

**To: The Parliamentary Inquiry into Workplace Bullying Canberra ACT 2600**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and in 2010, after working in a job for 9 years, I was terminated. The event triggered a series of events that I can only describe as horrific, and as a result of these events, my whole life was destroyed; not as much by the initial incident though; the majority of the damage was caused whilst trying to seek justice along the way. If it was not for the fact that I had an advocate, who assisted me during my ordeal, I probably wouldn't be here. There were many times when I felt humiliated and so worthless as a human being that I didn't care if I woke up in the morning. My mental health was not good and this had an impact on my family.

From the perspective of someone who has tried all avenues that are available out there to assist someone like me who was being bullied... they don't work. No matter what avenue I took to seek justice, I was bullied even more and the only reason any of my requests were met or I obtained any type of justice was because my advocate spoke for me and obtained the information on my behalf. Not once when I requested information or documentation did I receive it without being bullied or ignored and then my advocate would need to bully back to get what I was requesting. I should not have needed to be represented by an advocate to navigate the system and seek justice and I feel extremely sorry for people who are in my position and do not have anyone to assist them. When you are being traumatised on a daily basis, it is really hard to seek any form of justice let alone put up with more bullying on top of the initial incident.

What is of most concern to me is that there is no recourse for the actions of an employer found to be guilty of bullying. My employer was guilty and the insurance company paid a damages amount, but at no time did the employer take responsibility for the inappropriate management practices or change the way they conduct business (there is a report which documents 7 years of inappropriate management practices on behalf of this employer).

From WorkCover, to FairWork Australia and Ombudsman's offices, I experienced major issues that were avoidable, had people taken the time to look at the facts, people were competent at their job and the system was fairer for people who do not understand the law and are suffering from a psychological injury.

The company I worked for, as a result of me speaking up about a situation that was in the best interest of the company, did not address any of the issues my case raised, nor have they been held accountable for any of their actions. I have full volumes of paperwork and documentation to substantiate all of the claims I make in this letter to you and present this information in an effort to stop this happening to others in the future.

Current business activities support that the Company I worked for:

- Had several bullying complaints lodged with the Board of Management over several years.

- Lied to two FWA hearings (1 Wrongful dismissal dispute and 1 General Protection dispute), no recourse for actions.
- Have wasted 1.2 million dollars in government funding by not complying with Funding Contract.
- Have not met any performance measures attached to the funding for several years.
- Have breached workcover legislation, without recourse.
- Are in breach of their own constitution
- Are not compliant with Financial obligations under funding agreement
- Are not compliant with ASIC requirements
- Were found guilty by the ATO Ombudsman's office of not paying the correct amount of super and ordered to pay within 30 days (one year has lapsed and I am still waiting) no penalty for not providing the information has been imposed.

I could go on here but it is not my intention to be a part of the problem, I want to ensure I am working toward a solution.

Without assistance, I would not have received the medical treatment I needed and I doubt I would have survived what happened.

Over a two year period:

I was ignored by my employers when I tried to discuss issues with them that I was experiencing in the workplace which included the Acting CEO taking illicit drugs during working hours and coming back to work intoxicated,

I was concerned it was impacting the performance of the company and I was left responsible for the daily operations due to the Acting CEO's substance abuse issues,

When I brought the matter up with the Acting CEO I was then subjected to extreme bullying,

When I tried once again to discuss it with my employer (the Board of Management) I was sacked from a job that I loved and was good at, without presenting any of my issues,

I was given no opportunity to discuss the issues with my employer and was told that the police would be called if I tried to contact them,

I then had my work standard questioned and my competencies lied about,

I was called a liar,

accused of stealing,

accused of defrauding the government,

accused of having a vendetta;

and left feeling degraded, humiliated and quite useless as a human being.

None of the slurs on my character or the things said about me were true and even though I proved this, at the end of the day, I still walked away as a broken human being without a reference after being in a job for 9 years that I was good at.

Having lost my 23 year old son just prior to this problem with my work... Life was pretty bleak there for a while. I was extremely lucky to have an Advocate, and I am concerned for the hundreds of people out there that have gone through what I have, and do not have someone battling for them... are the even still alive!?

My case history has been included in a report to be released by the advocate who represented me at the end of July 2012 and exposes the high level of covert bullying that is experienced by a person when they speak up about an issue. Information about the report, including documents that expose the issues I experienced with agencies and organisations, who should have assisted me and did not do this until my Advocate kept at them like a hound dog (and collected all information and evidence in writing;) should be made available to the Inquiry.

who was my advocate, is in receipt of an abundance of evidence based information, which was collected through the case studies of numerous advocacy clients over the years and highlights the issues associated with reporting bullying, how the incidents are managed by HR Managers and Rehabilitation providers; and what can be done to alleviate systemic symptoms, that apparently, according to the evidence, are all too common.

There are many learning's from the information that can be used to address the identified issues that lead to illness... information that can be used to reduce human suffering and also to assist in reducing the burden of cost for Employers. In several of the case histories, where the Miracles Advocate used critical containment methodology, the cases were confined to the initial incident and were resolved within a short period of time; without the need for further damage to health, workers compensation claims or costly litigation.

Unfortunately, having enough advocates on the scene to assist people is not a practical solution, but perhaps teaching HR departments, Managers, Heads of Organisations and Government Agencies what critical containment is, would be a great start to reducing human suffering, covert bullying that takes place after the initial incident and the spiralling burden of cost for industry.