

Submission
No 188

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

Name: Suppressed

Date received: 3/07/2008

Partially Confidential

3 July 2008

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000
Fax: (02) 9230 3416

Attention: The Director,

Submission to the management and operations of the Ambulance Service of NSW Inquiry

I hereby submit the following information to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry regarding my lengthy grievance with and subsequent intimidation by the current management of the Ambulance Service of NSW.

Please note the issues extended over some 6 years therefore the following information has been placed in summarised, chronological order. Further evidentiary documentation is available if required.

I request that the following details remain confidential at this stage, however I am happy to discuss this further following your review. Awaiting in anticipation of your reply.

Sincerely,

Submission to the NSW Parliament:

Management and Operations of the Ambulance Service of NSW (Inquiry)

CHRONOLOGY

- a) I, _____, commenced as a Paramedic with the Ambulance Service of NSW on 29 January 1990. During my much-loved career I had been involved in a great many emotionally and physically tough and sensitive situations. I had endured client physical assault, verbal abuse and been exposed to number of life threatening circumstances in order to serve my community well.
- b) In the first few years following my entry to the Ambulance Service of NSW I completed all the basic Ambulance training including an on-road supervised component. In 1992 I had completed Ambulance training up to Level 3 which was the required standard.
- c) In 1993 on a personal quest for excellence with clinical care, I successfully attained Certificate Cardio-Pulmonary Technology and a Certificate of Train the Trainer. I trained a number of probationary Ambulance Officers and provided remedial training for various other Ambulance Officers to assist them to attain the standard Level 3.
- d) I held an exemplary service record reflected in 1994 when I was awarded a Superintendents Commendation for duty above and beyond normal in a highly testing situation involving cyanide poison. I have also been awarded the National Medal for my excellent and lengthy service to the community in addition to receiving numerous letter of gratitude from my patients. In 1995 I also attained a Diploma Health Science (Pre-Hospital Care) through Charles Sturt University.
- e) In 1997 I was given the opportunity to act in higher duties as a Station Officer for Penrith station which employed around 40 Paramedic Level 5 and Levels 1 through 4 Ambulance Officers plus I also spent some months acting as a Station Manager at the Tregear station. I was thanked and commended for my excellent work by the Western Sydney Ambulance Service Area Office.
- f) It was a requirement to apply for further Ambulance clinical levels from Level 4 up to Level 5, although for a few years running, courses were not held due to budget constraints. Then in 1997 I was accepted into the Paramedic Level 5 Ambulance Officer training which entailed 2 months of face to

face training at the Ambulance Education Centre, 3 months in a hospital theatre and another month of supervised on-road training.

- g) In 1998 I graduated as a Paramedic Level 5 Ambulance Officer and was posted to Colyton station where I remained. In 1998 I also attained a Bachelor Health Science from Charles Sturt University and a Certificate of Ambulance Studies through TAFE. As a Paramedic Ambulance Officer and having lengthy service prior to my graduation, I was paid at the maximum rate, earning \$65,000 per annum.
- h) In 2000 I spent some months acting in higher duties as a Station Manager at Colyton station and again was commended and thanked for my efforts by the Sydney West Area Office of the Ambulance Service of NSW
- i) On 10 June 2000, I attended an emergency case as a Paramedic in the suburb of St Marys, Sydney. Upon arrival I found a 34 year old female, well known and frequently transported by the Ambulance Service, who is approximately 120kg, a known cerebral palsy patient, who stated she was suffering nausea and possibly in mild pain requiring transport. In the course of transferring the patient to the stretcher, the female moving against my advice, and I injured my lumber spine while reaching forward to save this frequent patient from unexpectedly falling. I then transported this patient to Nepean hospital.
- j) In my many years as a Paramedic I was always diligent with utilising the necessary resources to ensure no injury occurred to either myself or my working partner. On the case at St Marys there was certainly no carelessness on my part as the patient leaned over too far against my advice during what was normally a routine move.
- k) After seeking medical advice soon after I was informed my injury which entailed herniation (protrusion and nerve compression) of two spinal discs (L4-L5-S1). I was placed on workers compensation for 4 weeks during which time I underwent intensive physiotherapy.
- l) In July 2000 I returned to work as third officer on the ambulance, (due to weight restrictions) for approximately 3 months. My medical officer then upgraded me to working reduced hours (working 3 of my normal 4 shifts per week) as second officer on the ambulance, (with no weight restrictions) which I continued for another 4 months.

