

"All that is needed for evil to prosper is for people of good will to do nothing"—Edmund Burke

The



Whistle

NO. 34, JULY 2003

Newsletter of Whistleblowers Australia

PO Box U129, Wollongong NSW 2500



Media watch

Whistleblower wins

by Janelle McLennan

Northern Star, 10 March 2003, p. 3

RICHMOND Valley Council has settled out of court a long-running defamation suit brought against it by a former Casino Municipal engineer.

Ross Sullivan, an engineer at Casino from 1961 to 1963, and again from 1971 to 1973, launched the defamation case against the then Casino Council after he was suspended from duties in 1973.

The matter was taken on by the Richmond Valley Council following the merger of the Casino Council and the Richmond River Shire Council.

Mr Sullivan, who had been highly critical of the council's administration, claimed the reasons published for his suspension were defamatory, untrue and unjustified.

At the time, Mr Sullivan was particularly critical of the council's failure to do anything about the serious problems he had identified with the town's water supply, which was pumping badly polluted water from the Richmond River.

As part of the settlement, the Richmond Valley Council and former Casino mayor Jack Lane apologised unreservedly for the hurt and embarrassment caused to Mr Sullivan.

It is also understood that Mr Sullivan received a hefty cash payment from the council.

Richmond Valley Council general manager Brian Wilkinson refused to comment on the settlement.

Mr Sullivan, who is now a member of Whistleblowers Australia, also refused to comment on the out of court settlement, but said he was pleased that the matter had finally reached 'closure'.

"However, nothing could have compensated me for the interruption to my career and otherwise. I was depressed about the council's maladministration and consequent waste of money and blunders," he said.

"In particular, I was worried about the potentially fatal contaminated water supply, and until the conviction of the meatworks in 1981 [for polluting the river] I pressed for this to be

corrected, making representations to Public Works, the council and State Pollution Control Commission.

"I even travelled to Casino to collect samples and have them tested at my own expense."

Mr Sullivan has no concerns with the current council.

Richmond River Express Examiner,
11 December 2002, p. 22.

"The following statement is published by the Richmond Valley Council:

APOLOGY

Mr. Sullivan was Casino Municipal Engineer during the period 1961-1963 and 1971-1973. He expressed concern as to shortcomings in that Council's administration and was subsequently suspended. He claims that the reasons published for his suspension were defamatory, untrue and unjustified. The present Council accepts those claims and apologises unreservedly to him for the hurt and embarrassment suffered by him as a result."

"The following statement is published by Mr. John Lane:

APOLOGY

Mr. Sullivan was Casino Municipal Engineer during the period 1961-1963 and 1971-1973. He expressed concern as to shortcomings in that Council's administration and was subsequently suspended. He claims that a comment by Mr. Lane, the then Mayor of that Council, during that suspension, was defamatory, untrue and unjustified. Mr. Lane accepts those claims and apologises unreservedly to him for the hurt and embarrassment suffered by him as a result."

Insiders needed

Senator Andrew Murray

Letter to the editor,

Australian, 4 April 2003, p. 10

ACCC chairman Allan Fels needed that whistleblower to come forward so that the petrol price fixing allegation

could be verified. She likely didn't come forward because there is no federal protection and compensation for someone risking their livelihood. Without whistleblower legislation we are never going to get the inside run on the rorts and frauds that afflict our society at massive cost.

Professor Fels has rightly called for better whistleblower protection. He and other regulators would benefit if there were more encouragement for whistleblowers to come forward.

The Government has been very poor at introducing accountability measures. Frustrated at the inaction, I have initiated a Democrats bill on whistleblowing that covers the public sector, but it is yet to be debated.

We need whistleblower legislation for the private sector to meet the need to provide protection for those who want to speak out against corruption and impropriety.

Deepening mystery of the SIEV-X

Sydney Morning Herald, 12 April 2003, p. 58

Amid the clamour surrounding the war in Iraq, it's not surprising that a significant award to an Australian from an obscure but important British magazine went almost unnoticed. The *Index on Censorship*, an outlet for many noted writers and commentators, seeks to protect freedom of expression by reporting on censorship around the globe. It made its Whistleblower of the Year award to former Australian diplomat Tony Kevin for his "dogged investigation" of the sinking of the SIEV-X. That's the acronym (Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel - Unknown) for the boat crammed with asylum seekers which sank off Indonesia while heading to Australia in October, 2001, with the loss of 353 lives. In its enthusiasm, the *Index's* citation claimed that Mr Kevin had "uncovered the truth about the sinking". He, presumably, would be the first to demur; he is still working to discover the truth. Indeed, 18 months

on, the sinking of the SIEV-X is a deepening mystery.

