

*Typed copy of
Handwritten submission*

25th July 2003
Ivan Carnegie
Vic

Commissioners
Productivity Commission

Re: National Workers' Compensation and Occupational Health & Safety Frameworks

Please forgive the tardiness of my submission; it should be viewed in the context of the mental trauma suffered as a long standing O.H.&S. D.W.G. delegate representing some 253 nursing staff in a now defunct major psychiatric hospital.

Some 10 years after being superannuated out I am now slowly coming 'good', however will not be reviewed again and am highly unlikely to return to that profession, or indeed any job in a full time capacity.

In the years 1986 (Victorian O.H.S. legislation) and 1993 when I was superannuated I achieved much; a halving of back injuries by widening toilet cubicles in psychogeriatric wards, non-slip flooring, mechanical cooling to decrease patient aggression, decent staff rooms, safe staffing numbers.

I ensured an upgrading of the facility. The only task left that I had set was the commencement of dual training of hospital management and O.H.S. representatives. Agreement in principle was reached, however I remain unsure as to whether it was union or management or both that scuttled the concept. I was broken and still suffer the consequences.

I believe totally in the value of the legislation and its potential positive impact and hope you do so.

I suggest that in looking at O.H.S. issues you look to ensure the strongest legislation and associated Codes of Practice are recommended as the minimum level rather than lowering standards across our nation.

As to Workers' Compensation if a person feels unable to return to previous position, the focus should be on maintaining workmate contacts and social contact in the form of recreational activity such as table tennis and tai chi which I now do. The value of this is a decrease in self destructive behaviours and some warmth in the soul.

Respectfully yours,

Ian Carnegie