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- m) In February 2001 I had pre-scheduled annual leave which I took. During that time the pain my lower back did not improve significantly, therefore on my return from leave I voluntarily sought work in full time office duties in the recruitment division of the Ambulance Service of NSW (Rozelle Head Office) which was anticipated as a temporary measure to allow some time for my back to heal, then I intended to return as a Paramedic fulfilling on-road duties at Colyton full time.
- n) In August 2001 was also presented an opportunity by the Ambulance Service rehabilitation coordinator to a seconded (full time) position as a Project Officer for a time with the Finance and Data Services division at Rozelle. In this position I could still maintain my Paramedic status and wages [as another colleague of mine did in another Project Officer position] therefore I accepted it to give myself time to heal. The type of work I performed in the Project Officer role could not have been performed effectively without the clinical Paramedic knowledge and experience that I possessed which meant it was at least somewhat commensurate with my skills and experience.
- o) The _____ of that division was _____ and my direct supervisor, _____ seemed so impressed initially with my performance that a permanent position description was formulated and provided to me for review and the wages as discussed in December 2001 would commence at Health Manager 1 status but this was postponed until the near year. In 2001 I attained a portion of a Graduate Diploma of General Management.
- p) On 2 January 2002 my injury inexplicably became exacerbated causing increased pain. Disc protrusion was found by medical staff at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital to be 50% more than the original injury. Following absolute disablement and agony in March 2002 I underwent my first surgery entailing a partial laminectomy/discectomy to lumbar disc between lumbar vertebrae 5 to sacral vertebrae 1 by Orthopedic surgeon, Dr John Stephens.
- q) I gradually returned to work in April 2002 to the Project Officer position whilst still maintaining my Paramedic status and wages. The decision to make me permanent in that role was never again raised by _____ and I continued my duties in the Project Officer position whilst still maintain my Paramedic Ambulance Officer status and wages working at least 30 hours per week.
- r) Whilst continuing in the Project Officer role (full time) and following my first surgery I still endured much pain. As a result I consulted with a number of specialists and then participated in intensive physiotherapy; commenced hydrotherapy; began an exercise program; took neural medication; all of
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which provided me with little relief. I even consulted with a pain management specialist medical officer Dr J. Ditton. As a result I had two cortisone injections (via epidural needles into the spine) which resulted in nil effect in September 2002. I continued working in the Project Officer position throughout this treatment although performing 6 hours work a day due to pain. I even took work home as it was easier for me to manage my pain in a more comfortable environment and I wanted to ensure I achieved work projects effectively and efficiently.

- s) On 19 March 2003 I met with _____ and _____ and _____ stated that the Ambulance Service would be reviewing my situation asserting that the duties of the Project Officer position needed someone full time and I was still only working 6 hours per day. I informed _____ that I was due to undergo a review by a Neurosurgeon who was using new technology with excellent results for full recovery of back injured patients. This good news made no difference to _____ who stated 'we can't wait _____'.
- t) On 16 May 2003, I met with _____ and a Rehabilitation Provider _____ when I was informed by _____ my position as Project Officer required a full time employee, and this position will no longer be available to me as I was unable increase my hours or return to full time work. This is despite my informing the _____ and _____ that I was now due to undergo proven successful disc replacement surgery in the next few months under Neurologist, Dr Kevan Seex which was new that was completely overlooked. _____ did not attempt to establish my medical records and determine the expected prognosis to verify that I was soon to recover. _____ instead proceeded to inform me that my Paramedic status would be removed and stated the only position available was a Data Entry position at a full time wage of approximately \$33,000 per annum (full time wage). _____ gave me a four week deadline to decide to accept this position, my alternative was unemployment.
- u) At that meeting on 16 May 2003 to my utmost surprise, _____ began making dispersions about my performance level. When I enquired her about what area of my performance was in question, she was unable to provide me with an answer. I had received no information about any performance issues previously either in writing or verbally and I requested that if there were issues identified for _____ to put these in writing and forward the correspondence to me. Nil correspondence was ever forwarded or received. There has never been a question surrounding my performance in fact over my many years I have received reports and references that indicate my performance was excellent.

