

**Submission  
No 75**

## **INQUIRY INTO EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCIES**

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# Police Association of NSW Submission

Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs

Inquiry: Emergency services agencies



*The Police Association of New South Wales (PANSW) represents the professional and industrial interests of approximately 16,500 members, covering all ranks of NSW Police Officers in New South Wales.*

*This submission is written on behalf of our members.*

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Section 1: Targeted bullying prevention measures.....	5
Policies establishing standards of behaviour .....	5
Recommendations.....	5
Communication .....	6
Recommendations.....	6
Training .....	6
Recommendations.....	7
Section 2: Response to instances of bullying.....	8
Current elements.....	8
Recommendations.....	11
Classification of matters as complaints .....	11
Generation of complaint through injury claim processes.....	12
Role of Workplace Relations and Equity Unit .....	12
Moving involved parties.....	12
Mediation.....	13
SafeWork NSW .....	13
Section 3: Support services.....	14
Current elements.....	14
Specifically offered during equity matter processes .....	14
Broader psychological support services and mental health programs.....	15
Recommendations.....	17
Section 4: Addressing the Causes of Bullying .....	19
Improving work demands/resources balance and psychosocial safety climate factors in the NSWPF .....	20
Staffing needs to address workloads.....	20
Commitment to mental wellbeing of NSWPF employees.....	21
Worker Consultation.....	22
Conclusion.....	23
Recommendations .....	24
Section 1: Targeted bullying prevention measures.....	24
Section 2: Response to instances of bullying .....	24
Section 3: Support services .....	25
Section 4: Addressing the Causes of Bullying.....	25

## Introduction

Bullying, harassment and discrimination have terrible consequences for those subjected to it. It severely affects a person's working life. It can cause stress and trauma which lead to devastating psychological injury. No doubt this Committee has heard from individuals whose careers, happiness and mental health were destroyed by bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Australian workplaces have a poor record in preventing and addressing bullying, harassment and discrimination. The Australian Workplace Barometer (AWB) found that 6.9% of respondents in 2009-2011 had been the victims of workplace bullying in the previous 6 months alone.<sup>1</sup> This was compared to equivalent international standards of 1-4%, ranking Australia the 6<sup>th</sup> highest rate of bullying when compared with 34 European countries. The most recent AWB (covering 2014-2015) found the percentage of workers who had been the victims of bullying in the previous 6 months had increased to almost 10%.<sup>2</sup> A large amount of these victims were bullied regularly and over an extended period of time, demonstrating the failure of their workplaces to respond adequately. Bullying, harassment and discrimination are problems that many Australian workplaces have struggled to address.

In addition to this base-line level of bullying, police officers in the NSWPF are subject to several factors which further exacerbate the level and consequences of bullying and undermine efforts intended to address bullying.<sup>3</sup> These include:

- Work activities which expose workers to higher levels of trauma,
- High level of job demand and workload,
- Limited job control,
- Imminent, widespread organisational change,
- Strict, directive forms of decision making inherent in hierarchical organisations,
- Shift work, and work schedule interference with work-life balance,
- Complications managing injured workers,
- A negative imbalance of work demands and work resources.

These risk factors are prevalent in the NSW Police Force (and no doubt other emergency service agencies this Committee has examined). This is partly inherent in the nature of policing, which has regular exposure to trauma, high-stakes split-second decision making, and the pressing necessity to respond to certain categories of incidents or provide certain services.

This accords with the PANSW experience of bullying in the NSWPF. PANSW staff provide support to officers who make a bullying claim. As such, PANSW staff witness first-hand the prevalence of bullying in the NSWPF.

While there is a degree of inherent increased risk in policing, there is also scope to improve preventative managerial approaches and work design strategies, processes for responding to bullying, and support services for victims of bullying.

The NSW Police Force has made a concerted effort to utilise many of these opportunities to prevent and respond to bullying in the NSWPF. This submission will highlight the existing strategies utilised by NSWPF. Subject to some further improvements, the NSWPF framework is extensive, and adopts

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<sup>1</sup> Potter, R., Dollard, m., Tuckey, M. *Bullying & Harassment in Australian Workplaces: Results from the Australian Workplace Barometer Project 2014/2015*, Safe Work Australia, November 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> *Guide for Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying*, Safe Work Australia, May 2016.

many best-practice components of an anti-bullying strategy framework. These initiatives are having a positive impact on the perception of acceptable behaviour, the concern for officer wellbeing, and the processes available to the victims of bullying.

As with many organisations in Australia however, bullying remains a problem that needs further addressing.

One reason for this; many anti-bullying strategies have a lag time of a number of years. NSWPF efforts to address workplace bullying, and workplace mental health in general, have considerably increased in recent years. Therefore, the PANSW is hopeful we will soon witness the benefits of NSWPF initiatives, as we already have regarding the rates of physical and psychological injury more broadly.

Further, there are deep-seated components of police work and current NSWPF job design which can create environments conducive to bullying. The emerging leading explanations of workplace cultures of bullying and strategies to combat bullying identify two primary opportunities to target bullying:

1. Organisational and managerial concern for the mental health of staff, resulting in health-friendly management practices, and
2. Job design and work practices which support mental health, address work demand and resource imbalance and therefore reduce the risk and consequences of bullying.<sup>4</sup>

These factors are addressed in the 'Psychosocial Safety Climate' and 'Job Demands-Resources' focused theories of bullying causes and opportunities and strategies to address bullying.<sup>5</sup>

Policies and programs which specifically target bullying are essential components of a holistic response to bullying. However, as shown by the nation-wide stats, organisations can adopt best practices policies and programs, but will still fail to achieve the desired results. This is because without addressing these broader Psychosocial Safety Climate factors of bullying, specific bullying policies and programs will be undermined, and the environment conducive to bullying will remain.

This submission will assess current NSWPF anti-bullying strategies, and recommend further improvements. It will then consider work demands/resources strategies and application of strategies consistent with Psychosocial Safety Climate principles. The NSWPF, through the Human Resources Command and the Workforce Improvement Program, has made considerable progress in addressing these factors in recent years. This submission identifies some further improvements.

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<sup>4</sup> Potter, R., Dollard, m., Tuckey, M. *Bullying & Harassment in Australian Workplaces: Results from the Australian Workplace Barometer Project 2014/2015*, Safe Work Australia, November 2016. Dollard, M., Baily, T., McLinton, S., Richards, P., McTernan, W., Taylor, A., Bond, S. *The Australian Workplace Barometer: Report on Psychosocial Safety Climate and Worker Health in Australia*, Safe Work Australia, December 2012

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

## Section 1: Targeted bullying prevention measures

### Policies establishing standards of behaviour

The NSWPF has a number of policies which establish what is expected of members of the NSWPF, what constitutes bullying, harassment or discrimination, and communicates that these behaviours will not be tolerated.

