

INQUIRY INTO EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCIES

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 27 June 2017

Partially
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 4 – LEGAL AFFAIRS

Submitted by:

Dear Committee members,

I write to your committee in the hope that my experiences will provide you with examples of what was once common practice amongst members of the NSW Police Force, and serve as a reminder of where we once were...and where we now need to ensure we are not, today.

In 19 , I was a 16 year old NSW Police Cadet (No:) attached to the Breath Analysis Section (BAS) in . I alternated week-about from Police Academy to BAS for a period of 6 months. One morning, whilst performing my duties at the BAS the following occurred:

I was attacked by approximately 6 police officers and handcuffed to the steel bars which formed part of the hallway structure within the centre thoroughfare. I was forced onto the floor facing upwards. Whilst I was being stripped of my clothing it became apparent that I was about to experience “black-balling” whereby black boot polish was applied to the genitals.

As my pants were being removed I managed to free one leg...lashing out I struck one of the Senior Constables () in the knee, causing him to fall to the ground screaming in pain. It was apparent that the blow had fractured the police officer’s knee.

My action was founded in terror, not only from the embarrassment of being stripped naked by 6 police officers, but the trauma of the assault, handcuffing and wrestling to the ground. I resisted with all my strength, however was no match for 6 adult males, all intent on removing my clothing and pasting my testicles black with boot polish.

When it became apparent that the Senior Constable had been seriously injured I was released and cautioned to say nothing to anyone. I was then directed to go home. I’d barely been at work for an hour when this occurred. An Ambulance was called to convey the Senior Constable to hospital.

I endured the next 23 hours imagining how I would be dismissed from the Cadet Corp and/or otherwise disciplined for my actions...I was terrified and traumatised from the event for many weeks.

Upon returning to the BAS the next day, no one would discuss what had happened, except that I needed to keep my mouth shut. Later in the day I managed to read the Occurrence Pad where it recorded the serious injury occasioned to Senior Constable () when he fell down a flight of stairs whilst performing his duties the previous day.

In 19 , I was a junior police officer (Registered No:) age 20, stationed at Police Station performing General Duties. Whilst on night shift (around 2am) I was walking through the front foyer of the police station, when I was attacked by 5 police officers and dragged to the ground.

I attempted to resist the assault but was eventually dragged to the ground and held down by all 5 police officers. As I continued to resist, the largest of the police officers () placed his knee across my throat and applied his significant weight cutting off all capacity for me to breathe. As I was passing-out he would release the pressure and permit me to take small breaths, barely enough to remain conscious.

Whilst I was in that state, naked on the floor of the police station foyer they summoned a female Telecommunications Officer (TCO) from the Radio Room who proceeded to brush black boot polish onto my genitals and scrotum. An extremely embarrassing and painful experience.

Once 'black-balled' I was released and made the object of significant torment and ridicule for many weeks to follow. I suffered bruising to my throat and abrasions around the genital area.

In 19 , whilst working General Duties on day shift, I attended a fatal motor vehicle accident in . The victim had suffered severe head and facial injuries whereby the lower jaw had been dislocated from the skull.

Upon returning to Police Station and feeling ill I went to the toilet cubicle and proceeded to dry-retch, attempting to vomit. Whilst in the cubicle with the door locked, an unknown police officer threw the lower jaw bone of the deceased person into the cubicle, striking me on the chest and stomach.

I was horrified that anyone could do such a despicable thing to a work-mate and to disrespect a deceased person in that way. Again I was traumatised for many weeks following.

In 19 (approx.), whilst working General Duties on day shift, I attended Baton training at the PCYC situated at . I was selected to participate in the demonstration simulating an arrest of an offender. I was nominated as the offender. The two baton instructors proceeded to apply torturous 'holds' and blows to my body until I was left in a withering ball on the floor (in tears). This was done in front of approximately 40 other police officers.

I was belittled, tormented and deeply hurt as a result of that trauma. I suffered extreme bruising to a majority of my upper and middle torso.

I survived 17 years within the ranks of the NSW Police Force, resigning in 19 . My letter to you is a 'cry from the past' in the hope of demonstrating that there are survivors prepared to defend, protect and support anyone threatened by systemic bullying, without fear!

To be clear, I do not seek to resolve any individual grievance or case. I have no desire for my letter to become public, unless it could/would benefit those victims suffering the after effects of this debilitating behaviour.

After spending many years in the private sector, I am once again a member of a NSW Emergency Service, performing duties as a senior manager.

I am hyper-vigilant and sensitive to all forms of intimidation, bullying and harassment and will act with immediate effect in any circumstance where I believe it to be occurring within my service.

Kindest Regards,