Additionally, until I required time off to attend medical treatment [redacted] created a position description and was discussing my taking up the seconded Project Officer position permanently. When I mentioned that I was to undergo proven successful surgery and it was only a matter of a short time before I could 'go back on the road' as a Paramedic, [redacted] made the statement 'but you can't be a Paramedic again [redacted]', without any advice from my General Practitioner and Neurologist.

- v) On 27 May 2003 after a great deal of distress, I commenced a grievance procedure in response to the stated intention of [redacted] to remove my Paramedic status and place me in the Data Entry position by writing to Greg Rochford the Chief Executive Officer of the Ambulance Service of NSW requesting a review of my situation. I appealed to Greg Rochford that the Data Entry position was lowly paid and was not commensurate with my skills and experience plus I explained that I was to undergo proven successful surgery shortly which would allow me to go back to on-road Paramedic duties within a reasonable time frame. I continued to work diligently in the Project Officer position in the meantime.
- w) In May 2003, in desperation, and as my grievance was concerning Ambulance Service of NSW management, to gain some fair hearing, I did forward details to the following MPs: Member for Port Jackson MP Ms Sandra Nori; State Premier MP Mr Robert Carr; Opposition State Premier MP Mr John Brogden; Minister for Health Mr Morris Iemma; and the Shadow Health Minister among others for their advice regarding my situation. The end result of replies from these Ministers, following contact with Greg Rochford, suggested that as I had accepted the position of Compliance Officer, the situation was resolved.
- x) On 19 June 2003 I contacted my Solicitor at Mc Clellands workers compensation lawyers who advised me regarding the term 'suitable duties' however could not assist regarding the forced change as this was an industrial issue. I contacted the Health and Research Employees Association [redacted] who stated the union would assist where required and I organised for [redacted] to attend a meeting I requested with Greg Rochford which she agreed.
- y) On 20 June 2003, following my writing to various Minister of Politics, I was finally given the opportunity to meet with Greg Rochford. At that time [redacted] was unavailable therefore I attended alone. I conveyed my concerns personally to Greg Rochford who assured me the Ambulance Service of NSW would utilise the Human Resources unit to conduct a review of my circumstances. Greg Rochford enquired regarding my intentions by writing to various Ministers of Politics. I informed Greg Rochford that I had written to the Ministers to gain their assistance as I had a grievance with

upper management with no higher position to consult for a resolution. Greg Rochford stated to the effect of 'I would like to remind you that you are an employee of the Service and as such you are not entitled to go outside the Service with your grievance.'

