

**THE SECRETARY**  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

DEAR SIR,

THANK YOU FOR THE INVITATION TO INJURIES AUSTRALIA TO PRESENT ITS VIEWS ON THE DIFFERING ASPECTS OF AUSTRALIAN WORKERS COMPENSATION AS OUTLINED IN YOUR LETTER OF THE 3/7/2002.

TO ASSIST THE COMMITTEE TO UNDERSTAND OUR POSITION REGARDING THESE MATTERS PLEASE ALLOW US TO PRESENT A SHORT EXPLANATION AS TO THE ROLE AND THE AIMS OF OUR ORGANISATION.

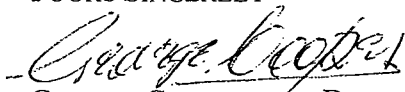
INJURIES AUSTRALIA WAS FORMED WITH THE AMALGAMATION OF THREE SEPARATE LONG ESTABLISHED GROUPS REPRESENTING THE MOTOR VEHICLE INJURED, THE WORK INJURED AND THE RELATIVES OF EMPLOYEES SLAUGHTERED IN THE WORKPLACE. OUR AIMS ARE SIMPLE. PREVENTION OF DEATH AND INJURY IN ALL HUMAN ACTIVITIES, BE THEY COMPENSABLE OR NOT, AND TO SEE THAT THE MEDICAL AND SOCIAL NEED OF THE INJURED AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE ALWAYS SWIFTLY AND FULLY SEEN TO.

INJURIES AUSTRALIA IS A REGISTERED NON-PROFIT COMPANY AND ENJOYS CHARITABLE STATUS.

THE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THOUSANDS OF INJURED PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES HAS GIVEN US A UNIQUE EXPOSURE TO THE ENORMITY OF THE MEDICAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE UNWILLINGLY INJURED HAVE TO DEAL WITH. THIS HAS LED US INTO RESEARCH WHICH EXAMINED THESE PROBLEMS SO THAT THEY COULD BE UNDERSTOOD AND THE CAUSES EXPOSED. WE BELIEVE THAT WE ARE EQUIPED WITH THE NECESSARY EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE TO BE ABLE TO MAKE A USEFUL CONTRIBUTION TO THIS ENQUIRY AND WOULD WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH THE COMMITTEE TO EXPAND ON OUR VIEWS AND TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS.

OUR REPLY TO THE QUESTIONS PRESENTED ARE ATTACHED. THE COMPLEXITY OF THESE SUBJECTS AND THE MULTIPLICITY OF THE VARIOUS COMPENSATION AUTHORITIES HAS MEANT THAT IT IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHIN REASONABLE SPACE, TO DELIVER THE FULL REPLY WHICH WE WOULD HAVE WISHED, THEREFORE WE HAVE CONCENTRATED OUR REPLY AROUND THE NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT SYSTEM.

YOURS SINCERELY



GEORGE COOPER DIRECTOR.

2/8/2002.

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**THE INCIDENCE AND COST OF FRAUDULENT CLAIMS AND FRAUDULENT CONDUCT BY EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS, AND ANY STRUCTURAL FACTORS THAT MAY ENCOURAGE SUCH BEHAVIOUR;**

WITH RESPECT, WE MUST REMIND THE COMMITTEE THAT THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY NEVER TIRES IN IT'S EFFORTS TO SHAPE PUBLIC OPINION IN IT'S OWN FAVOUR----REGARDLESS OF OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE WHICH PAINTS A VERY POOR IMAGE OF THEIR PAST SOCIAL AND ETHICAL PERFORMANCE. THEY ALWAYS SPEAK DARKLY OF "FRAUD" BUT RARELY DESCRIBE WHAT THIS "FRAUD" ACTUALLY IS OR HOW OR UPON WHOM IT IS PERPETRATED.

INSURANCE COMPANIES WILL ALWAYS TREAT ANY CLAIM AS SUSPICIOUS AS WELL THEY SHOULD. REGRETABLELY, THEIR BEHAVIOUR TO WORK OR MOTOR COLLISION INJURED PROPLE IS, AT TIMES, UTTERLY UNCIVILISED AND UNETHICAL. IT IS THE OPINION OF MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE IN A POSITION TO OBSERVE THE BEHAVIOUR OF INSURERS THAT THEY, THE INSURERS, MAY WELL WE ATTEMPTING "FRAUD" UPON THE INJURY VICTIM BY DELIBERATLY DELAYING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A CLAIM OR ATTEMPTING OUTRIGHT DENIAL OF THE CLAIM !!!!!!!!!!!