The primary policy regarding bullying, harassment and discrimination is the NSWPF *Respectful Workplace Behaviours Guidelines* and *Respectful Workplace Behaviours Guidelines Policy Statement*. The *Statement* and *Guidelines* communicate the NSWPF's commitment to maintaining a safe, ethical and productive workplace in which all employees are valued and supported.

It goes on to:

- Identify the NSWPF's obligation to provide a safe, ethical, inclusive and productive work environment and to set standards of behaviour that supports a workplace culture free of bullying, discrimination and harassment.
- Communicate the benefits of respectful workplaces,
- Identify what respectful workplace behaviour is,
- Establishes the responsibilities of all employees, commanders, managers and supervisors,
- Sets the definitions of bullying, harassment, discrimination, vilification and victimisation,
- Specify that members of the NSWPF must not engage in such behaviour under the *Work, Healthy and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) and other relevant legislation,
- Identify resolution strategies, and refers readers to the other policies and procedures under which these matters can be resolved, and
- Refers readers to support services.

The *Guidelines* state commanders, managers and supervisors are responsible for proactively monitoring the work environment and preventing negative workplace behaviours, in addition to not engaging in these negative behaviours themselves.

These specific *Guidelines* and *Policy* are supported by the general application of the *NSWPF Code of Conduct and Ethics*.

### Recommendations

The NSWPF policies sufficiently establish the responsibilities of members of the NSWPF regarding respectful workplaces and behaviour and what constitutes bullying.

One further improvement could better facilitate universal application of the policies. The definitions should clearly differentiate behaviour which constitutes bullying, harassment, discrimination, vilification and victimisation (i.e. behaviour which amounts to misconduct) from interactions considered to be workplace conflict. This will assist in interpretation of whether complaint procedures or grievance procedures should apply to a matter (note: this will assist in implementing Recommendation 4).

***Recommendation 1: The Respectful Workplace Behaviours Guidelines and all related policies/procedures clearly differentiate the behaviours which constitute bullying harassment, discrimination, vilification and victimisation, from workplace conflict.***

## Communication

The NSWPF has several communications strategies to ensure members are aware of the principles of the *Respectful Workplace Behaviours Guidelines*.

In 2016, the Human Resources Command launched the *Respectful and Inclusive Workplace Campaign*.

This campaign included the following components:

- Respectful Workplace Behaviours Policy Statement,
- Respectful Workplace Behaviours Guidelines,
- Workplace Equity Guide for Investigators,
- Respectful and inclusive workplaces posters,
- “Just Joking” posters (understanding where the line is),
- Video messages from the Commander Human Resources and Corporate Sponsors on respectful and inclusive workplaces,
- Mindfulness Techniques Workshop broadcast via Obsidian, and
- Respectful Workplace Behaviours presentations /workshops.

The *Workplace Relations and Equity Unit (WREU)* has continued ownership of communication on these issues. They conduct proactive communication initiatives, as well as offering advice to any NSWPF employee who contacts the WREU. The WREU team have a sound understanding of the legislative and policy framework relating to inappropriate workplace behaviour such as bullying, harassment and discrimination and are able to provide expert advice. They are also familiar with and discuss relevant support services with victims where indicated. This includes the Employee Assistance Program, Internal Witness Support Unit and Peer Support officers. The WREU also collaborates with other key areas of the NSWPF to identify and implement health and wellbeing strategies that support employees and ensure a safe, healthy and productive workplace

## Recommendations

***Recommendation 2: Ensure existing communication strategies regarding respectful workplace behaviour are maintained and integrated into the broader strategies for police health and wellbeing, in line with the recommendations regarding the NSWPF psychosocial safety climate made in Section 4 of this Submission.***

## Training

In recent years, the NSWPF has implemented a range of education campaigns to increase the capacity of workers, supervisors, managers and commanders to engage in and foster positive workplace interaction. This arose out of strong NSWPF commitment to reducing injury rates (both physical and psychological).

This was first implemented by the delivery multiple levels of leadership training. Firstly, supportive leadership workshops were delivered, with the collaboration of the PANSW. Subsequently, a tiered Applied Leadership program was delivered to every NSW police officer of the rank of Sergeant and above, which involved multiple sessions and levels, targeted to address the requisite skill set for each rank. The training equipped officers with the ability to manage staff according to principles and practices which best address the health needs of their workers.

The ‘Taking the Lead’ program delivers leadership training for Constables and Senior Constables. Delivery is through lectures, class discussion, case learning and simulation based training. The objective of the training is to obtain safe operations, safe people and safe working environments. A

key component to creating a safe working environment is fostering the psychological health of individual team members.

In addition to leadership training, the NSWPF identified that workplace conflict was a main contributor to psychological injury, and therefore developed training specific to preventing harmful forms of workplace conflict. This has been delivered through targeted workshops and presentations.

The Workplace Relations and Equity Unit provides training, support and clarification to employees, commanders, managers and supervisors regarding management practices, and responses to potential bullying matters.

There are also online training modules accessible to all officers, which provide practical skills in engaging in respectful workplace interactions, identifying bullying or other negative interactions, understanding reporting obligations and pathways, and managing matters involving bullying.

### Recommendations

The NSWPF has successfully developed and delivered a range of relevant training on this issue. The training specifically addresses workplace conflict issues, as well as broader commitment and skills relevant to health and wellbeing (further discussed in Section 4 of this submission). Training targets leadership positions and the workforce at large, and covers the range of knowledge from self-regulation and self-help, peer support, and managing workers.

The NSWPF should ensure that training is provided to officers on an ongoing basis, to continue to increase skills and understanding, and reinforce policies, obligations and learning outcomes. The PANSW believes it is productive to continue to incorporate such training into the broader campaign to boost the health and wellbeing of members of the NSWPF. All officers should receive ongoing training which includes methods to improve the health and wellbeing of themselves, their colleagues and anyone they manage/supervise. Training should be delivered to each rank, and tailored for the requirements of that rank (for example, knowledge and skills required for supervision/management of staff). This training should include components relating to respectful workplaces and anti-bullying obligations. This recommendation should be considered in conjunction with those in Section 4 of this submission.

***Recommendation 3: Existing training programs should be provided on an ongoing basis, and continually incorporated into the broader education campaign regarding health and wellbeing.***



## Section 2: Response to instances of bullying

### Current elements

The response to a workplace conflict matter is established by the *Workplace Equity Resolution Procedures*, which flows into resolution processes either under the *Complaint Handling Guidelines* or the *Workplace Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedures*, depending on the nature of the matter.

