



Australian Government

Comcare

PUTTING YOU *FIRST*

Giri Sivaraman
Principal
Maurice Blackburn Lawyers
Level 20
201 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000

By email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Sivaraman

Your clients: Messrs' [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and Ms [REDACTED] and further submission regarding clients: Ms [REDACTED], Ms [REDACTED] Messrs' [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter to Mr Paul O'Connor and Mr Steve Kibble of Comcare, dated 11 May 2012. Mr O'Connor and Mr Kibble have asked me to respond on their behalf in my capacity as General Manager, Regulatory Services Group.

In a previous letter to you on 14 May, Mr Nigel Docker noted the parameters of his investigation and that Comcare was thoroughly reviewing the workplace systems relating to the prevention and management of bullying behaviour at CSIRO.

As a result of those investigations, and due to a range of deficiencies identified, Comcare has issued CSIRO with an Improvement Notice under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. The improvement notice requires CSIRO to undertake a range of improvements to its systems in relation to matters including:

- a. The review and improvement of CSIRO's governance systems around the management of workplace misconduct and of allegations of bullying;
- b. The provision of training to CSIRO staff regarding misconduct, bullying and workplace conflict;
- c. The proper support and management of workers exhibiting psychological distress or injury;
- d. The implementation of systems ensuring regular workplace hazard and risk assessment of psychosocial risk factors; and
- e. The notification of incidents of bullying to Comcare.

We have reviewed in detail the specific allegations raised by your clients and identified in your correspondence to Comcare dated 11 May 2012 and 16 October 2012. Comcare does not propose to undertake further investigations into these specific allegations given our investigative processes have already considered the areas of concern. I would also note the passage of time since the occurrence of the matters alleged in your correspondence to Comcare and note that some of these matters have already been formally investigated by Comcare in the past. Hence, and in view of the ongoing enforcement action underway, we see limited benefit in revisiting these matters at this stage. However, we will consider any new allegations of bullying incidents if they arise.

Please be assured that the information provided as part of your clients' submissions will continue to inform our decisions and strategies going forward, including how we focus our resources during Comcare's current campaign to prevent harm in federal workplaces through targeted activities to reduce psychological injury in the jurisdiction.

If your clients would like to be appraised directly of Comcare's ongoing prevention programs and how they will impact upon the CSIRO, I would be agreeable to facilitating an appropriate forum at a convenient time and location.

Alternatively, if there is anything further you would like to discuss in respect of this correspondence or Comcare's campaign activities please contact Ms Mina Podbereski, Director Regional Services Delivery NSW/ACT by email at [REDACTED] or by telephone on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Neil Quarmby
General Manager
Regulatory Services Group
Comcare

1 November 2012