WE ARE NOT IN THE POSSESION OF THE LATEST FIGURES AS TO THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH MAKING A FRAUDULANT COMPENSATION CLAIM IN NSW. BUT WE DO KNOW THAT IN THE PAST IT HAS RARELY EXCEEDS FIVE (5) PER YEAR.

HOWEVER, NSW WORKCOVER INSURANCE ANNUAL REPORT DOES SHOW THAT HUNDREDS OF EMPLOYERS ARE FINED BY THE NSW WORKCOVER INSURANCE FOR "FRAUD" EACH YEAR. ASSUMEDLY FOR, 1. NOT HAVING ANY WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE AT ALL. 2. NOT HAVING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF THEIR EMPLOYEES COVERED BY WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE. 3. NOT PAYING THE CORRECT PREMIUM RATE FOR THE PARTICULAR INDUSTRY IN WHICH THEY ARE OCCUPIED.

**STRUCTURAL FACTORS----WORKERS COMPENSATION.**

WORKERS COMPENSATION IN NSW IS CLAIMED BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO BE A NON-ADVSERIAL INSURANCE SYSTEM. IN TRUTH IT IS ANYTHING BUT NON-ADVESERIAL.

IT IS ABSURD FOR ANYONE TO BELIEVE THAT THE WORKING MEN AND WOMAN OF NEW SOUTH WALES GO TO WORK SO THAT THEY CAN BE INJURED AND THUS CLAIM WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE. YET THAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF SOME PEOPLE WHO MAKE A GENEROUS LIVING FROM DEATH AND INJURY IN THE WORKPLACE.

THE WHOLE "INSURANCE" SYSTEM IS DELIBERATLY CONDUCTED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO BE OF THE MINIMUM ASSISTANCE TO THE WORK INJURED AND THEIR FAMILY, IF AT ALL. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT INJURED EMPLOYEES DO NOT HAVE ANY ACCESS TO STATE CONSUMER LAWS. THE EMPLOYER HAS PAID FOR THE "INSURANCE" POLICY AND LEGALLY IS THE CONSUMER. THE INJURED EMPLOYEE BECOMES THE CLAIMANT.

TO FURTHER ADD TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORK INJURED AND THEIR FAMILIES THEY ARE FORCED TO DEAL WITH AN INSURANCE COMPANY WHICH DOES NOT REPOSENT THEIR INTERESTS. THE INJURED HAVE NO CHOICE----IN MANY CASES, THIS MAY BE AN INSURER THEY WOULD NOT TRUST TO DO THEIR OWN FAMILY INSURANCE BUISNESS WITH.

CERTAINLY THERE ARE AVENUES OF COMPLAINT. BUT THESE ARE SO LOADED AGAINST THE NON-CONSUMER INJURED EMPLOYEE THAT THE SITUATION IS LUDICROUS.

LET'S CONSIDER THESE ABSOLUTE FACTS.

THE NSW GOVERNMENT WHOLLY OWNES THE NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SYSTEM. THE

COMMERCIAL INSURERS INVOLVED ARE ONLY THE PAID AGENTS OF THE NSW GOVERNMENT AND DO NOT HAVE ANY OF THEIR OWN CAPITAL AT RISK. ALL PREMIUMS COLLECTED BY THE INSURER/AGENTS ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF THE NSW GOVERNMENT.

THE NSW GOVERNMENT ALONE IS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE POLICING OF THE WORKERS COMPENSATION LEGISLATION. SHOULD AN INJURED EMPLOYEE LODGE A WORKERS COMPENSATION CLAIM AND FAIL TO RECEIVE ANY OR ALL OF HIS/HER MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION AND FINANCIAL ENTITLEMENTS ON TIME OR AT ALL, THEN IT IS THE NSW GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS FAILED. THERE ARE COUNTLESS THOUSANDS OF EXAMPLES OF HOW THE PAID INSURER/AGENTS OF THE NSW GOVERNMENT HAVE CONDUCTED WHOLESALE "FRAUD" AGAINST THE WORK INJURED AND THEIR FAMILIES. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, NOT ONE OF THESE DELIBERATE ACTS OF "FRAUD" RESULTED IN ANY ACTION BY NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER. HOW COULD IT WHEN ALL THAT THE PAID AGENT/INSURER WAS DOING WAS CARRYING OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS OF EMPLOYER, THE NSW GOVERNMENT!