#### *Role of the Workplace Relations and Equity Unit*

Throughout the entire resolution process, the *Workplace Relations and Equity Unit* (WREU) provides advice and support to ensure the matter is resolved appropriately. It is mandatory for all potential workplace equity matters to be referred to the WREU for information and advice on the appropriate course of action. This obligation still applies when the equity matter is only one component of a range of matters.

The WREU provides consistent expert advice on equity matters, assists enquirers to clarify whether matters may constitute equity matters, explains how matters are handled, and suggests strategies for resolution. Once the process has begun, the WREU assists commanders/managers/supervisors to handle a matter according to procedures and the appropriate level of escalation, assess appropriate action, and meet their responsibilities to address and prevent bullying behaviour. It may also advise on interim measures needed to ensure safety and welfare of all staff. Once a matter has been resolved the WREU assists in determining ongoing strategies.

Ownership of matters remains with the Command from which the matter arose; the WREU role is advisory.

#### *The role of Professional Standards Command*

More serious matters will involve oversight by the Professional Standards Command, who may also provide advice on management action (including interim management action).

#### *The role of external oversight agencies*

Under the previous arrangement with the Ombudsman, complaints regarding workplace bullying, harassment, victimisation or unlawful discrimination were notifiable to the Ombudsman if the subject of the complaint had previously had a similar complaint made against them. A similar approach might be adopted by the new Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, although this is a matter for that Commission and the NSWPF.

#### *Reporting mechanisms*

A workplace equity matter may be reported to:

- Supervisors, managers and commanders,
- The Workplace Relations and Equity Unit, either to Workplace Equity Officers, or electronically,
- The Professional Standards Manager or other Region Managers,
- Professional Standards Command, or
- External oversight agencies.

Oral and written forms of reporting are available for most of these options.

#### *Confidentiality*

All parties must treat the matter confidentially. However, for many of the resolution processes available to be effective, or for procedural fairness requirements in complaint matters, it will usually

be necessary for the parties involved to be aware of the nature of the allegations and the identities of the other parties involved.

Matters can be raised anonymously. This can affect the ability to resolve the matter, although matters raised anonymously will be actioned if the matter is serious and there is sufficient information available to make an informed response.

### *Triage*

When a matter is received, the receiving unit will determine:

1. Whether the matter constitutes a workplace equity matter under the *Respectful Workplace Behaviours Guidelines*.
2. Whether any received document requires assessment by the relevant Complaints Management Team to determine whether it be treated as a Part 8A complaint.
3. The WREU will provide a recommendation of the most appropriate management option, including management under the *Complaint Handling Guidelines*, *Workplace Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedures*, or a general day to day management issue.
4. Where the alleged conduct would amount to bullying, the matter is to be managed under the *Complaint Handling Guidelines*.
5. Whether the matter requires an evidence based investigation.

### *Managing conflicts of interest*

The *Complaint Handling Guidelines* and the *Workplace Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedures* both contain provisions for avoiding/managing conflicts of interest in the handling of matters.

### *Grievance resolution*

The *Workplace Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedures* state that they are not intended for use in matters involving allegations of unlawful workplace harassment or bullying, as these should be dealt with under the *Complaints Handling Guidelines*. The *Workplace Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedures* remain relevant however, as they will be the mechanism by which workplace conflict categories are resolved, so may be dealing with precursor behaviour to bullying.

The purposes of conflict resolution under the *Workplace Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedures* are understanding, problem solving, and reconciliation.

The methods for resolution under these procedures are self-resolution, facilitated conflict resolution, and formal grievance resolution, which includes mediation or movement of involved parties to other teams/duties.

### *Complaints handling*

Equity matters which constitute a complaint will be resolved under the *Complaints Handling Guidelines*. Allegations of bullying would constitute a complaint, and the relevant policies specify that such matters are to be dealt with as a complaint.

Police officers or non-sworn staff who make such a complaint would be considered Internal Police Complainants (IPC). Commanders have an obligation to protect an IPC from any further bullying, harassment, victimisation or ostracism as a result of their complaint, and are to take immediate action should they become aware of such behaviour.

Procedural fairness requirements must be met whenever reviewable action under s173 or 181D of the Police Act are considered. This means any action may only be made on the basis of relevant and

logically probative evidence, and the subject of the complaint is to be made aware of the allegations and given an opportunity to respond.

Within the *Complaint Handling Guidelines*, there is provision for handling a matter either through resolution or an evidence based investigation.

#### Complaint resolution

The resolution process is an alternative to evidence based investigation, which aims to resolve complaints more quickly than a formal investigation process, but still in a fair, impartial, equitable and discrete manner. This process may also be used to resolve a complaint when there is insufficient inculpatory material.

This process still involves an investigation to determine what conduct has occurred (for example, speaking with involved parties and witnesses) and will still result in a sustained/not sustained finding based on the information gathered. However, the investigation process is designed more for quick resolution and problem solving than would be the case in a formal evidence based investigation.

Resolution can only be utilised with the support of a Professional Standards duty officer, who will also provide instructions regarding suitable courses of action, and will quality review the outcome. The Commander/manager must ratify all resolution findings and management outcomes.

During a resolution process, if any inculpatory evidence is identified, the Professional Standards duty officer is to be notified to determine whether an evidence based investigation be conducted.

#### Complaints investigation

An evidence based investigation is necessary when there is a need to obtain evidence that will be admissible in criminal court proceedings, or where reviewable action is likely to be taken against a NSW police officer and this may be examined in other tribunals.

Investigations are determined on the balance of probabilities. In matters involving more serious allegations and more severe consequences, stronger evidence will be needed to satisfy this standard of proof than for less serious matters.

Interim risk management action can be taken at any time until final management action is determined and implemented.

The NSWPF has also developed a *Workplace Equity Guide for Investigators* so investigations can best address bullying. The document advises complaint investigators about issues which are specific to workplace equity complaint matters. For example:

- What constitutes different categories of equity matters,
- Dealing with complaints where the evidence is predominately one person's word against another's,
- Acknowledging the reasons for delayed reporting of bullying matters,
- Applying the 'reasonable person' test,
- The existence of downward, upward and sideways bullying,
- Clarifying that bullying can occur regardless of intent,
- Information on hostile work environments, and
- Remedial action which can be taken to address bullying.

The WREU is also available to provide advice and guidance in investigations.

Even when a complaint is not sustained, the policies provide for investigation reports to include recommendations aimed at rectifying negative behaviours or environments.

