

INQUIRY INTO EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCIES

Organisation: Public Service Commission

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The Hon. Robert Borsak MLC
Chair
Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

By email: portfoliocommittee4@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Borsak

I would like to provide an addendum to my submission to the Legislative Council Portfolio Committee no. 4 – Legal Affairs' Inquiry into emergency services agencies. I indicated in my original correspondence with your committee that new data would be available after the initial closing date for submissions and that I would provide such data to assist the committee in its work.

The attached addendum updates the submission with additional results from the 2017 People Matter Employee Survey focusing specifically on the issue of bullying in the NSW public sector and emergency services agencies.

If you have any questions about this addendum, please contact Jim Lloyd by phone: 9272 6095 or email: jim.lloyd@psc.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Head
Public Service Commissioner

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO.4 – LEGAL AFFAIRS

INQUIRY INTO EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCIES

**ADDENDUM TO THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER'S SUBMISSION**

AUGUST 2017

Addendum to the Public Service Commissioner's submission to the Inquiry into emergency services agencies

A. Introduction

On 25 July 2017, the Public Service Commissioner made a submission to the Legislative Council Portfolio Committee no. 4 – Legal Affairs' (the Committee) Inquiry into emergency services agencies (the Inquiry).

The submission focused specifically on the issue of bullying in the NSW public sector and emergency services agencies including:

- New South Wales Rural Fire Service
- Fire and Rescue New South Wales
- New South Wales Police Force
- Ambulance Service of New South Wales
- New South Wales State Emergency Service.

Section 2 and Section 3 of the submission reported on trends around the prevalence of bullying in the NSW public sector and in emergency services agencies. Section 4 reported on the contributing factors to bullying.

Selected preliminary results from the 2017 *People Matter Employee Survey* (People Matter survey) were included in the submission. However, since making the submission a more detailed analysis of the data from the 2017 People Matter survey has been undertaken. Supplementary information is provided to the Inquiry in this addendum.

This addendum should be read in conjunction with the Public Service Commissioner's submission.

B. People Matter survey results 2017

The Public Service Commission conducted the fourth People Matter survey in 2017. The survey was open to all staff across the NSW public sector in June 2017 for the whole month.

Participation in the survey has improved for each survey with a response rate in 2017 of 42% across the NSW public sector. Response rates also went up or were stable in each of the emergency services agencies (see [Table 5](#) of the submission for details).

The Public Service Commissioner's submission reported on employee perceptions of bullying in the NSW public sector. This included employee perceptions of witnessing and experiencing bullying for the period 2012 to 2017 (see [Figure 1](#) - employee perceptions of bullying (public sector 2012-2017), [Figure 2](#) - experienced bullying (emergency services agencies 2012-2017) and [Figure 3](#) - witnessed bullying (emergency services agencies 2012-2017) in the submission).

The following tables provide supplementary data from the 2017 People Matter survey that was not available at the time the submission was made.

In reviewing this data it is important to note that the People Matter survey only records the perceptions of employees who respond to the survey, not reported instances of bullying and other behaviours.

B.1. Prevalence of bullying in the NSW public sector in 2017

The proportion of employees subjected to bullying across the NSW public sector is shown for each demographic group in [Table 1a](#). There was a slight decrease across all demographic groups compared to 2016 (as reported in [Table 1](#) of the submission).

Table 1a - Employees subjected to bullying by demographic group (2017)

Group	% *
Public sector	18%
Women	19%
Men	14%
Language other than English	15%
Mental health condition	35%
Disability	30%
LGBTI (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex)	23%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	24%

* Percentage of the respondents in each group who answered 'yes'; not a percentage of all survey respondents

Source: People Matter survey 2017

Table 2a shows that immediate managers / supervisors, fellow workers and senior managers continue to be the most frequently cited sources of bullying (this updates Table 2 of the submission).