WE ARE IN POSSESSION OF A COURT SUMMARY WHERE ONE OF OUR MEMBERS, A WORK INJURED MIGRANT MAN, HAD APPEALED AGAINST THE ABRUPT (WITHOUT A REASON OR WARNING) CANCELATION OF HIS COMPENSATION WEEKLY INCOME MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS. ON THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED, THE JUDGE REINSTATED THE INJURED MIGRANT MANS WEEKLY PAYMENTS INCLUDING BACK PAY. IN HIS SUMMERY, THE JUDGE CONDEMNED THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE INSURER/AGENT AND SAID THAT THE MANNER IN WHICH HE HAD BEEN TREATED BY THE WORKCOVER AND ITS AGENT/INSURER WAS SO APPALLING THAT IF THE INJURED MAN HAD ASKED FOR AN INCREASE IN HIS PAYMENTS HE WOULD HAVE GLADLY ORDERED IT. INJURIES AUSTRALIA SENT A COPY OF THE COURT SUMMERY TO THE NSW INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS MINISTER REQUESTING APPROPRIATE ACTION AGAINST THE INSURER/AGENT. TO THIS DAY WE HAVE NOT HAD THE COURTESY OF AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FROM THE MINISTER, NOR WAS ANY ACTION TAKEN TO DICCIPLINE THE INSURER/AGENT. THIS WAS A MALICIOUS AND DELIBERATE ACT OF "FRAUD" PERPERTRATED AGAINST A NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING INJURED WORKER BY THE INSURER/AGENT FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER INSURANCE. LET IT BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT COMPENSATION "FRAUD" IS NOT ONLY PERPETRATED BY EMPLOYERS AND INJURED EMPLOYEES.

WE HAVE FOUND THAT THE WORST EXCESSES OF NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER INSURER/AGENT "FRAUD" ARE CARRIED OUT AGAINST ABORIGINAL MEN AND MIGRANT WOMEN. TWO OF THE MOST VULNERABLE GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY.

THIS OBSESSION WITH THIS SO-CALLED INJURED WORKER "FRAUD" HAS CAUSED ENORMOUS DISRUPTION TO THE MEDICAL AND SOCIAL TREATMENT AND THE LIVES OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF INJURED PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES. PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TRAUMERTISED WHILE THEY WAIT MONTHS OF A CLAIM TO BE ACCEPTED, HAD THEIR INCOME TERMINATED WITHOUT NOTICE, THEIR MEDICAL AND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION TERMINATED WITHOUT NOTICE. THEY BECOME UNEMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYABLE THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN.

**THE METHODS USED AND COSTS INCURRED BY WORKERS COMPENSATIONSCHEMES TO DETECT AND ELIMINATE FRAUDULENT CLAIMS;**

AS WE HAVE STATED, THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY LIE THAT INJURED EMPLOYEES ARE CARRYING OUT WHOLESALE "FRAUD" SHOULD BE TREATED VERY LIGHTLY. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT THE WORK INJURED ARE DENIED A VOICE IN HOW WORKERS COMPENSATION IS CONDUCTED AND

THEIR ONLY COURSE OF COMPLAINT IS TO THE NSW WORKCOVER WHO IS ALSO THE INSURER. HOW UNFAIR IS THAT???? THEY HAVE DELIBERATLY BEEN MADE POWERLESS. THEY ARE AT THE VERY BOTTOM OF THE PECKING ORDER AND ARE EASILY BLAMED FOR ALL THE ILLS OF THE SYSTEM.

WE DO NOT DENY THAT THERE MAY BE THE ODD CASE OF FRAUD SUCH AS WHEN A PERSON BEING INJURED AT A SOCIAL FOOTBALL GAME ON SUNDAY AND CLAIMS ON MONDAY THAT IT HAPPENED AT WORK. THAT WOULD BE FRAUD.