## Recommendations

### Classification of matters as complaints

The policies the NSWPF have in place are well designed, and the recent shift to the *Respectful Workplace Behaviours Guidelines* and associated procedures has been a further improvement.

However, in some cases implementation is hampering the effectiveness of these changes. The policies specify any allegation of bullying is to be treated as a Part 8A complaint. In practice, however, matters which the PANSW believes should be treated as bullying complaints are interpreted as workplace conflict, not amounting to bullying, and therefore dealt with under the *Workplace Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedures*, rather than the *Complaint Handling Guidelines*.

This process has a number of deficiencies for officers making a bullying allegation. A grievance will be dealt with locally, with lesser investigative procedures to determine what conduct took place. There are also less reporting obligations and quality control procedures than would apply to a complaint. The outcomes and action processes available are also limited to those under the *Workplace Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedures*. In practice, this means outcomes are typically limited; resolution processes fail, involved parties will receive advice on future conduct, and the officer making the allegation may be moved to a different team (which might mitigate the symptoms of the problem but not address the cause).

These deficiencies contribute to the reluctance of officers to report bullying.

It would be preferable that bullying matters be dealt with as a complaint, although that process also has inadequacies; the complaint process is much longer, meaning a resolution may be subject to considerable delay. While awaiting an outcome, the complainant is still potentially in the workplace and a final strategy to protect them is not determinable for some time.

The PANSW recognises the practical difficulties giving rise to this problem; grievance processes are insufficient to address bullying conduct, but equity matters which may amount to bullying typically involve a lack of inculpatory material, and may be limited to one person's word against another's. It therefore makes it difficult to achieve an outcome under an evidence based investigation process. Complaint processes also require certain time consuming components, including investigation and procedural fairness steps, causing delay and requiring considerable human resources. These are difficulties which all organisations struggle to address.

Acknowledging the difficulties associated with both grievance resolution options and complaint handling procedures, the PANSW recommends there be a stand-alone process for allegations which might amount to bullying which seeks to balance the benefits and deficiencies of both paths, including the timeliness and outcome-focus of resolution processes, and the investigation, reporting and quality control components of complaint handling. The *Workplace Relations and Equity Unit* should be given the capacity to quality review these matters, with Professional Standards Command involvement in more serious cases. Such a policy would need to be developed through consultation between the NSWPF and the PANSW.

***Recommendation 4: The NSWPF and the PANSW consult to develop appropriately designed procedures to handle allegations of bullying, which better meet the needs of complainants. In the***

***absence of such a process, bullying allegations should be properly interpreted as such, and dealt with as a complaint.***

***Recommendation 5: Police officers who allege conduct amounting to an equity matter should have protections as an Internal Police Complainant. This is the intended operation of current policies, however the interpretation of some allegations as workplace conflict rather than a complaint matter is restricting access to these protections.***

#### Generation of complaint through injury claim processes

Victims of bullying can suffer psychological injury or related health issues, and as such require treatment services and/or time off work. Therefore, bullying allegations may well form part of a workers' compensation claim.

Despite making a compensation claim, a victim might not make a complaint regarding the same bullying conduct.

The PANSW recommends consideration of a process whereby compensation claims related to bullying allegations cause the generation of a police complaint.

One option to achieve this would be to ensure that whenever the insurer accepts liability for an injury resulting from workplace bullying, that triggers the generation of complaint.

Although it is in the overall interests of police officers that bullying matters be properly addressed in the complaints process, there are a number of reasons why a victim may be reluctant to make a complaint. Any process of automatically generating a complaint from a compensation claim should be accommodating of those reasons. Procedures and resolution outcomes would need to be established to ensure it does not increase the stress of the victim, expose them to any additional injury risks, or add additional barriers to recovery and return to work.

***Recommendation 6: Establish a process whereby workers' compensation claims which include allegations of bullying automatically generate a police complaint. One options to be considered is that a complaint is generated upon the acceptance of liability by the insurer.***

#### Role of Workplace Relations and Equity Unit

The Workplace Relations and Equity Unit involvement is only advisory.

***Recommendation 7: The WREU should be given increased capacity to assist staff who make bullying claims, and complaint and grievance processes should include a mandatory quality control process to be conducted by the WREU. Any recommendations of the WREU should be recorded, and if not complied with, reasons given.***

#### Moving involved parties

In the PANSW's experience, in some matters there is an over-reliance on moving involved parties to address workplace conflict and bullying claims. While this may achieve a short-term solution in the separation of parties, it does not address the root causes of workplace conflict nor prevent future instances. Officers may also be unsatisfied with this as a solution, as it may not have been in their interests to change teams but for the workplace conflict.

***Recommendation 8: Unless requested by the officer making an allegation of workplace bullying, outcomes other than moving the officer should be prioritised.***

## Mediation

The PANSW believes complainants could benefit from an improved mediation process. This stems from concerns some participants in mediation currently do not genuinely seek to achieve satisfactory outcomes. The PANSW acknowledges the difficulty in addressing this, as participation in mediation is voluntary, and as such parties cannot be forced to participate or directed to participate in a specified way. However, the scope to achieve outcomes better than moving involved parties to other teams means improving mediation should be examined. This could form part of any revised process developed as a result of Recommendation 4.

A Centre for Health Initiatives report recommends caution regarding mediation, as many organisations in fact show an over-reliance on mediation, and a lack of awareness of the power imbalance between the involved parties.<sup>6</sup> However, in the PANSW experience, NSWPF procedures could benefit from strengthening mediation options and obligations, if this were established in conjunction with the other PANSW recommendations, and procedures were put in place to address the power imbalance between involved parties.

***Recommendation 9: In developing a process under Recommendation 4, consideration be given to improving mediation processes.***

## SafeWork NSW

SafeWork NSW's functions in responding to a bullying complaint involve contacting the organisation, assessing their compliance with work health and safety obligations in relation to the bullying allegation, and supporting compliance with those obligations. If there has been a breach of work health and safety laws, SafeWork can carry out prosecutions, although its policies indicate this is a last resort.

In the PANSW experience, it is extremely rare that SafeWork has much involvement in a NSWPF bullying matter. SafeWork usually advises there is little prospect for a prosecution and therefore declines to be involved. This is understandable given the difficulty in obtaining evidence in bullying matters. However, the PANSW recommends that SafeWork should play a more active role in ensuring the NSWPF is compliant with WHS obligations whenever a serious bullying complaint is raised with SafeWork NSW.