Tony Kevin's concern is that Australia may have contributed to the sinking through its "semi-clandestine" attempts to stop people smugglers. Australian Federal Police were working actively with the Indonesians to disrupt the smugglers. The AFP paid teams of local agents for this work but, significantly, did not control their activities. Mr Kevin has lately speculated in the *Herald* that the SIEV-X was sabotaged by being deliberately overloaded — 421 people herded aboard a 19.5-metre boat. It was intended to sink as a warning to other would-be smugglers.

Mr Kevin thinks it probable that Australian agencies knew something about the operation or were even complicit in it. He finds it strange that Australia has been so "half-hearted" in seeking to extradite Abu Quassey, the people smuggler who organised the SIEV-X's final journey. Mr Kevin believes that Australian authorities fear what Abu Quassey might tell an Australian court. Meantime, Abu Quassey has not been charged by the Indonesians, nor have Indonesian police who helped corral his doomed passengers.

The Senate, last December, sought a judicial inquiry into the sinking of the SIEV-X. The Government has ignored that request, loudly denying it has anything to hide. Meanwhile, the questions and answers mount, not just from Tony Kevin but from other dogged investigators such as the Labor senator John Faulkner. The case for an inquiry becomes only more compelling. As Mr Kevin says, "The real SIEV-X story remains to be told."

For whistle-blowers only

Sebastian Rupley
PC Magazine, 23 April 2003

Last year, corporate whistle-blowers made headlines right along with corporate executives who were guilty of shady accounting practices and greed-driven schemes relying on inside information at firms such as Enron and WorldCom. While some of the whistle-blowers ended up receiving praise and national attention, they went through personal ordeals when they

became publicly known as the tipsters. Now privacy and security software company Anonymizer is making available a new technology called STOP (Secure Tips Online Program), designed to help secure the anonymity of potential whistle-blowers.

The flurry of corporate malfeasance last year produced a flurry of legislation requiring corporations to observe new rules in areas such as financial-records auditing and ethics reporting. One bill, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, requires publicly-held corporations and their audit committees to implement confidential, anonymous complaint procedures through which employees can report malfeasance to the SEC. Anonymizer designed its new STOP service to help companies comply with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

"We provide a completely online and secure system that companies can deploy in about ten minutes," claims Lance Cottrell, the founder of Anonymizer. "A compliance officer goes to the sectips.com site and fills out a compliance form. This form specifies who should receive the tips and more information, after which a code is issued and the company must give out the code. The code makes sure that a random person can't just go in and start hurling tips."

When asked if Anonymizer makes any absolute guarantees about employee anonymity though, Cottrell said no. "We don't guarantee the anonymity, but no such site we've ever deployed in seven years has ever received a complaint about anonymity." He says Anonymizer has protected over four billion Web pages.

Pricing for the STOP service scales, from a minimum of \$1,000 per year, according to a company's size, which is determined by the number of employees and the company's revenue.

Anonymizer has been securing anonymous exchanges of Internet-based information for seven years. After the 9/11 attacks, the company provided the FBI with a site for securing such exchanges so people could submit tips without fear of repercussions.

Did this man know too much?

Gerard McManus
Sunday Herald Sun,
2 March 2003, pp. 37-38.

Gary Lee-Rogers blew the whistle on alleged corruption within one of Australia's leading security agencies. It was, he said, a decision that could cost him his life. Friends believe it did.

WHY did Gary Lee-Rogers die? If his family and friends are to be believed, the anti-terrorist training officer was killed after trying to expose corruption and misconduct inside one of Australia's leading security organisations.

Sources say police believe Lee-Rogers, who was found dead in his Queanbeyan flat, outside Canberra, on October 1 last year, committed suicide with an overdose of insulin.