Table 2a - Source of the most serious bullying in the last 12 months (public sector total) (2014-17)

Source of bullying	2017	2016	2014
Your immediate manager/supervisor	24%	26%	28%
A fellow worker at your level	27%	25%	23%
A senior manager	22%	23%	23%
Prefer not to say	13%	13%	10%
A subordinate	8%	8%	9%
Other	4%	4%	N/A
A client or customer	2%	2%	3%
A member of the public other than a client or customer	1%	<1%	1%

Source: People Matter survey 2014, 2016, 2017

Table 3a shows the types of behaviours experienced by those who indicated that they were subjected to bullying across the public sector in 2017 (this can be compared to Table 3 of the submission). The time series shows that these proportions remain relatively stable.

Table 3a - Behaviours experienced by employees subjected to bullying (public sector total) (2017)

Type of behaviour	% experienced
Bullying behaviours	
Unjustified criticisms or complaints	15%
Withheld information vital for effective work performance	11%
Shouted or expressed anger	10%
Deliberate exclusion from workplace activities or opportunities	10%
Spread misinformation or malicious rumours	9%
Abusive, insulting or offensive language	8%
Repeatedly hassled or gave unwanted attention	8%
Other	5%
Threatened job loss or restricted job opportunities	5%
Sent offensive phone, text, email, written, online messages	3%
Criminal acts and/or sexual harassment	
Threatened with physical harm	0.8%
Sexual harassment or abuse	0.7%
Physical harm	0.4%

Source: People Matter survey 2017

Table 4 in the submission is taken from the Workforce Profile and 2017 Workforce Profile data will be available in November 2017.

Refer to Table 5 in the submission for response rates for the People Matter survey from 2012 to 2017, inclusive.

B.2. Prevalence of bullying in emergency services agencies in 2017

Table 6a shows that the most frequently cited sources of bullying in emergency services agencies are senior managers, immediate managers/supervisors and fellow workers. These results are similar to the findings in 2016 (as shown in Table 6 of the submission).

Table 6a - Source of the most serious bullying in the last 12 months (2017)

Agency	Senior manager	Immediate manager / supervisor	Fellow worker at same level	Subordinate	Client or customer	Member of the public	Other	Prefer not to say
Ambulance Service of NSW	32%	25%	21%	10%	R	R	3%	5%
Fire and Rescue NSW	30%	26%	24%	6%	R	R	R	10%
NSW Police Force	29%	29%	23%	6%	R	R	2%	10%
Office of the NSW Rural Fire Service	20%	41%	14%	R	R	R	R	11%
Office of the NSW State Emergency Service	27%	33%	R	R	R	R	R	R
<i>Public Sector (Total)</i>	22%	24%	27%	8%	2%	1%	4%	13%

(R) = redacted (results are not available due to the small size of the group)

Source: People Matter survey 2017

Table 7a shows the top three sources of the most serious bullying between 2014 and 2017 with relatively small differences between 2016 and 2017 (this updates Table 7 of the submission).

Table 7a - Source of the most serious bullying in the last 12 months (comparison between top 3 for 2014-2017)

Agency	Senior manager			Immediate manager / supervisor			Fellow worker at same level		
	2017	2016	2014	2017	2016	2014	2017	2016	2014
Ambulance Service of NSW	32%	29%	29%	25%	27%	26%	21%	18%	24%
Fire and Rescue NSW	30%	29%	42%	26%	23%	22%	24%	26%	16%
NSW Police Force	29%	30%	30%	29%	28%	28%	23%	20%	23%
Office of the NSW Rural Fire Service	20%	18%	30%	41%	44%	29%	14%	13%	15%
Office of the NSW State Emergency Service	27%	24%	30%	33%	28%	33%	R	R	R
<i>Public Sector (Total)</i>	22%	23%	23%	24%	26%	28%	27%	25%	23%

Source: People Matter survey 2014, 2016, 2017

Table 8a shows the proportion of employees in emergency services agencies who responded that they have been subjected to bullying in the last 12 months and took sick leave and/or made a workers' compensation claim as a result of the bullying (this can be compared to Table 8 of the submission).