***Recommendation 10: Examine procedures for SafeWork NSW to support NSWPF compliance when notified of bullying allegations.***

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<sup>6</sup> Magee, C., Gordon, R., Caputi, P., Oades, L., Reis, S., Robinson, L. *Final Report: Workplace Bullying in Australia*, Centre for Health Initiatives University of Wollongong, May 2014.

## Section 3: Support services

### Current elements

Specifically offered during equity matter processes

Officers who make bullying complaints can access the following support services to assist them during the complaint/resolution process.

#### *Support person*

At all stages of an equity matter, all parties are entitled to have a support person present. Support people may be contact officers, friends, colleagues or union representatives.

#### *Employee Assistance Program (EAP)*

Personal counselling services are available for all staff and their immediate families via an external counselling organisation.

EAP employs registered psychologists.

Crisis telephone counselling can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and psychologists are also located throughout the State and provide emergency help for all employees.

EAP offers general counselling to all employees and their immediate families through its extensive network of local providers. Counselling rooms are located in professional premises and are placed throughout the metropolitan area, as well as in most regional centres.

Services provided by EAP include short-term crisis intervention for any personal problem that may adversely affect an employee's ability to perform their normal duties.

#### *Peer Support Officers (PSO)*

Peer Support Officers (PSO's) provide appropriate support to employees during periods of professional and personal distress. PSO's offer immediate assistance through one-on-one peer support and assess the need for referrals to health professionals or alternative support programs. They are also trained to provide education and information around the various support services available to members of the NSWPF. PSO's are not trained counsellors or mental health practitioners.

#### *Case conferencing*

Being the victim of bullying frequently correlates with time off work for injury, often for extended periods of time. This can lead to a great deal of apprehension on the initial return to the workplace. Therefore, it is imperative that victims of bullying have some assurance that they will be returning to a safe environment.

In the PANSW's experience, case conferencing is a successful avenue for achieving this. Case conferencing is run by Injury Management Advisors, and involves all parties involved in an officer's injury management and return to work (including the employer, managers, treating medical practitioner, and union representative) seeking to address obstacles to a successful return to work.

Case conferencing provides officers with a sense of ownership over the return to work process, and in relation to bullying issues, is an effective way of allowing them to have their say as to the conditions under which they return. It has been adopted as a preferred method of progressing workplace injuries, particularly where bullying issues are present, in cases which have otherwise reached a 'stalemate', as it affords officer's the opportunity to negotiate suitable work



arrangements with the support of (and in the presence of) their treating medical practitioners and support persons.

The NSWPF has invested considerable resources in up-skilling Injury Management Advisors (IMAs) to deal with these sorts of workplace matters. Early programs developed and implemented by the Workforce Improvement Program increased the training delivered to IMAs, which included capacity to identify and manage conflict in the workplace and its effect on return to work. The Workforce Improvement Program also implemented the IMA extended service model to improve the support services and outcomes achieved for officers on injury management and return to work plans.

#### *Broader psychological support services and mental health programs*

In addition to these services offered during equity processes, victims of bullying can access the range of NSWPF psychological support services and mental health programs.

In recent years, the Human Resources Command and Workforce Improvement Program have developed and implemented a large number of programs and services which have significantly reduced the number and severity of injuries (both physical and psychological) in the NSWPF, and improved the health and wellbeing of NSW police officers. As identified earlier in this submission, we have seen the benefits in the general health and wellbeing of officers. The PANSW is hopeful these indicators are predictors of a further improvement in workplace environments that are more conducive to respectful behaviour and positive interactions, in line with work demands/resources theory and psychosocial safety climate principles discussed in Section 4 of this submission.

Below, this submission outlines a selection of the most relevant of these support services. These services and programs have predominately been developed and implemented by the Workforce Improvement Program (WIP) and funded out of the WIP budget. The WIP has developed over 80 projects aim at improving officers' health and wellbeing and reducing injury rates and severity.

#### *E-WellCheck*

WellCheck is a screening service which measures officers' risk of psychological injury and when needed refers them to appropriate stages of support services.

The previous delivery was carried out through direct contact. This constrained the NSWPF to only assessing targeted units or duty types.

The development of an electronic delivery method of this risk assessment has enabled the NSWPF to apply the program to all NSW police officers. This will assist in injury prevention, early intervention, and support service delivery.

#### *Incident Support*

The incident support service is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to any employee who is impacted by any potential traumatic incident. This service is delivered by experienced psychologists with specialised training and ongoing incident and case management expertise. The service provides liaison and support for management in response to the incident and following initial intervention. Where required this includes development of support plans for individual staff members.

#### *Incident and Support database*

The incident and support database is used to store the details of an officer's exposure to incidents that may impact on their health and wellbeing. The psychological support provided or offered is also captured. This information is tracked centrally and is available when the officer changes command.



This is another program designed to assist in injury prevention and early intervention, by identifying injury risk before significant harm is done.

#### *NSWPF Chaplaincy*

Police Chaplains provide a number of services, including responding to critical and traumatic events in officer's lives. Chaplains support police officers at emergency situations and at the scenes of disasters.

#### *Family Support*

The Family Support Coordinator provides information and coordinates support services for family members of ill or injured employees of the NSWPF. Whatever issue the family is experiencing, the Family Support Coordinator will assist in accessing the most appropriate information or service. The service has been provided for approximately one year. The feedback provided to date by users of the service has been very positive.

#### *Reconnect*

Reconnect is a service designed to improve the mental health of employees. Participants are supported by a team including a psychologist, strength and conditioner and dietician. The program draws on the link between structured exercise and improvements in mental health. It is expected that by approximately August 2017 sufficient number of officers will have utilised the service to allow evaluation of the program.

#### *Restart*

Restart is a twelve-week health and fitness service, offering officers dietary advice, individual exercise training with strength and conditioning coaches, mentoring in diet planning and psychological advice where warranted. The training is conducted during work time in the first month and after this it is undertaken in the officer's personal time.

#### *Five things booklet*

Five Things is an easy to use guide to help improve officer health and wellbeing. The guide provides 5 things for officers to consider when it comes to managing stress, building resilience, practicing mindfulness, getting better sleep and coping with shift work demands. It also has tips about diet, exercise and safe alcohol use. Each section of the booklet looks at easy things to incorporate into day to day life to better manage health and wellbeing. Feedback from the field on the value of the booklet has been positive.

#### *Your Health First*

This education package was developed through collaboration between the NSWPF and PANSW.

The training provides practical advice on a range of issues including resilience building behaviours, managing stress, trauma and other psychological injury factors, and preventing suicide.

Workshops aim to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, seek to break down barriers which prevent officers discussing mental health, and most importantly encourages employees to seek help when needed.