However, an autopsy that proved inconclusive, revealed a blood-tipped knife was found near Lee-Rogers' bed. Blood was also found elsewhere in his bedroom and in his kitchen.

The mystery does not end there.

Earlier, in a series of chilling e-mails sent to friends and colleagues, the 45-year-old Australian Protective Services instructor predicted his own death at the hands of those whom he claimed had persecuted him relentlessly.

In one, from May last year, he wrote: "I am in fear of my life and know I will die 'accidentally' or 'by my own hand' within the next few months.

"Make it known that if I suicide there is someone behind my demise. I am expecting an accident at any time."

In another e-mail written shortly before his death, he wrote: "You do not have to look outwards for terrorism and its agents; it is already here, look inside before it is too late."

His landlady is said to have told Lee-Rogers' estranged partner that she saw him shortly before he was found dead and that he had been so severely bashed he could barely walk.

His friends believe that bashing was carried out by people connected to law enforcement agencies, possibly even by members of the Australian Federal Police.

Australian Protective Services — which guards many of the nation's most important buildings, including Parliament House, detention centres and international airports — has long had close ties to the AFP and was last year brought under its wing.

Lee-Rogers had also claimed a senior AFP detective, working in the ACT, forced a gun into his mouth and demanded he plead guilty to criminal charges that, he said, had been brought against him in an effort to discredit his claims of corruption.

"I have already had a gun placed in my mouth and you should know it was ... of the ACT police regional fraud squad who did it. Make it known he is a corrupt police officer," he wrote to a friend.

The officer is still a member of the AFP.

Now, five months after resisting a thorough probe into the circumstances of his death, authorities in Canberra have agreed to a coronial inquest.

THE AFP, which also speaks for APS, declined to discuss the case. "As the matter is before the NSW coroner it would be inappropriate to comment," a spokeswoman said.

The NSW coroner is involved as Lee-Rogers' Queanbeyan flat was outside the ACT.

Lee-Rogers' mother, Aileen Leslight, 80, of Frankston, is demanding justice for her son.

"I definitely believe he was murdered," she said this week. "What happened to Gary was something that should never have been done in this country."

Mrs Leslight, a retired ballet pianist, said she believed her son was now free of the torment that had plagued the last two years of his life, but would not be at peace until justice was done.

"The biggest thing I've got to do now is to forgive them," she said. "But I've got to find out first what they did so that I can forgive."

The authorities' treatment of Lee-Rogers' family has also been criticised.

Mrs Leslight and Lee-Rogers' former partner, Kathleen Mills, who have been demanding a full-scale investigation since his death, only heard about the decision to hold a coronial inquest from the *Sunday Herald Sun*.

"You'd think they would at least pay us the courtesy of telling us, but no," Ms Mills said. "It is very strange, but it has been strange from the beginning."

As of Friday, there was still no official phone call or letter to inform Lee-Rogers' next-of-kin of the inquest.

Ms Mills said she had occasionally doubted her former partner when he described how he was being persecuted by sections of the APS and then the police. Those doubts were dispelled by his death.

"All I want to know is what happened to Gary," Ms Mills said. "But in my heart now, I do not believe it was suicide."

She said that, while she was estranged from Lee-Rogers in his last year, they were still engaged in phone-text tiffs right up until his last days.

"That's one reason why I believe he didn't commit suicide," she said. "We were still arguing — that's how I know he was OK."

"But he also said in those messages that he was going to 'beat those bastards'."

Events surrounding Lee-Rogers' fall from grace as a highly regarded senior instructor with the APS make for puzzling reading, but the circumstances of his death are even more disturbing.

He was one of the most qualified instructors in the APS. Before joining the organisation he worked for many years as a paramedic.

He was later to join search and rescue teams, and underwent security training in the US.

He was also qualified in scuba diving, flying and parachuting.

But in 1999, his career collapsed when he warned his superiors about problems within APS.

These ranged from small-scale racketeering, the promotion of badly trained or unprepared officers, and misappropriation of government funding.

More disturbingly, Lee-Rogers believed there were serious shortcomings in security at facilities such as Sydney Airport and "other sensitive establishments."

His warnings were made long before the terrorist attacks in New York and Bali.

Instead of acting on his warnings, the organisation is alleged by his

family to have turned on him, leading to a 2 1/2-year ordeal that culminated in his death.