IN THE PAST THE 'B' GRADE TELEVISION STATIONS HAVE SHOW SENSATIONALISED STORIES OF WORKERS COMPENSATION "FRAUD" BUT ARE THEY TRUTHFUL? WE ARE LEFT TO BELIEVE THAT WHAT THEY HAVE SHOWN IN FUZZY PICTURES IS REALLY TRUE. THEIR PAST RECORD IS SO BAD THAT WE MUST TREAT THEIR OFFERINGS WITH MORE THAN MILD SUSPICION. HOWEVER, INJURIES AUSTRALIA RECOMMENDS THAT THE COMMITTEE AVAIL ITSELF TO AN ABC CHRIS. MASTERS FOUR CORNERS PROGRAMME WHICH EXPOSED THE MISTREATMENT OF INJURED FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES BY COMCARE. WHAT IS SHOWN IS IDENTICAL TO WHAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN INFLICTED ON INJURED EMPLOYEES BY THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER AND FALSLY CLAIMED TO BE ACTS OF "FRAUD" BY THE WORK INJURED.

ALLOW US TO POINT OUT THAT THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER HAS BUT THREE MAIN TASKS. PREVENT DEATH AND INJURY IN THE WORKPLACE-----CONDUCT THE COMPENSATION SYSTEM TO ENSURE THAT THE WORK INJURED RECEIVE SWIFT AND FULL MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR THEIR WORK CAUSED INJURIES ALONG WITH INCOME MAINTENANCE WHILST THEY ARE UNABLE TO WORK AND SWIFT AND MEANINGFUL RETURN TO WORK VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION----- COMPENSATION PAYMENT FOR LOSS AND NEGLIGENCE.

THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER ANNUAL REPORT SHOWS THAT THEY SPEND FIVE (5) TIMES AS MUCH MONEY CHASING "FRAUD" AS THEY DO ON REHABILITATION. IS THIS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER FRAUD??

**THE FAILURE OF EMPLOYERS TO PAY THE REQUIRED WORKERS COMPENSATION PREMIUMS OR OTHERWISE FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THEIR OBLIGATIONS;**

INJURIES AUSTRALIA MUST, IN ALL FAIRNESS, WISHES TO POINT OUT THAT THE MAJORITY OF EMPLOYERS ARE HONEST LAW ABIDING ORGANISATIONS. AS WITH MOST THINGS IT IS THE ROGUE ELEMENT WHO DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE LEGISLATION AND JUST LIKE THE SO-CALLED FRAUDULENT WORKERS ALL EMPLOYERS, QUITE UNFAIRLY, COME UNDER SUSPICION OF THE WORKCOVER/INSURER CARTEL.

ALL THE PROBLEMS OF INCORRECT PREMIUM PAYMENT ARISE FROM THE ABJECT FAILURE OF NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER TO INSTALL A SIMPLE FEE ASSESMENT STRUCTURE BASED ON THE EMPLOYER'S FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS EMPLOYEE INCOME TAX DEDUCTION (PAYE) SCHEME. ALTHOUGH THIS HAS BEEN POINTED OUT TO THE LEGION OF MANAGERS AT NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER THEY HAVE FAILED TO APPRECIATE THE ADVANTAGE.

THE PROBLEM OF THE HUGE UNDERPAYMENT OF PREMIUMS HAS ALWAYS BEEN ASSISTED BY THE FAILURE OF THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER TO POLICE ITS OWN LEGISLATION. SOME EMPLOYERS TELL US THAT THEY HAVE NEVER HAD A VISIT FROM ANYONE FROM THE WORKCOVER IN OVER 20 YEARS IN BUISNESS.

THERE IS ONE OTHER FACTOR WHICH WE HAVE FOUND WHEN ASSISTING OUR MEMBERS. IN MANY CASES WHERE PREMIUM FRAUD IS BEING PRACTISED ON NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER COMPENSATION INSURANCE, THERE IS ALSO WAGES FRAUD AGAINST THE

WAS PREFERRED BY THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER MANAGERS RATHER THAN SEE THEIR OWN INCOMPETENCE EXPOSED.

