

INQUIRY INTO EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCIES

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 27 June 2017

29th May2017

Inquiry Into Emergency Services.

Terms of Reference. - The prevalence of Bulling and Harassment and Discrimination as well as the Effectiveness of the Protocols and Procedures in place to manage and resolve such complaints

Dear Committee,

My name is my address is . My phone number is . I have been a member of the Rural Fire Service in excess of 20 years. During this time I have worked my way up through the ranks .As a member, Deputy, Senior Deputy and Captain.

During this time I have gained many qualifications. Basic fire Fighter, Advanced Fire fighter, Crew Leader, Rural Fire Driver, Air Base Operator. I have participated in many away firefighting teams. Many of these fires were section 44 fires. I have attended many Motor Vehicle Accidents. Some which involved fatalities. As is a rural area we were involved in fighting house fires factory fires. I have led many teams in fire and flood rescues. Working with State Emergency Service, Ambulance Service, Fire and Rescue, Police, State Forestry. Other community involvement was the . I have been involved in fund Raising have helped train juniors through the fire service. I am well known in the community. I am also a many times on fire grounds I have done running repairs on fire trucks to get the trucks so that they can be used safely and not be taken off the fire ground that is to maintain them being operational. I have my service Medals. As the Rural Fire Service was a large part of my life it devastated me when I was bullied into handing in my resignation from the Rural Rare Service.

The first incident involved [redacted] then they targeted me. The NSWRFs made a very hurtful accusation that my [redacted] without any professional advice on this matter and this is mentioned in the [redacted] that once again intimidated and humiliated me throughout the ordeal. I felt I had no choice other than to resign so [redacted] did not endure what [redacted] and I had endured, As a result of this bullying and harassing behaviour I myself became depressed as I had lost something that had been a large part of my life for many years. I ended up seeking help from my GP whom commenced me on antidepressant medication and I remain on it to this very day. Although this treatment has helped I would like some closure as I feel that there are things that have not been addressed to my satisfaction resulting in me not gaining me some closure to this adversity.

I am writing to you today as upon reflection during the period since my resignation from the Rural Fire Service I find that I continue to be unable to accept and resolve the events that led to me feeling that there was no other way but resign from the Rural fire Service. The Rural fire Service had been a large part of my life. It was my way of giving back to the community in which I live.

This is my submission. It is my hope that other people that have been bullied and harassed in the Rural Fire Service join me in lodging their submission as well

It was after this incident that I found myself having several complaints made against me. I am sure that it was

. They were leading a vendetta to rid the RFS of myself and my family.

As a result of these complaints the RFS made the decision to hold a hearing for me to have a 'voice' and answer these complaints. I had with some assistance written responses to these complaints. You have a copy of the RFS documents and a copy of my responses.

Before the hearing had commenced I handed my written resignation which was effective immediately.

The panel of this hearing chose to go ahead with the hearing. I thought at the time I had no choice but to let them continue with the hearing.

My wife was with me as my support person. She was told that she was not able to speak. At this point she did say that this was nothing but a Kangaroo Court.

With reflective and mindful consideration I have questions that I need answers to in order for me to move on from this disgusting end to a very long career of volunteering in the RFS.

1. I have never been given copies of the original written complaints. I have verbally asked for copies as well as my solicitor.
2. My resignation was effective immediately. Why did the hearing go ahead?

3. I was given a penalty. I had furnished them with my resignation. Can a member of the public be given a penalty?
4. Why was the video camera only on me?
5. Why was there no independent person on the panel? The panel consisted of all RFS people.
6. Why was my wife not allowed to speak as she was my support person? I was upset and not able to think as clearly as I normally would.
7. Why was the appropriate training not provided
8. Why was the zone manager not on the panel? Why did he not investigate the complaints? I feel he lacks people skills.

During the whole of this process commencing with what they put through and then myself I felt targeted, bullied and harassed.

One of the panel members . To my mind this is a conflict of interest as and is friends with this panel member.

I feel the public has been disadvantaged by my resignation as I have years of experience. My fighting fires locally and away with some of the biggest fires our nation has seen this I miss as well as running the

. I believe that the has folded.

Several months ago I applied to join the Brigade. submitted the paper work that I had completed to headquarters.

upon following up on the progress of the application was informed by headquarters that they had lost the application.

It is my hope that you will be able to gain some answers to the questions written here. With these answers I will in time be able to move on from where I am now tormented not knowing the answers.

I am available for verbal evidence this could be over the phone or in person.

Regards