Post workshop evaluations have been extremely positive, and many officers have highlighted the value of this program to the PANSW.

#### *Your Health Check*

Recognising the important connection between physical and psychological health, this program includes the delivery of medical assessments (i.e. cholesterol, weight, blood pressure, waist

circumference, stress checks etc.) to all serving police officers. Over ten thousand tests have been conducted to date.

A number of checks have resulted in employees being referred to medical practitioners for follow up treatment and in some cases implementation of health improvement plans.

Officers have also been referred to other health services, including appropriate mental health services.

#### *Ongoing resilience workshops/lectures*

The PANSW and NSWPF sponsored a series of lecture tours by Dr Gilmartin, a noted international expert on building resilience in police officers. The initial tour helped launch a hugely successful campaign in promoting new health services available to officers, and in reducing stigma and opening dialogue about police officers' mental health.

Dr Gilmartin's book "Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement, a guide for officers and their families" is provided to all newly graduating police officers.

A video with key messages from the lectures delivered by Dr Gilmartin will be rolled out during 2017 via the NSWPF HR Intranet site to coincide with key communication messages on health & wellbeing.

In addition, a number of tailored and customised educational workshops have been conducted around the state for NSWPF officers by beyondblue.

#### *Recommendations*

The NSWPF has implemented highly successful programs across the prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation spectrum. Programs cover psychical and mental health, and the range of factors which contribute to police psychological injury.

The PANSW commends the NSWPF, in particular the Human Resources Command and Workforce Improvement Program for these efforts.

These programs have made considerable progress in improving the psychosocial safety climate factors discussed in Section 4 of this submission.

Strategies to expand existing programs and build on current achievements are listed below.

#### *Recon model for treatment of psychological injuries*

The Reconnect program was developed following the highly successful Reconditioning program. The Reconditioning program enabled early intervention in physical injuries, regardless of claim status, to ensure officers recovered for work as quickly as possible. The benefits to participants and the savings for the NSWPF were highly impressive.

Reconnect has adapted the Reconditioning program to assist in psychological injuries. Early indications are that Reconnect will also be highly successful.

The success of this model should be examined as a basis for police rehabilitation centres, which should provide ready access to psychological support staff for a broader pool of psychological injury and mental health issues. Like the recon- programs, psychological services should be delivered with the overriding objective of making officers well, and as such should be accessible regardless of injury claim status, and available so as to achieve early intervention aims.

Implementation of programs on this expanded scale would require increased funding to the NSWPF Workforce Improvement Program, and then adoption of running costs into the recurrent funding of the NSWPF.

***Recommendation 11: Provide the NSWPF with the funding needed to expand coverage of the Reconnect program delivery range.***

***Recommendation 12: Provide the NSWPF with the funding needed to adopt a recon-style model for delivery of counselling and other psychological support services.***

*Ongoing resilience, psychological fitness and suicide prevention training*

PANSW long advocated for the NSWPF to deliver mental health and wellbeing training to all NSW police officers and future recruits. The NSWPF is achieving this through programs such as Your Health First, and the Gilmartin tours, DVD and book distribution.

The PANSW believes the NSWPF should be given all necessary funding to continue to roll out the training to reach every single NSWPF staff member, and then on a business as usual basis roll out 'refresher course' training options to reinforce learning outcomes and maintain competencies.

***Recommendation 13: Provide NSWPF with the funding to:***

- ***continue the roll out of resilience, psychological fitness and suicide prevention training to reach all NSWPF staff,***
- ***deliver ongoing 'refresher' courses,***
- ***continue to develop materials for the NSWPF Academy in line with ongoing delivery to current officers and staff.***

*Workforce Improvement Program*

The Workforce Improvement Program (WIP) has achieved considerable benefits to the health and wellbeing of NSW police officers, and considerable savings for the NSWPF. The bulk of the NSWPF successful services and programs have been developed and implemented by the Workforce Improvement Program (WIP) and funded out of the WIP budget. The WIP has developed over 80 projects aim at improving officers' health and wellbeing and reducing injury rates and severity.

As a result of the PANSW Pre-Election Submission 2015, the NSW Government granted funding to the WIP for a fixed term.

The PANSW submits the WIP should receive recurrent funding, to continue to develop and deliver these successful programs.

Successful WIP programs should also be adopted into business as usual practices by the NSWPF.

***Recommendation 14: The NSWPF be granted recurrent funding to:***

- ***continue the Workforce Improvement Program development and delivery of existing and new program,***
- ***monitor, review and modify WIP programs, and***
- ***adopt successful programs into business as usual practices for the NSWPF.***

## Section 4: Addressing the Causes of Bullying

Leading theories regarding bullying prevention now identify the balance between work demands and employee resources and psychosocial safety climate factors as the best determinant of bullying prevalence, and therefore the best target for intervention.<sup>7</sup>

Psychological, emotional and work 'demands' which contribute to a negative psychosocial safety climate include factors such as:

- High workloads,
- Prioritisation of productivity over worker health needs,
- High pressure job activities or decisions,
- Widespread exposure to stress,
- Exposure to trauma or other drains on emotional reserves,
- Insecurity during organisational restructure,
- Directive, hierarchical structures of management which give workers little room for job control.

Employee 'resources' which contribute to a positive psychosocial safety climate include factors such as:

- Organisational and managerial prioritisation of worker health,
- Reasonable workloads, ensured by adequate staff levels and access to necessary resources, skills and training,
- Resilience and mental health,
- Availability of effective support services,
- Respectful workplace interaction and diversity friendly practices,
- Appropriate performance management and discipline procedures,
- Worker consultation regarding the other factors

A strong psychosocial safety climate is achieved by organisational and managerial prioritisation of worker health, and developing the necessary policies, procedures and services to communicate and implement this priority. Improving an organisation's psychosocial safety climate entails efforts to reduce work conditions that predispose the workplace to bullying, such as high demand, high pressure, and emotional drain. This also addresses the common criticism of anti-bullying strategies that they are reactive, and seek to support individuals in dealing with bullying problems as they arise, rather than designing the work environment to prevent bullying.<sup>8</sup>

A negative imbalance of the work 'demands' and 'resources' results in a workforce which is seeking to meet unreasonable workloads, where meeting these workloads in effect has to be prioritised over worker health in order to meet service demands. Workers and managers alike are stressed, and negative workplace interactions are utilised as a short-cut to achieve short term productivity targets. In these contexts, bullying is not only more likely, but even inherent in the job design.

