

Submission Statement

I was a part of the recent redundancies made by the Queensland Government. I had worked for the Department of Transport and Main Roads for 15 years under its different titles such as Queensland Transport. I always however did work for the Department of Main Roads before the amalgamation of the two departments. I worked in different buildings in the Brisbane gaining a wide range of knowledge of the Department and Government.

When the Government announced it would be cutting staff in the Public Service there was quite a bit of stress in the workplace as you would expect. However statements made by the Premier that permanent public servants had nothing to fear and the fact that temporary public servants seemed to be the staff targeted did allay some stress for a short while. Until it became obvious that permanent public servants were indeed in the firing line.

In my section of 6 staff we were told in May by our Director that if permanent staff were to be sacked that the 6 of us would be the first to go!! This of course caused a lot of stress for us. There was then talk of staff submitting resumes and a proper process put in place to decide which staff would go. This never occurred.

So as the months rolled by and it became clear that a large number of public servants were to be laid off the stress in the workplace and fear factor was quite intolerable. Staff in my area would arrive to work in tears some days so stressed about whether they would survive or lose their jobs. It created a very uncomfortable environment to work within. Staff were naturally scared and friction between people was becoming more prevalent.

We were told that you would not be able to volunteer to take a redundancy. So the situation arises that staff, who were happy to leave, may be forced to stay and staff who didn't want to leave would be forced to go. Not a very clever process I didn't think. We were then told that under legislation you would be offered a retrenchment package to go but if you wanted to reject that offer you could apply to be redeployed. The General Manager who came to speak to us weekly to update us on what was happening told us that there would be very few if no vacancies in the redeployment so your best to take the offer. It became clearer later that certain selected and shall we say protected staff was then moved around to positions that were vacant. An offer that was never given to me.

It then became apparent that a number had been given to our Director of how many people would have to be let go in our Branch. In August our Director called my section into his office and told us that we were sacked!! We were the first 6 to go. No consultation entered into we had no chance to argue or fight for a position that was it. It felt like a complete lack of respect for me and the job I had done for the last 15 years. Tasks and duties I had been performing began to be taken off me and I was left with little jobs to do. Tasks I had enjoyed performing I now no longer did as I was being forced out.

The Director General came to speak to our Branch and I found it to be an insulting meeting. He sat there saying how great it was going to be once all the changes had occurred and what a better department it would be as a result. Having already been given

my fate before I should have been it was a slap in the face that this man really didn't care about who was going to be let go and how it would affect them.

Then it came to Tuesday September 11, 2012. The day ordained to be the day staff found out about their fate as a public servant. Of course the 6 people in my section already knew our fate. It was a horrendous experience to sit and watch as people were contacted by phone or email to be told your job is gone. People were being terrorised every time the phone rang. It was an experience I will never forget and was handled quite poorly, the atmosphere in the office that day was of overwhelming fear.

Once we had officially received our offer we became aware of our finish date which was November 2, 2012. Almost two months after September 11. I didn't have a lot of leave owing so unlike others who had been laid off I had to keep coming into to work. As I mentioned earlier I had fewer tasks to perform now so found having to front up to work every day knowing I was on borrowed time was very stressful and uncomfortable. I was given permission to just stay home until November 2. They didn't want us in the workplace and we didn't want to be there so I found this a great relief.

I think the Department was very incompetent in how it handled the whole process. I would like to have finished my career at TMR but that has gone now taken away by a poor process that gave me no chance to even fight for my job. It came down to a group of people deciding my fate who barely or didn't know me at all!! I do not believe the people of Queensland are going to be better served by a public service that hasn't got the resources to supply services to them!! Some patience and better planning could have spared a lot of good and hardworking public servants their livelihoods. The knowledge and experience that has now been kicked out of the Queensland Public Service cannot be replaced and the people of Queensland will be the poorer for that.

I do not see how public servants are going to be able to feel any job security in the future when the government can just change legislation to please themselves. There will be a constant feeling of fear and worry about your job. How can you get the best out of staff if they are scared of their employment all the time? The Public Servants have had a negative workplace feeling for many years and now with fear as well in the workplace it will be very difficult for staff to perform their duties well.

It will be very difficult for the union and staff to feel that they can trust a government so willing to change the goalposts whenever it wants to get its way.

I am father of two with a wife who at the moment is only working part time we have a mortgage and all the bills that everybody pays but now I am unemployed thanks to the short sightedness and impatience of a government hell bent on seeing a public service outsourced which will not be of benefit to the people of Queensland