DEPT. SOCIAL SECURITY FIGURES FROM THIS TIME REVEALED THAT THERE WERE OVER 25000 PEOPLE IN NSW RECEIVING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE WHILST A WAITING THE CONCLUSION OF A WORK CAUSED INJURY CLAIM FROM NSW GOVERNMENT WORKERS COMPENSATION SYSTEM.

OUR OPINION WAS THAT FEW OF THESE UNFORTUNATES HAD BEEN EMPLOYED BY SELF INSURERS.

**FACTORS THAT LEAD TO DIFFERENT SAFETY RECORDS AND CLAIMS PROFILES FROM INDUSTRY TO INDUSTRY, AND THE ADEQUACY, APPROPRIATENESS AND PRACTICABILITY OF REHABILITATION PROGRAMS AND THEIR BENEFITS.**

THE SAFETY RECORD OF ANY BUSINESS, ESPECIALLY WHERE THERE IS HEAVY MANUAL WORK CARRIED OUT AROUND THE CLOCK, IS ONLY AS GOOD AS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND STAFF. MANY STUDIES SHOW THAT WHERE THERE IS A THEM AND US ATTITUDE ONE IS SURE TO FIND A HIGH STAFF TURNOVER, ACCOMPANIED BY AN UNACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF WORK CAUSED INJURIES, A POOR RECORD OF AFTER INJURY RETURN TO WORK AND A HIGH LEVEL OF ABSENTEEISM. THEY ALWAYS GO TOGETHER.

THE ANSWER LIES WITH THE MOST SENIOR PERSON IN THE COMPANY PLUS ACTIVE INTERVENTION OF THE STATES SAFETY AUTHORITY----WORKCOVER.

**REHABILITATION HAS BEEN A GREAT FAILURE SINCE THE VERY BEGINNING OF THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER SYSTEM IN 1987. AS WE HAVE STATED EARLIER, REHABILITATION WAS ONE OF THE THREE PILLARS OF WISDOM ON WHICH NSW WORKCOVER WAS FOUNDED, YET IT WAS HOBbled FROM DAY ONE. ALL REHABILITATION WORK WAS DELIBERATLY HINDERED BY A SEVERE RESTRICTION ON THE AMOUNT OF MONEY ALLOWED TO BE SPENT ON THIS IMPORTANT WORK. ALSO, THE INSURER/AGENTS BECAME THE "CASE MANAGERS" AND ONLY EMPLOYED THE CHEAPEST LABOUR THAT THEY COULD HIRE.**

**SUCCESSFUL QUALIFIED REHABILITATORS FOUND THEMSELVES CONTINUALLY AT ODDS WITH THESE UNTRAINED "CASE MANAGERS" WHEN THEY TRIED TO DO THE CORRECT THING BY THE INJURED PERSON. THE OUTCOME WAS FAILURE RESULTING IN LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT AND THE PROSPECT OF THE DOLE FOR LIFE.**

**REHABILITATION IS STILL INCORRECTLY PRACTICED TODAY BECAUSE AMONG OTHER THINGS, NOBODY WILL LISTEN TO THE INJURED PERSON.**

**BECAUSE IT WAS SO EASY TO CUT OFF PEOPLES PAYMENTS AND DUMP THEM BY THE TENS OF THOUSANDS ONTO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, IT BECAME THE PREFERRED WAY TO GO RATHER THAN ATTEMPT REHABILITATION.**

**TO HELP THIS TRAITOROUS BEHAVIOUR THE NSW GOVERNMENT DEVISED A CLEVER SCHEME WHERE THEY PAID HUGE BONUSES TO THEIR INSURER/AGENTS TO DUMP PEOPLE OFF THE SYSTEM. INJURIES AUSTRALIA HAS WORKCOVER DOCUMENTATION WHICH SHOWS HOW TENS OF MILLIONS OF WORKCOVER DOLLARS WERE PAID TO THE INSURER/AGENTS IN 1998 TO RID THEMSELVES OF THEIR LEGISLATED RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**TO GREASE THE SKIDS UNDER THE UNWILLINGLY INJURED, THE INSURER/AGENTS PAID A GENEROUS CASH BONUS TO THEIR "CASE MANAGERS" TO PUSH THE WORK INJURED OFF THE WORKCOVER SYSTEM.**

**THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER MANAGERS BRAGED HOW THEY SAVED \$850 MILLION. EIGHT PERCENT (8%) WAS PAID TO THE INSURER/AGENTS FOR THEIR HATCHET WORK. BUT THE OPERATIVE WORD IS SAVED. THEY ONLY SAVED THE MONEY BY STEALING IT OUT OF THE POCKETS OF THE INJURED AND DUMPING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES ONTO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. NO REHABILITATION FOR THESE POOR PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE LEGISLATION PROMISES THEM. MUCH HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT THE CONCERN AS TO THE SHARP RISE IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVING A DISABILITY SUPPORT PENSION. IT WOULD BE A SAFE BET TO SAY THAT A HUGE PROPORTION OF THESE UNFORTUNATES COULD BE TRACED BACK TO THE DREADFUL ACTIONS OF THE NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER. REHABILITATION/RETURN TO WORK MUST BE THE FIRST PRIORITY OF A SUESSEFUL AFTER INJURY CARE PROGRAM. AGAIN WE POINT TO THE EFFORTS OF THE SELF INSURERS. EVERY EMPLOYER SHOULD BE ASKED TO FOLLOW THIS EXAMPLE. IT WORKS.**

#### CONCLUSION

IN THIS REPLY WE HAVE ONLY SCRATCHED THE SURFACE. IT MAY APPEAR THAT WE ONLY HAVE BAD NEWS ON THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT. FORTUNATLY WE KNOW OF SOME OUTSTSNDRG RESULTS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED BUT IN ALL CASES THERE CAN BE NO CREDIT FOR THE WORKCOVER OR THEIR INSURER /AGENTS. WONDERFULL PEOPLE, IN THEIR CONCERN FOR THE WORK INJURED, HAVE COME TOGETHER TO ASSIST THOSE TRYING TO GET BACK INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF LIFE AND HAVE SUCCEEDED.

FINALLY ONE SAD POINT. FOR SOME TIME NOW INJURIES AUSTRALIA HAS BEEN AWARE OF THE ALARMING NUMBER OF SUICIDES AMONG THE WORK INJURED. FOUR YEARS AGO WE TOOK THIS UP WITH THE A SENIOR NSW WORKCOVER SPOKESPERSON AND HE LAUGHED AT US. WE INFORMED HIM THAT WE RECEIVE MANY LATE NIGHT CALLS ON OUR 1800 NUMBER WHERE PEOPLE TELL US THEY ARE GOING TO KILL THEMSELVES BECAUSE OF THE WAY THEY HAVE BEEN TREATED BY WORKCOVER. THEY SAID THAT WE SHOULD TAKE NO NOTICE OF THE PEOPLE WHO TALK ABOUT SUICIDE BECAUSE THEY NEVER DO IT ANYWAY.

BEING ALARMED AND NOT SURE WHAT TO DO WE ATTENDED THE WESLEY MISSION COURSE ON UNDERSTANDING THE SUICIDE PROBLEM, A COURSE WHISH WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND. THE LECTURER INFORMED THE STUDY GROUP THAT AS SOON AS PEOPLE STSRRT TALKING ABOUT IT, TAKE HEED BECAUSE THE LARGE PROPORTION WHO DO TALK OF SUICIDE WILL ATTEMPT TO DO IT AND MANY WILL SUCCEED

WE NOW IDENTIFY UP TO FIFTY WORK INJURY CAUSED SUICIDES PER YEAR AND NSW GOVERNMENT WORKCOVER ARE NOT INTERESTED IN KNOWING ABOUT IT. SURELY THESE UNHAPPY PEOPLE HAVE DIED AS SURELY AS IF THEY HAD BEEN SLAUGHTERED AT WORK.

WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT SOMEHOW GOVERNMENTS CAN GET THEIR ACT TOGETHER, COMMUNICATE WITH THE INJURED AND THEIR FAMILIES TO PRODUCE A MORE HUMANE AFTER INJURY CARE SYSTEM. IT WOULD BE OUR PLEASURE TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS FURTHER WITH THE COMMITTEE.