- z) I continued working in the Project Officer role in the meantime. I wrote numerous letters to Ministers of Politics including the NSW Health Minister seeking assistance with my grievance; as my issue concerned the upper management of the Ambulance Service of NSW, there was little other option to gain assistance.
- aa) On 3 July 2003 I met again with Greg Rochford with a representative from the Health and Research Employees Association. Greg Rochford stated that the Service was offering a Compliance Officer, Health Care Records position. No time limits for a decision on accepting this position were mentioned nor was there anything provided to me in writing about any time limits or my rights and responsibilities in terms of the grievance I had raised. I questioned Greg Rochford regarding the reason I was forced to leave the seconded Project Officer position [and my Paramedic status] and Greg Rochford indicated that it was determined the positions functions were vital and that the Service required a full time employee to fully satisfy the purpose of the position. Although nothing was ever provided in writing regarding those alleged reasons. Greg Rochford simply informed me there were absolutely no other positions available other than the Compliance Officer position. Interestingly, a colleague of mine obtained a Clinical Project Officer position 1 month later. I also spoke about the fact I was owed Long Service Leave (97.5 days) and that if I was to take that in a different position that this would financially disadvantage me by \$1500. Greg Rochford informed me that according to legislation employees are paid at their current rate of pay and as a result I would be paid at the different rate in the new position. I requested that a review be conducted of the low wages of the Compliance Officer position and quoted comparable Compliance Officer rates of pay, advertised at the time in the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper. Greg Rochford agreed to conduct such a review.
- bb) On 4 July 2003, as a result of a supposed 'review' of my employment, I met with _____ regarding a new offer of a position of Compliance Officer - Patient Health Care Records in the administration division of 4 hours per day, 5 days per week. I was provided a position description and I was informed the proposed yearly wage would be \$42,500 if I was to work full time in such position, however the offer that Greg Rochford, _____ and _____ had formulated was for 20 hours per week ONLY which was worth around \$21,000 per annum. At this meeting _____ stated 'the initial offer of the Data Entry operator was a good one' and that I should 'feel lucky' to get the offer of

the Compliance Officer position. I expressed my sincere concern at the low wages and the fact the Compliance Officer position was still not commensurate with my level of skill and experience. I was not at any time, provided with information concerning my rights or responsibilities regarding my grievance instead receiving LACHES.

- cc) On 14 July 2003 following my writing more letters to Ministers of Politics about the still poor wages of the Compliance Officer position and the unfairness of the removing my Paramedic Ambulance status, Greg Rochford directed the then _____ to conduct a review of the projected wages for the Compliance Officer position. The outcome of that review deemed the pay suitable for the position description.
- dd) On 22 and 23 July 2003 again I met with _____ and _____ who both stated a review had been conducted and the Compliance position wages were deemed satisfactory and would remain as offered. As I felt the situation was still unsatisfactory I requested a further review of the wages via an independent party, in keeping with Service policies and procedures. I received intense opposition from _____ who stated also that my Long Service Leave could not be granted as I was on workers compensation. I was also instructed that a pay out of same was not possible and as a result I stood to lose a further \$1,500 if I accepted the new Compliance Officer position.
- ee) On 24 July 2003 I met with _____ to discuss the fact that _____ had declined to grant my Long Service Leave and as such going into the Compliance Officer position with a lower rate of pay I stood to lose \$1500 which would cause me even more financial hardship. _____ simply restated what Greg Rochford had stated that the legislation is that the rate of pay would be paid at the current rate of the position a person is working in when the leave was approved.
- ff) On 25 July 2003 I contacted the Chamber Magistrate at the Balmain Local Court, to obtain advice regarding the refusal of the Ambulance Service management to grant my Long Service Leave. I was informed that I was entitled to take that leave, yet _____ refused to approve of my leave application. The Chamber Magistrate forwarded the forms to claim this from the Ambulance Service via the court and I then communicated to _____ that I intended to submit such an application.
- gg) As the Compliance Officer position, was still below my wage as a Paramedic Ambulance Officer and still not commensurate with my level of skills and experience plus the Service continued to refuse to grant me my Long Service Leave and refused to pay a lump sum at the Paramedic Ambulance Officer

rate of pay, I continued my grievance. I wrote further correspondence to Minister of Politics and had several further meetings with _____ and _____, all to no avail.

