues to be obstructive to industrial issues. Not meeting deadline for reform or outcomes.
- **a) (Greg Rochford, Dennis Willis, Mike Willis)** The establishment of a new station has been a protracted incident with the service actively dismissing the concerns of the community, criticising the then Health minister for promising a station and rebuffing evidence presented to them from HSU. They dismissed their own staffing matrix for complement numbers and skill mix, rebuffed the population statistics as fluctuating and ignored the offer of funds provided by the community to establish a new station. Only after the intravention of HSU and the now Divisional Manager Denis Beaven has the project started to gain momentum. **2006- awaiting outcome**
- **b) (Greg Rochford, Mike Willis)** The uniform has been introduced in November 2007. Since this date we now have officers with partial or no uniform components, The joint committee from HSU and ASNSW has been desolved by the service with no further consultation or rollout information available. There appears to be no funding available to provide the new uniform to all officers including Patient transport, air ambulance and co-ord staff as well as the remainder of road staff. **2004-awaiting outcome**
- **c) (Greg Rochford, Mike Willis)** The fatigue issue has been ongoing for a long time. The service recently released a document in response to increasing fatigue issues stating it is an individual issue and not a collective issue. It has not contained any line of responsibility as to the managing of fatigue or maximum work guide lines. This area in consultation with HSU provided a fatigue policy to the service in 1997. It has since gone missing with no one taking ownership. We have officers routinely working up to 20 hours a day without rest with no support from the co-ordination centre to reduce fatigue. **1997- awaiting outcome**
- **d) (Greg Rochford, Mike Willis, Manager assets)** The service has no plan to address increasing workloads, expanding areas and response times. They have no formula to engage in consultation with developers to provide emergency services to a new area. They have moved to a Multi function Centre at a number of locations in the country including this area. They have allowed the building of two centres without the correct relief quarters as agreed within the new ambulance station guidelines. We have officers staying at a caravan park at because the service did not provide self contained cooking facilities for relief officers.
- **(Greg Rochford, Mike Willis, John Flynn)** Over 4 years the service was provided with staffing enhancements gained through HSU. As part of the enhancements there was funding provided (\$4.3 million) to provide ambulance enhancement for the extra staff. We have not received 1 extra Ambulance. The service has not delivered on this and has used the money to gain administration vehicles. To the end of the rollout we were again required to take industrial action as Mike Willis stated there was no funding available for further staff. we are still awaiting our final enhancement at Wagga station. **2004 - awaiting enhancements**

Bulling and Harassment

- The service continues to subject officers to frivolous complaints and investigations. We are currently awaiting the outcome of 2 investigations of over 12 months duration, 2 investigations over 3 months duration and 1 investigation has been suspended after the threat to ambulance officers abiding by a joint agreement in relation to overtime uses and operational requirements was reported to the union. The investigations have led to stress leave being taken and family hardships. We have highlighted to to the service that they are not following their own procedures and guidelines agreed to by the PSCU unit.

There are a number of other issues that the service has proved that they are incapable of providing support and guidance to improve the service and the officers conditions. To name a few are Station conditions (look at Rozelle), Staffing levels, rural incentive packages, and the previously mentions and the consequence of most of the above fatigue. It is clear that new officers are not prepared to accept the current conditions within the service. We have again be voted most trusted profession yet moral is at an all time low in my opinion directly attributed to the confusion, and lack of direction and decision making coming from our senior managers.

Ambulance Officer