

**INQUIRY INTO REVIEW OF THE EXERCISE OF THE
FUNCTIONS OF THE WORKCOVER AUTHORITY**

Name: Mr Ron Hammonds

Date received: 8/05/2014

Partially Confidential



Email:

7th May, 2014

The Chairman,
NSW Legislative Council,
Standing Committee on Law and Justice,
Parliament House,
Macquarie Street,
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you to express my concern about the curtailment of entitlements to workers who have been injured in the workplace over the past several years.

In this regard I am adding my support to the testimony given by the Hearing Care Industry Association on 21st March, 2014, to your organization for the enquiry into the Review of the Exercise of the Functions of the WorkCover Authority.

I have sustained a considerable hearing loss of 64.6% in the left ear and 66.8% in the right ear, as can be confirmed by of Connect Hearing at Fivedock NSW.

My hearing problem was first recognized in 1972 when I was working as a Carpenter and Joiner at Lidcombe State Hospital from 13th February, 1962, to 13th January, 1989, a total of 27 years. During that time I was Union Rep for the Building Workers' Industrial Union, and despite my regular requests to management for hearing protection against their excessively noisy machinery, it was some time before they supplied us with earmuffs.

Following my employment at Lidcombe Hospital, I worked for TRW Steering & Suspension Pty. Ltd. at Marrickville, also as Carpenter and Joiner, from 16th January, 1989 to 22nd December, 1994. TRW's insurance company is GIO.

The CFMEU took over from the BWIU in the 1980's, and I was supplied with hearing aids in 1994. Hearing loss at that stage was 25.64% and 23.64%. Turner Freeman and Taylor & Scott handled progressive legal matters, tests and hearing aid updates from then on.

Whitelaw McDonald, solicitors located at Kotara NSW, handled my case during 2009, involving Court and WorkCover.

I have been enjoying my retirement since December 1994, and Connect Hearing (previously known as Digital Hearing Aids, Affordable Hearing Aids, and Platinum Earcare) have been looking after my hearing health ever since.

However, for the past 20 years or so, I have been unable to use the telephone, and have had to rely on my wife to relay messages. I cannot make out conversations at all on the telephone, even wearing hearing aids. I rely heavily on my hearing aids to understand what is said on television, and public meetings or hearings are less than informative as once again I need to have my wife tell me what was said later on.

As you can see from paragraph 3 of this letter, my advanced hearing loss is quite severe, and with replacement aids being so expensive, not only at current rates, but also at escalating rates in future, my value of life will be seriously compromised.

I therefore ask that your Committee give further deliberation on this matter so as to allow all those who have had the misfortune to injure themselves as a result of their employment to continue to experience government assistance in the future.

With all best wishes,

Yours faithfully,

R. D. HAMMONDS