- hh) On 28 July 2003 I met with _____ and _____ again regarding my employment situation. I requested that an independent review be conducted as the current situation was still unsatisfactory. I was informed by _____ that I could apply to the Chief Executive Officer Greg Rochford when _____ stated 'but that may place you in a worse situation anyway, because you might find that you get a position with even less pay than even the Data Entry position we first offered you'. _____ informed me that an independent review was now not possible in any case stating 'there was no more time for negotiations' asserting that a statutory 28 day time period was in place for negotiations and this period was to expire THAT DAY and I had to either ACCEPT the position that SAME DAY or face unemployment. _____ also informed me that if I accepted the Compliance Officer position then I could have my Long Service Leave as "time off only" but no lump sum payouts. Alternatively I could transfer the leave to the Compliance Officer position. I expressed my concern with this as if I took it at the Compliance Officer rate and not the Paramedic Ambulance Officer rate of payment I stood to lose \$1500 and I was already financially disadvantaged having a reduction in wages as a result of injury and then being forced into the Compliance Officer position at a lower wage. _____ added that this was the offer and 'no negotiations will be entered into by the Service regarding any portion of the offer after your acceptance which needs to be in writing'.
- ii) I felt extremely distressed and anxious following their ultimatum and the harrying manner in which _____ was communicating. I informed _____ and _____ I felt distressed and was unable to answer at that moment and I left without responding in writing, to attend my General Practitioner. I was provided with a certificate for sick leave and attended counseling to assist me.
- jj) Later that day and subsequent to much taunting and pressure from these meetings, I felt pressured into accepting the position of Compliance Officer to ensure I had some sort of income. I therefore proceeded to e-mail my acceptance of the position to both _____ and _____, telephoning the next day to ensure receipt of same, which was confirmed. I felt pressured into deciding to take the Compliance Officer (administration) position as I wanted to avoid unemployment and no income. Already suffering [diagnosed] depression as a result of the situation and having the ultimatums from _____ weighing heavy on my mind, I felt great duress when signing the written letter of acceptance. Once ousted from my Paramedic Ambulance Officer status, I would have to apply again as

any member of the public must do and start at the bottom to become an Ambulance Officer again, but I would be unemployed if I did not accept the position.

- kk) On the other hand that meant that my long service leave would be granted at the [basic] Paramedic wage rate [avoiding losing the difference estimated at around \$1500] and would take effect immediately for a period of 12 weeks, assisting me to avoid further stress, anxiety and depression. The relief of removing myself out from the constant laconic attitude from _____ influenced my decision greatly as the leave would commence from the 4 August 2003 until 7 November 2003.
- ll) On 5 August 2003, one week after going on Long Service Leave, I received correspondence from the Ambulance Service's insurance company GIO/TMF stating that my workers compensation payments would cease as the _____ [following consultation with _____ and Greg Rochford] informed GIO/TMF I had not accepted the offer of the Compliance Officer position. The correspondence explained that as such my payments would be diminished to \$70 per fortnight and effectively, this meant I was unemployed.
- mm) On 6 August 2003, following further correspondence over the next few weeks to the Ambulance Service of NSW from my solicitor and to Ministers of Politics, Greg Rochford then overturned the original advice by the Ambulance Service (via _____ who is now retired) to the Service insurer GIO/TMF that I had not accepted an offer of employment as compliance officer. I pointed out in fact, I had confirmed twice verbally with _____ office, sent two emails carbon copying these to Greg Rochford and forwarded written and signed correspondence by post as requested to ensure I remained employed.
- nn) On 15 August 2003 I received correspondence from the Ambulance Service of NSW insurer GIO/TMF [at the Service's instruction] directing me to attend a psychiatrist for an assessment and I attended this appointment.
- oo) On 27 August 2003 I received correspondence from Greg Rochford. It is notable that not only did the Ambulance Service of NSW not forward any official correspondence, outlining the specific reasons behind my forced employment change from a Paramedic Ambulance Officer [in a seconded Project Officer role] to a Compliance Officer they also omitted to issue a formal government position number for the Compliance Officer position in their correspondence confirming that I had accepted the Compliance position.

