

INQUIRY INTO EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCIES

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 21 July 2017

Partially
Confidential

The Legislative Council
Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs
NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into emergency services agencies
Submitted by
formerly employed by Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) from 1978 to 2011

INTRODUCTION

I was a career firefighter with Fire and Rescue NSW.

My service record is exemplary and recognising my diligent, long service and good conduct.

and was employed for over 34 years until I was forcibly medically retired on 1 December 2011.

I had committed my entire working life to FRNSW and serving the community.

I make this submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into emergency services agencies in good faith and to the best of my knowledge; everything that I state herein is true and correct. I understand that this submission is made under parliamentary privilege. I submit my request to be interviewed and to participate at a Hearing.

OVERVIEW

There is not one adverse report on my personnel files in relation to the performance of my duties as an operational firefighter and nor as an operational station officer.

In my 34 years of service to FRNSW there has only ever been one formal complaint lodged against me that when investigated it was found that there was no case to answer on my behalf. The allegation that was made against me was vexatious and malicious and I requested that FRNSW follow organisational policy and procedure and take appropriate action.

This did not occur, and no action was taken.

Since my merit based appointment to the role of Station Officer

I experienced difficulties with the FRNSW and FRNSW
in relation to the administration and application of FRNSW policies and procedures

. In making those reports regarding suspected irregular administration and application of FRNSW policy and procedure I followed the correct organisational process.

To this day no legitimate investigation has ever occurred.

The Code of Conduct states that *“FRNSW employees have a duty to report potentially unethical or corrupt practices.”*

FRNSW Commissioner is reported as saying that employees should never turn a blind eye to any inappropriate behaviour or situations, and that the person reporting will not suffer any retribution- *“that any allegations of maladministration or inappropriate conduct are taken very seriously by Fire and Rescue NSW”*.

This could not be farther from the truth.

The failure of FRNSW to legitimately investigate FRNSW and FRNSW is very concerning given that I believe the very real possibility that reporting of significant public monies by senior FRNSW management had occurred. The FRNSW Code of Conduct clearly articulates what standards are required from all FRNSW employees.

It appeared to me that depending on who you were and/or who you knew determined what transferred officer’s financial arrangements were applied.

Because of my reports I was targeted and subjected to unrelenting retribution with the end result being the termination of my employment via forced medical retirement.

By doing my duty it cost me my career.

I have included in this submission an abridged chronology.

I have comprehensive documentation in support of my claim.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

eth

Recommendations:

1-Planned interaction with representatives of FRNSW (NSW Fire Brigades) and Team Managers RSD South and Team Manager PS&CS.

2-Focussed partnership arrangement with FRNSW (NSW Fire Brigades) to review and evaluate effectiveness of current policy and procedures.

3-Obtain a commitment from FRNSW (NSW Fire Brigades) to provide appropriate information and training to supervisors and managers to improve the psychosocial working environment of employees by treating them fairly

41. 2015

20 October 2015-

Mr David Elliott MP (Minister for Emergency Services) engages Hon Roger Boland to conduct a review into the handling of a number of historical complaints of bullying and harassment involving current and former members of Fire and Rescue NSW.

I participated in the review.

42. 2015

30 November 2015-

The Hon Roger Boland forwards his report to Mr David Elliott MP Minister for Emergency Services.

Mr Boland found that in a number of cases the wrong process was applied. *“Because the wrong process was applied FRNSW has left itself open to the criticism that complaints were not properly investigated and appropriate remedies not applied to those guilty of bullying and harassment. Indeed, some of the complainants who complained the proper process was not followed alleged that FRNSW covered up for the alleged perpetrators.*

Mr Boland commented that my matters were not properly managed and found FRNSW failed to apply correct policy and procedure.

CONCLUSION

On 24 September 2004 FRNSW Commissioner, based on the information that I had provided to him, ordered a detailed and thorough investigation be conducted.

To this day no legitimate detailed and thorough investigation has occurred.

The continual failure of FRNSW to follow organisational policy and procedure to legitimately investigate my reports regarding FRNSW and FRNSW is very concerning given that I believe the very real possibility that roting of significant public monies by senior FRNSW management has occurred. Some of the FRNSW senior managers involved are currently employed by FRNSW. These opinions are supported by WorkCover NSW, Mr Roger Boland, the KPMG Report 2010, and ICAC investigations.

As a result of my reports I was subjected to unrelenting retribution in the form of systemic workplace mobbing by FRNSW senior and executive management.

The reason for such abhorrent treatment is unclear but one can theorise as to why.

My reporting and doing what is expected, cost me my career, significantly impacted on my health and the welfare of my wife and children, and has put my family under severe financial stress.

From where I stand, the way forward with these matters is for a royal commission to be undertaken so that all matters submitted by operational and administrative personnel are investigated and those responsible are dealt with appropriately.

As previously stated I have comprehensive written documentation in support of my assertions.

