



Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Services

INQUIRY INTO EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCIES

Guidelines for submission authors

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- The inquiry will be considering the policy response to bullying, harassment and discrimination in the emergency service agencies named in the terms of reference. The process is not a forum to resolve individual grievances or complaints. At the same time, the committee welcomes personal stories/case studies to understand the nature of the policy problem.
- It is not necessary to include documentation as the committee takes your story at face value. It is better to write a succinct case study that captures your experience.
- Beyond your story, it is helpful to make observations about the relevant agency's systems – for example its system for managing complaints about bullying, harassment and discrimination, or for supporting employees who have experienced workplace trauma. The committee welcomes recommendations for how those systems can be improved.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Submissions can be made on either a confidential, partially confidential or public basis, and it is helpful if people indicate their request when they lodge their submission.
 - **Confidential** submissions are seen only by the committee and secretariat. They help to build a picture of what is going on in an agency, but cannot be referred to in the committee's report.
 - **Partially confidential** submissions have the author's name and any other identifying information removed, but the remainder is published on the committee's website and can be referred to in the committee report.
 - **Public submissions** are published in full (including the author's name) on the committee's website, and again, can be referred to in the committee report.
- Unless you are seeking full confidentiality, please avoid naming the individuals involved.
- The secretariat may also recommend that parts of your submission be suppressed (kept confidential) in order to protect your privacy and/or that of other individuals.
- The committee has ultimate decision over what is published or kept confidential.

OTHER PROTECTIONS

- Anyone who makes a submission (or gives oral evidence) is protected by parliamentary privilege from intimidation or other attempts to deter them from giving evidence or to punish them for having done so. The committee has written to the commissioners of each of the emergency services agencies mentioned in the terms of reference, emphasising that it is essential that employees and volunteers be able to freely participate in the inquiry.
- Parliamentary privilege also means that no action can be taken against current or former employees who have signed a deed of release in relation to any disclosure they make in a submission or oral evidence to the inquiry (unless, for example, their submission or evidence is circulated by them without the authority of the committee). However, any decision to breach the terms of a deed of release is a serious matter and any individual considering doing so should seek their own legal advice so that they are fully apprised of the possible risks that may flow in relation to their individual circumstances.

LODGING YOUR SUBMISSION

The closing date for submissions is **Sunday 23 July 2017**. Submissions can be lodged:

- online, via the inquiry webpage at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/emergencyservices
- by email to portfoliocommittee4@parliament.nsw.gov.au
- by letter to The Director, Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

If you would like further advice, please feel free to contact the committee secretariat on 9230 3067 or portfoliocommittee4@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