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- pp) On 27 August 2003 I also attended an independent medical specialist for an assessment of my physical disability and according to legislative guidelines I was rated at 13% whole person injury. As a result I did not qualify for any further compensation for my workplace injury, pain and suffering as the legislative threshold is set at 15% which meant I was not entitled to any compensation.
- qq) On 10 November 2003, when I was due to commence in the Compliance Officer position, my Neurologist required me to attend Westmead Private Hospital to undergo an exploratory surgical procedure. This was an extremely painful (third) procedure called discography, which entails an exploratory fine needle that is inserted into the spinal cord. The purpose of which was to determine the exact pain loci so the neurologist is sure that disc removal is the appropriate type of treatment to assist me to recover. Side effects could follow such a procedure therefore my Neurologist advised me to lay flat for three weeks or incur possible cerebral/neural complications. I then returned to work on 1 December 2003 and reluctantly, into the Compliance Officer role, to avoid even further financial hardship.
- rr) On 5 January 2004 I underwent a disc arthroplasty, which involved complete removal of my tenuously thin L5-S1 spinal disc with a total disc replacement to a metal/plastic type artificial disc inserted into my lumbar spine. My Neurologist informed me that he expected me to return to my previous Paramedic Ambulance Officer position by 12 months post surgery. This was communicated very clearly in Medical Reports to Greg Rochford and the Risk Management unit of the Ambulance Service of NSW.
- ss) On 8 March 2004 I returned to work in the Compliance Officer role, and I attended intense physiotherapy twice to three times weekly working very hard walking each day in order to recover quickly.
- tt) On 5 August 2004 I received correspondence from the Ambulance Service that stated I was due for my National Medal awarded to those officers that have contributed 15 years of exemplary service to the community. I actually was entitled to this award in early 2004.
- uu) In June 2004 I commenced a gym program attending twice weekly, discontinuing physiotherapy and I recovered within the prescribed period stated by my Neurologist whilst still continuing to work in the Compliance Officer position and continuing to write to Ministers of Politics for assistance with my unresolved grievance with the conduct and decisions in relation to my employment in the Ambulance Service of NSW. I also commenced a TAFE Certificate IV course in Investigative Services at my own expense to broaden my skills.
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- vv) On 25 June 2004 I applied for an investigation position with the Professional Standards and Conduct unit of the Ambulance Service of NSW. I was later informed I was not successful in obtaining this position.
- ww) I continued in the Compliance Officer role however at every avenue of opportunity for contribution of ideas or direction I was blocked by _____, even so far as when I continuously applied to increase my part time hours to full time.
- xx) On 15 September 2004 I was directed by the GIO/TMF to attend appointments with a psychologist at the pain management clinic at Cairperdown and I attended for the required approximate 4 week period and the psychologist stated that I was doing all I could to recover and could assist me no further.
- yy) On 3 February 2005 I made application to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission claiming discrimination. The matter went to the first mention and then a court hearing date was made. As I need legal representation, could not afford my own and legal aid stated they did not have anyone available I could not proceed and withdrew from that process.
- zz) On 17 March 2005 I sought the assistance of the NSW Industrial Relations Commission and attended the commission following my application that the Ambulance Service of NSW, Mr Rochford and _____ had dismissed me from my Paramedic position unfairly, unjustly and harshly. The magistrate rejected this claim and stated that I could have it heard as an industrial matter [IRC05/925 JCF CRS].
- aaa) When I approached my union the Health Services Australia to represent me in an industrial matter before the Industrial Relations Commission they were protracted in their manner regarding the matter and therefore I did not pursue it any further [See transcription 17/03/05].
- bbb) On 25 April 2005 I attended the Industrial Relations Commission again for a further hearing and Justice O'Neill on that occasion created an agreement with the Ambulance Service and myself that if I was to recover within 2 years that I would be entitled to reinstatement as a Paramedic and Justice O'Neill residing over the matter stated '... and you would not have to compete for that' referring to the fact I could simply notify the Ambulance Service when I had fully recovered and I would be reinstated without having to reapply as any member of the public would have to do[See transcription 25/04/05].
- ccc) Even at this time after more than 12 months the position of Project Officer had not been filled with any employee, full or part time. It is also of interest to note that the stated 'vital' position duties stated needed a full time person to do, that I was undertaking previously as the Paramedic
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Project Officer, were broken up and dispersed into other employee positions anyway in January 2004, one of which is became portion of my duties in the Compliance Officer role.

