

Submission
No 430

**INQUIRY INTO THE PRIVATISATION OF PRISONS AND
PRISON-RELATED SERVICES**

Name: Mr David Grills

Date received: 22/02/2009

General Standing Committee

I have been employed by the Corrective Services since 1991. During that time I have seen many changes forced upon us some good some bad. For many years now the department has used the specter of Privatisation as a whip to keep the Officers in line. This has been a constant strategy of the department along with the usual bullying, harassment and intimidation that is used. The latest example of this can be seen by reading the last correspondence sent to the staff at Parklea Correctional Centre by Commissioner Ron Woodham, the same Commissioner who has publicly stated that Prison Officers are "Rorting the Overtime" because we are greedy and drive top of the line four wheel drives. Commissioner Woodham has used the media to spread his own style of propaganda content in the knowledge that any form of reply will be blocked by the media, this of course fly's in the face of the claim by the Department of Corrective Services that they are transparent in all dealings.

By the departments own admission they are looking at a saving of four (4) million dollars a year over a (4) year period by privatising Parklea and Cessnock, with a budget blow out of \$40 million I fail to see how this will have any impact on the current situation. A more promising outcome may be expected if there was no privatisation but a general reduction in cost across the entire department, spread the pain so to speak. By publicly blaming the Prison Officers for the \$40 million "Overtime" blow out it clearly shows the contempt Commissioner Woodham has towards Prison Officers. I would expect a person in his position to show true Leadership during these trying times and sit down with the staff and discuss how savings could be achieved; instead Commissioner Woodham has refused to discuss other viable options insisting the only option is privatize Parklea and Cessnock thereby shifting the blame onto Prison Officers.

Here is a list of questions that I feel need to be asked and answered in full.

1/ Will the Commissioner allow an independent audit of the department including his own Office?

2/ Will the Commissioner publicly state his own salary and the cost he personally incurs?

3/ Will the Commissioner provide an unbiased break down of the total expenditure of each separate centre and unit along with a break down of cost per head?

4/ Will the Commissioner accept responsibility for the budget blow out and if not why not?

5/ Have steps been taken by Commissioner Woodham taken to reduce expenditure within the Department including his own Office?

6/ Why has Commissioner Woodham allowed the ranks of staff to swell in Head Office while at the same time pushing to reduce the number of Officers within Correctional Centres.?

7/ Since Ron Woodham has become Commissioner why has there been an increase in the number of Assistant Commissioner's.

8/ Why were Parklea and Cessnock singled out for privatization?

9/ Why wasn't staff afforded the opportunity to put forward their ideas and strategies for reducing the overall cost?

10/ Why has Commissioner Woodham blamed the Prison officers for his own Fiscal mismanagement and his failure to act sooner to avoid this situation?

11/ Why has Commissioner Woodham acted secretly in regards to the whole Privatization process.

12/ Why didn't Commissioner Woodham personally visit the staff at Parklea and Cessnock and advise them of the Departments intention to place both Centres with a private contractor?

I thank the Standing Committee for the opportunity to ask my questions.