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<sup>7</sup> Potter, R., Dollard, m., Tuckey, M. *Bullying & Harassment in Australian Workplaces: Results from the Australian Workplace Barometer Project 2014/2015*, Safe Work Australia, November 2016. Dollard, M., Baily, T., McLinton, S., Richards, P., McTernan, W., Taylor, A., Bond, S. *The Australian Workplace Barometer: Report on Psychosocial Safety Climate and Worker Health in Australia*, Safe Work Australia, December 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Potter, R., Dollard, m., Tuckey, M. *Bullying & Harassment in Australian Workplaces: Results from the Australian Workplace Barometer Project 2014/2015*, Safe Work Australia, November 2016, p9.

In such an environment, the conditions will remain conducive for bullying no matter what anti-bullying policies, procedures and services are put in place. Strategies specific to bullying can make a difference to the behaviours within the organisation and the experience of those victimised by bullying. But if these strategies are implemented within an organisation in which work demands and their effect on psychological health are conducive to bullying, the effectiveness of policies and programs will be limited. As expressed by SafeWork Australia:

*Overall, strategies to address workplace bullying should emphasise organisational-level primary prevention through monitoring and modifying the risk factors for bullying in the organisational system. Strategies that focus on bullying behaviour (such as reporting mechanisms) are important complementary actions, but not sufficient for prevention.<sup>9</sup>*

Not only are the work demands/resources balance and the psychosocial safety climate factors lead indicators of bullying, they are also the most effective target for intervention.<sup>10</sup> Addressing these root causes targets the underlying environmental conditions which foster bullying. Strategies targeting this level have the biggest impact on bullying conditions and behaviours, in addition to the benefits and savings yielded from improving the mental health of the organisation. Addressing work demand/resource balance and psychosocial safety climate factors has the best cost-benefit outcomes in the long term.

### Improving work demands/resources balance and psychosocial safety climate factors in the NSWPF

The principles of the psychosocial safety climate approach to bullying is consistent with the PANSW experience of bullying in the NSWPF. Bullying typically occurs where staff and managers under pressure to achieve unreasonable workloads. It often arises in relation to disciplinary action or performance management, or in the return to work and management of injured officers.

The PANSW has identified the following strategies to target work demand/resource and psychosocial safety climate factors which represent the best opportunity for significant positive effect on workplace health and respectful workplace interactions in the NSWPF.

#### Staffing needs to address workloads

Many Local Area Commands or specialist units in the NSWPF do not have sufficient staffing levels to meet the services demands placed on them. They are committed to serving the community as best they can, but struggle with increasing workloads.

As highlighted by the PANSW since our *Pre-Election Submission 2015*, NSW has the lowest police to population ratio in the country, and current staffing commitments are failing to keep up with population growth.

Many LACs cover communities which are currently experiencing considerable population growth, disproportionate to the rest of the State or to previous trends. As such, they are becoming more and more overworked.

***Recommendation 15: The number of sworn officers in NSW increase, at a minimum, to keep up with yearly population growth.***

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p8.

<sup>10</sup> Potter, R., Dollard, m., Tuckey, M. *Bullying & Harassment in Australian Workplaces: Results from the Australian Workplace Barometer Project 2014/2015*, Safe Work Australia, November 2016, p8.

Currently, the NSWPF is in the process of restructuring the organisation, through the *NSWPF Re-engineering* process.

The objective of the Re-engineering process is to ensure police resources are most effectively used to serve the community. This is an objective the PANSW has always supported.

In addition, the PANSW recommends that in any resulting organisational restructure or job-redesign, principles of psychosocial safety climate and work demand/resource balance are explicit and mandatory criteria in assessing and approving proposals.

***Recommendation 16: Any organisational restructure or change to positions or job design include principles of psychosocial safety climate and work demand/resource balance as explicit and mandatory criteria in assessing and approving proposals. This should be implemented through consultation with the PANSW.***

The PANSW has also long called for the implementation of a fair and transparent workforce allocation model, which would ensure police numbers are allocated to LACs or units based on factors including workload, crime rates, task time/complexity, and population.

***Recommendation 17: To address staffing shortages in many LACs and units, the Re-engineering process must transparently utilise a formal workforce allocation model.***

#### Commitment to mental wellbeing of NSWPF employees

The programs and services developed through Human Resources Command and Workforce Improvement Program have been highly effective and should be commended. Many of the strategies and elements needed to improve psychosocial safety climate are already in place.

To further capitalise on these programs, we make the following recommendations:

The NSWPF has already delivered extensive leadership training, the main objective of which was to ensure managerial practices were conducive to mentally healthy workplaces and optimal recovery for injured workers.

***Recommendation 18: In conjunction with Recommendation 3 and Recommendation 12, training should be an ongoing commitment, with targeted training delivered to address any new training needs or new leadership personnel, and refresher courses delivered to reinforce learning objectives and maintain competencies. This ongoing training should continue to include leadership practices which foster mentally healthy workplaces and facilitate optimal return to work. It should also include components on modelling and enforcing respectful workplace interaction.***

The ability of injured workers to return to work in the NSWPF has increased dramatically in recent years as a result of excellent treatment services provided by the NSWPF, and improved injury management practices.

The PANSW still believes that there is significant potential to assist officers return to work and retain the valuable contribution they can continue to make by:

- Allowing for greater levels of reasonable adjustment to positions, and
- An increased role for the insurer in the return to work process and selecting suitable duties.

The Association is unfortunately still witnessing officers who are capable of performing suitable duties being unable to secure permanent employment and therefore medically discharging against their will, despite having a capacity to work in the NSWPF.

The PANSW believes there is greater potential to allow officers with permanent injuries or illness to return to work and stay at work by increasing the flexibility in modifying police positions to match an officer's capacity for work. Many injured officers, although not being 100% fit, could still perform meaningful, valuable work in the NSWPF.

Another strategy to improve the provision of suitable duties would be to increase the involvement of the insurer in the provision of suitable duties process. The Association would support a process whereby insurers have input in the provision of suitable duties, and when suitable duties are not provided or withdrawn, the insurer must be notified and provide commentary.

This has direct return to work benefits, helping officers recover and secure meaningful work, and reducing the impact on workers' compensation premiums. In relation to bullying, the PANSW believes this could also positively influence the psychosocial safety climate for NSWPF workplaces with high rates of injured officers. The management of injured workers, and incorporating suitable duties to meet operational needs is a significant work 'demand' in many workplaces. These recommendations would help incorporate modified positions into a productive workplace, and provide better support for officers seeking suitable duties.