ddd) In August 2005 I was informed by a colleague they had gained a position as a Hospital Liaison Officer utilising their Paramedic skills and experience, despite them having a very painful arm post workplace injury. I then wrote to Mr Rochford requesting such a position for myself but this was never offered.

eee) On 15 August 2005 I finally was presented with my National Medal for 15 years exemplary service to the community from Michael Willis at the Ambulance Service of NSW.

fff) On 29 August 2005 I met with Greg Rochford to discuss my returning as a Paramedic Ambulance Officer. At this meeting Greg Rochford stated I would be 'welcome back' providing I was fit for duties as the Service 'has an obligation' to ensure its employees are not injured further by being unfit for duty. Greg Rochford had brought in the supposed assistance of
at the Ambulance Service of NSW who took minutes at this meeting, which also, contained many erroneous inclusions that had to be later corrected.

ggg) On 20 October 2005 I faxed a letter of notification to the Ambulance Service of NSW Chief Executive Officer Greg Rochford that I had recovered, having a clear physical Functional Assessment from Workable Solutions Pty Ltd and I requested a reinstatement to my previous substantive position as a Paramedic [Level 5] Ambulance Officer. This correspondence was completely ignored and therefore I wrote further letters to Ministers of Politics for assistance.

hhh) On 1 September 2005 I attended a rigorous physical assessment by a GIO/TMF approved physiotherapist company called Workable Solutions Pty Ltd. The Functional Assessment as it is termed indicated I was in the 90th percentile [compared to the general community] for fitness; I had lifted various heavy weights with ease. The report was forwarded to the Ambulance Service of NSW Risk management unit and I liaised with my General Practitioner Dr Heather Stewart regarding my return to work as a Paramedic Ambulance Officer. Dr Stewart stated that when the Ambulance Service advised of the position I would return to work into then Dr Stewart would of course write a clearance certificate. Dr Stewart was reluctant to make any change until notified of an available position as it may affect my current employment [like previously in 2003] and cause further financial stress.