Table 8a - Percentage of employees who took sick leave and/or made a workers' compensation claim as a result of the bullying they experienced (2017)

Agency	Took sick leave	Made a workers' compensation claim
Ambulance Service of NSW	52%	8%
Fire and Rescue NSW	37%	6%
NSW Police Force	35%	10%
Office of the NSW Rural Fire Service	39%	R
Office of the NSW State Emergency Service	36%	R
<i>Public sector (total)</i>	39%	4%

(R) = redacted (results are not available due to the small size of the group)

Source: People Matter survey 2017

Table 9a shows the proportion of male and female employees in emergency services agencies who responded that they had been subjected to bullying in the last 12 months and, of those, the proportion who made a formal complaint (this can be compared to Table 9 of the submission).

Table 9a - Gender differences in being subjected to bullying and making a formal complaint (2017)

Agency	Of those subjected to bullying		Formal complaint made by those subjected to bullying	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ambulance Service of NSW	28%	28%	36%	35%
Fire and Rescue NSW	15%	15%	35%	40%
NSW Police Force	15%	21%	18%	17%
Office of the NSW Rural Fire Service	27%	26%	21%	R
Office of the NSW State Emergency Service	13%	14%	R	R
<i>Public sector (Total)</i>	14%	19%	23%	22%

(R) = redacted (results are not available due to the small size of the group)

Source: People Matter survey 2017

Table 10a shows the proportion of employees in emergency services agencies who responded that they had been subjected to bullying in the last 12 months and, of those, the proportion of frontline and non-frontline employees. There were reductions in the proportion of both frontline and non-frontline employees subjected to bullying across the emergency services agencies compared to 2016 (as shown in Table 10 of the submission).

Table 10a - Frontline and non-frontline employees subjected to bullying (2017)

Agency	Frontline subjected to bullying (% yes)	Non-frontline subjected to bullying (% yes)
Ambulance Service of NSW	30%	21%
Fire and Rescue NSW	16%	16%
NSW Police Force	18%	18%
Office of the NSW Rural Fire Service	33%	22%
Office of the NSW State Emergency Service	R	14%
<i>Public Sector (Total)</i>	20%	15%

(R) = redacted (results are not available due to the small size of the group)

Source: People Matter survey 2017

C. Diversity and inclusion in emergency services agencies

Table 11a shows employee perceptions of personal background as a barrier to success within emergency services agencies and the public sector.

Table 12a shows how respondents from different diversity groups answered this question.

Table 11a and Table 12a give a similar perspective to Table 11 and Table 12 of the submission although the data is not directly comparable due to a refinement of the questions.

Table 11a - Personal background is not a barrier to success (2017)

Agency	Agreement %
Ambulance Service of NSW	61%
Fire and Rescue NSW	65%
NSW Police Force	67%
Office of the NSW Rural Fire Service	55%
Office of the NSW State Emergency Service	70%
<i>Public Sector (Total)</i>	<i>74%</i>

Source: People Matter survey 2017

Table 12a - Personal background is not a barrier to success in my organisation (by diversity group) (Agreement %) (2017)

Agency	Male	Female	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	Language other than English	Disability	LGBTI
Ambulance Service of NSW	61%	64%	31%	52%	58%	59%
Fire and Rescue NSW	65%	69%	64%	76%	47%	65%
NSW Police Force	68%	66%	61%	65%	46%	51%
Office of the NSW Rural Fire Service	55%	55%	R	58%	56%	R
Office of the NSW State Emergency Service	73%	69%	R	75%	R	R
<i>Public sector (total)</i>	<i>73%</i>	<i>76%</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>74%</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>72%</i>

(R) = redacted (results are not available due to the small size of the group)

Source: People Matter survey 2017

D. Contributing factors to bullying

The analysis of the psychosocial factors associated with bullying, which were reported in Table 13 of the submission, have not yet been calculated for 2017.