***Recommendation 19: Increase options and commitment to modify positions for officers who, although not 100% fit, still have work capacity to perform valuable work in the NSWPF.***

***Recommendation 20: Increase the role of the insurer in the provision of suitable duties.***

#### Worker Consultation

Workplaces in which staff have a low level of control over their jobs and tasking have higher stress levels, lower psychosocial safety climate ratings, and an environment conducive to bullying.<sup>11</sup>

The PANSW acknowledges policing requires hierarchical command structures and directive capacity, and this inherently makes worker control difficult.

However, increased worker consultation on bullying and psychosocial safety climate factors in general, is an effective means to identify workplaces with psychological injury and bullying risks, and improve officers' perception of work control and organisational commitment.

***Recommendation 21: The Workplace Relations and Equity Unit, in consultation with Local Area Commanders/unit Commanders and PANSW, establish a consultation process with workers to identify factors contributing to bullying or poor psychosocial safety climate in general.***

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<sup>11</sup> *Guide for Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying*, Safe Work Australia, May 2016. Potter, R., Dollard, m., Tuckey, M. *Bullying & Harassment in Australian Workplaces: Results from the Australian Workplace Barometer Project 2014/2015*, Safe Work Australia, November 2016. Dollard, M., Baily, T., McLinton, S., Richards, P., McTernan, W., Taylor, A., Bond, S. *The Australian Workplace Barometer: Report on Psychosocial Safety Climate and Worker Health in Australia*, Safe Work Australia, December 2012.

## Conclusion

Bullying is a widespread problem in Australia, and one which many organisations struggle to address. A number of factors inherent to policing create a further elevated risk level.

NSW police officers who experience bullying can suffer awful consequences for their career, health and wellbeing.

The NSWPF has introduced a range of strategies to prevent and respond to bullying, and provide support to the victims of bullying and officers with psychological injury in general. These bullying specific strategies cover the components necessary for an effective anti-bullying framework.

The PANSW commends the NSWPF for implementing these strategies, and has provided some recommendations to further improve the anti-bullying framework.

These types of strategies are important to prevent bullying, and mitigate the consequences for victims of bullying.

However, unless the imbalance between work demands and resources is addressed, meeting the level of service demanded by the community will continue to create an environment conducive to bullying, and there will be a limit on how successful anti-bullying strategies can be.

The PANSW calls on this Committee to recommend the NSWPF be provided with the resources necessary to adequately resource psychologically safe workplaces that are conducive to respectful workplace interaction.



## Recommendations

### Section 1: Targeted bullying prevention measures

#### **Recommendation 1:**

The Respectful Workplace Behaviours Guidelines and all related policies/procedures clearly differentiate the behaviours which constitute bullying harassment, discrimination, vilification and victimisation, from workplace conflict.

#### **Recommendation 2:**

Ensure existing communication strategies regarding respectful workplace behaviour are maintained and integrated into the broader strategies for police health and wellbeing, in line with the recommendations regarding the NSWPF psychosocial safety climate made in Section 4 of this Submission.

#### **Recommendation 3:**

Existing training programs should be provided on an ongoing basis, and continually incorporated into the broader education campaign regarding health and wellbeing.

### Section 2: Response to instances of bullying

#### **Recommendation 4:**

The NSWPF and the PANSW consult to develop appropriately designed procedures to handle allegations of bullying, which better meet the needs of complainants. In the absence of such a process, bullying allegations should be properly interpreted as such, and dealt with as a complaint.

#### **Recommendation 5:**

Police officers who allege conduct amounting to an equity matter should have protections as an Internal Police Complainant. This is the intended operation of current policies, however the interpretation of some allegations as workplace conflict rather than a complaint matter is restricting access to these protections.

#### **Recommendation 6:**

Establish a process whereby workers' compensation claims which include allegations of bullying automatically generate a police complaint. One options to be considered is that a complaint is generated upon the acceptance of liability by the insurer.

#### **Recommendation 7:**

The WREU should be given increased capacity to assist staff who make bullying claims, and complaint and grievance processes should include a mandatory quality control process to be conducted by the WREU. Any recommendations of the WREU should be recorded, and if not complied with, reasons given.

#### **Recommendation 8:**

Unless requested by the officer making an allegation of workplace bullying, outcomes other than moving the officer should be prioritised.

#### **Recommendation 9:**

In developing a process under Recommendation 4, consideration be given to improving mediation processes.

#### **Recommendation 10:**

Examine procedures for SafeWork NSW to support NSWPF compliance when notified of bullying allegations.

### Section 3: Support services

#### **Recommendation 11:**

Provide the NSWPF with the funding needed to expand coverage of the Reconnect program delivery range.

#### **Recommendation 12:**

Provide the NSWPF with the funding needed to adopt a recon-style model for delivery of counselling and other psychological support services.

#### **Recommendation 13:**

Provide NSWPF with the funding to:

- continue the roll out of resilience, psychological fitness and suicide prevention training to reach all NSWPF staff,
- deliver ongoing 'refresher' courses,
- continue to develop materials for the NSWPF Academy in line with ongoing delivery to current officers and staff.

#### **Recommendation 14:**

The NSWPF be granted recurrent funding to:

- continue the Workforce Improvement Program development and delivery of existing and new program,
- monitor, review and modify WIP programs, and
- adopt successful programs into business as usual practices for the NSWPF.

### Section 4: Addressing the Causes of Bullying

#### **Recommendation 15:**

The number of sworn officers in NSW increase, at a minimum, to keep up with yearly population growth.

#### **Recommendation 16:**

Any organisational restructure or change to positions or job design include principles of psychosocial safety climate and work demand/resource balance as explicit and mandatory criteria in assessing and approving proposals. This should be implemented through consultation with the PANSW.

#### **Recommendation 17:**

To address staffing shortages in many LACs and units, the Re-engineering process must transparently utilise a formal workforce allocation model.

**Recommendation 18:**

In conjunction with Recommendation 3 and Recommendation 12, training should be an ongoing commitment, with targeted training delivered to address any new training needs or new leadership personnel, and refresher courses delivered to reinforce learning objectives and maintain competencies. This ongoing training should continue to include leadership practices which foster mentally healthy workplaces and facilitate optimal return to work. It should also include components on modelling and enforcing respectful workplace interaction.

**Recommendation 19:**

Increase options and commitment to modify positions for officers who, although not 100% fit, still have work capacity to perform valuable work in the NSWPF.

**Recommendation 20:**

Increase the role of the insurer in the provision of suitable duties.

**Recommendation 21:**

The Workplace Relations and Equity Unit, in consultation with Local Area Commanders/unit Commanders and PANSW, establish a consultation process with workers to identify factors contributing to bullying or poor psychosocial safety climate in general.