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- iii) On 26 September 2005 I was finally invited and attended a meeting with Greg Rochford and I had my father _____ and brother _____ present as witnesses and support persons. During this meeting Greg Rochford displayed complete disregard for the positive physical assessment from Workable Solutions Pty Ltd. Greg Rochford at one stage stated 'but you can't be a Paramedic again despite my handing Greg Rochford the results page of that physical assessment.
- jjj) By this time in 2005 my father, out of frustration at the injustices dealt to me had also commenced writing to Minister of Politics and to Greg Rochford. In several of Greg Rochford's replies to the Health Minister and others Greg Rochford made various arrogations about the particulars of my injury among others. One such false statement to the Minister for Health indicated that my injury was caused outside of work. This is among numerous erroneous inclusions in Greg Rochford's correspondence that my father refuted [with my assistance] in return correspondence.
- kkk) In September 2005 I met with _____ and _____ regarding my grievance. _____ during that meeting stated 'you need to be a Paramedic Ambulance Officer to work as a Hospital Liaison Officer' and 'you can't return to on-road duties as a Paramedic if you have any sort of pain.' This is despite my informing _____ of the colleague who is in pain and performing those duties. As I was ousted from my Paramedic ambulance Officer status I was in a position where I would have to attain reinstatement to that status again before I could have an opportunity of becoming a Hospital Liaison Officer [working at a hospital emergency department to expedite ambulance patients through to hospital beds - no lifting involved but clinical knowledge and skills required].
- lll) On 22 November 2005 due to continually being dealt willful, punitive conduct by the Ambulance Service of NSW obviously having no further prospects of promotion or reinstatement [at that stage] I resigned from the Compliance Officer position. I had previously attended a short course to gain qualifications and a license to perform security work and as a result I managed to obtain work at a private security company, full time.
- mmm) Once an ambitious person studying continuously, I battled to fund any professional development to remove myself from the situation. I enquired about funding with GIO/TMF but they stated that only courses directly related to my employment position [Compliance Officer] will be funded and in any case, funding has reached a maximum after completing 1 Project Management Course (5 days), and an Introductory Computing Course (5 days).
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- nnn) On 28 November 2005 following my request for a Functional Assessment I received written advice via email from . written by a Dr Wong at Health services Australia. Dr Wong stated that 'it was pointless offering her a pre-employment medical assessment at this stage', referring to my work cover certificate that was not yet the final certificate. Dr Stewart certified me fit to have the assessment form workable Solutions Pty Ltd and certainly had no issue in me attending a further Functional Assessment to satisfy the Ambulance Service of NSW I was fit for pre-injury duties.
- ooo) Then in mid 2006 whilst I was working in the Security industry the Ambulance Service invited me to attend a further physical assessment by Health Services Australia where I endured more than the usual assessment for work, moving and lifting up to 40-50 kilograms to prove that I had fully recovered from my workplace injury.
- ppp) On 16 October 2006 the Ambulance Service of NSW forwarded advice that I could return to attend training as a probationary Ambulance Officer and then following a series of training, passing exams and supervision I may have the opportunity to return to my previous substantive position as a Paramedic. The issue was that I was given 13 days notice to attend the first day of this training. I was required to provide 4 weeks notice in my then employment position of Security Supervisor and I communicated this to Greg Rochford.
- qqq) Then following an extension given to the training start time [after 6 years of negotiating] Mr Rochford offered for me to commence training on 19 January 2007.
- rrr) I declined this offer, considering it very unwise to accept, as upon further contemplation of the issues and my treatment by the Service over the preceding 6 years I considered the Service management would attempt retribution or 'payback' or present obstacles [as past experiences had proven] for me as a result of the action I took in notifying particularly the Health Minister and others about my circumstances and issues with Mr Rochford, . In addition the policy of the Ambulance Service of NSW censors staff from speaking about issues they have with management which limits my obtaining assistance, if required, for any further bullying or harassment by those individuals.

IN CONCLUSION

Willing and proud, I joined the Ambulance Service of NSW to serve my community and I fulfilled my functions with the utmost diligence in my duty of care to all, evident in my excellent reputation and my award of commendation for duty above and beyond. It is beyond belief, that an employee who is injured in the line of duty, whilst caring for a member of the community the Ambulance Service holds itself out as protecting, must not only endure the pain and suffering of that injury, but also the continuous, bullying conduct of management; manipulating, intimidating, oppressing and demoralizing employees perhaps until they are in such a diminutive position they quietly leave.

I received stand over attitudes from a number of key managers including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Greg Rochford, to facilitate my acceptance of the Compliance Officer role, instead of support in lieu of my next surgery [total disc replacement]. The intimidation continued even when I had completed a rigorous, independent, physical assessment funded by the Service's insurance company GIO and handed this personally to the CEO Mr Rochford, he stated 'but you can never become a Paramedic

During my time of need, employed with the Ambulance Service of NSW, I appealed for the duty of care owed to me in return for my conscientiousness over many years. I simply requested some time to completely recover [which was imminent according to my specialist] and return to the Paramedic work I of which I was highly skilled and experienced and dearly loved. Justice, fairness help, honesty, respect, empathy, duty of care, are the things I expected to receive from such as level of management, but that did not happen.

I make this submission with the intention to advise NSW Parliament of my experience with the conduct of the current management of the Ambulance Service of NSW so that others avoid having to endure such undeserved injustice. Obviously over the lengthy period of time it is impossible to list every date, time, statement and letter however I have attempted to provide an overall summary in chronological order. Details are available on request. I wish to thank the NSW Parliament for inviting this much needed inquiry.