

SUBMISSION OF ANGELA CASELLA


Angela Casella



Years of service: 2 years

Postal Delivery Officer – Western Delivery Centre

My submission is that I believe Australia Post managers seemingly deliberately try to undermine what should be straight-forward compensation claims. I also do not believe employees are told about their rights to attend their own treating doctors.

1. On Monday 27 October, 2008, I felt pain in my shoulder at the end of the day after delivering mail on my motor-bike for 5 hours but felt it was not that significant and only temporary. The next morning the pain had subsided somewhat so I spent the morning doing my usual sorting. I mentioned the pain before I went on delivery. When I started delivering, the pain in my shoulder started up again. By the end of the working day I could hardly move my neck and there was a sharp pain going down my shoulder and into my fingers. My fingers were going a bit numb. As soon as I got back to the Delivery Centre I reported this, and filled in a P400. Management took me to a company doctor  who provided me with full hours, restrictions and referred me to a physiotherapist. I was not advised that I could attend my own doctor first. At this time I was unable to move my head due to the pain.
2. I had been doing this particular round for a couple of weeks when I was injured. I was told it was a 4 hour delivery usually. I have since found out that the previous postie regularly took 4 ½ hours to do the round. I believe the extra pressure to complete the round quickly may have contributed to my injury which was diagnosed as “severe muscle strain with neural tension.”
3. On 13 November 2008 my claim was denied. The delegate relied on my manager’s response to the question: Do you recommend that this claim be accepted – “unsure pending further investigation”. The supervisor’s comments “unsure as to how injury has occurred by Angela and do not recommend any action as it is her left hand/shoulder” did not assist matters. Although, I am right-handed motor-bike delivery is invariably done left-handed. I believe these remarks were uncalled for as these staff witnessed my condition and understood that the injury could only have happened at work.

4. The union requested [REDACTED] to complete a report which he did on 27 November 2008. In this he writes *“Review with Angela confirmed reducing pain with increasing function under the care of her physiotherapist. With the positive outcome she was to tail off with residual physiotherapy, but as her claim was denied this did not eventuate.”*
5. The denial of my claim did hold up my recovery. The Reconsideration Officer reversed the liability decision. Except for one short flair- up, I have now recovered from this injury.