The names of members of the APS alleged to have committed fraud, as well as AFP officers who allegedly threatened Lee-Rogers, are recorded in his e-mails which have been obtained by the *Sunday Herald Sun*. The officers still hold senior positions.

Lee-Rogers registered official complaints about the alleged harassment that followed his allegations, including being relegated to storeroom duties, and, Ms Mills said, he was eventually suspended without pay.

"From that moment on (when he first made a complaint) everything went wrong," she said. "Gary's life was gradually taken apart, bit by bit."

The alleged campaign of harassment reached a peak on April 12, 2000, when the AFP charged Lee-Rogers with criminal offences relating to alleged false salary and overtime claims, and the theft of a first-aid kit.

He strenuously denied the charges, claiming they were fabricated as punishment for him trying to expose corrupt officers.

Without an income and unable to find work, Lee-Rogers gathered 26 witnesses to support his case. He also sought the support of Whistleblowers Australia, a voluntary organisation that campaigns against corruption.

BUT, according to another friend, Christina Schwerin of Morwell, the more determination Lee-Rogers showed in wanting to fight the charges, the more vicious the persecution became.

Lee-Rogers did not have the chance to clear his name — he died 38 days before his trial was to begin.

Ms Schwerin is convinced police officers were involved in his downfall. "You don't expect police to be doing this sort of thing," she said. "It's like a public execution," she said.

"Gary wasn't worried about the charges because he knew he would beat them."

According to the e-mails he sent to friends, the alleged persecution by colleagues and police included house break-ins, as well as physical and verbal threats.

The character assassination is said to have reached extreme levels, with Lee-Rogers complaining one of his

persecutors signed him up to more than 400 internet pornography sites without his knowledge.

His passport was confiscated and his mother said this week he was not allowed to leave Canberra to visit her in Melbourne.

According to his e-mails, the persecution also involved "get well" cards sent to him with the message: "Hurry up and die."

In other e-mails, he alleged that on several occasions an AFP policeman drove by his flat and drew his hand across his neck as if slitting his throat.

On another occasion, the officer was said to have stretched out his hand in the shape of a gun.

"He did this as though he was shooting me," Lee-Rogers wrote.

Despite his accusations that people were out to kill him, authorities insisted at the time of his death that there was no evidence to suggest foul play.

Unofficially, police are said to be sticking to the theory that Lee-Rogers committed suicide with an overdose of insulin, which would not necessarily show up in a post-mortem examination.

The mystery surrounding his death increased with the release of an autopsy report written by Melbourne forensic specialist Michael Burke.

In it, Mr Burke wrote: "There is no evidence to suggest any other persons were involved in the death."

Yet he went on to make an inconclusive finding, declaring the cause of death was "unascertained."

However, Whistleblowers Australia president Dr Jean Lennane, a trained physician, criticised the autopsy.

"There were several omissions, and no one appeared to have looked at his medical records," she said. "The suggestion is that he died of an insulin overdose, but there is no mention of a syringe."

Whistleblowers Australia also points out the report did not mention any markings from the alleged bashing, and there was no mention of scars left by an operation to remove a brain tumour in the late-1990s.

Mr Burke, who is a senior forensic pathologist at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, declined to discuss the criticisms of his autopsy.

"Given that there is a coronial inquest, I think it would be inappropriate to comment," he said.

ACCORDING to his report, Lee-Rogers was lying in his bed "in the fetal position holding a prescription of Prednisolone" — a powerful anti-inflammatory agent.

The only item of clothing mentioned was a green tie, leading to suggestions he was naked.

However, the person who eventually found Lee-Rogers, a close family friend and former paramedic colleague, said he was wearing a T-shirt and jeans.

Around his neck was also a number of medallions, including a Green Berets badge, a St Christopher's medal, and one showing the image of a wolf.

Mrs Leslight's suspicions were further raised when the medals were returned to her with apologies for the fact bloodstains had not been removed.

Mrs Leslight is also unhappy with a reference made by the pathologist that Lee-Rogers "had a history of alcoholism and depression."

She rejects this and wants it withdrawn. "He was ostracised earlier in his life because he didn't drink," she said. "He was definitely not an alcoholic."

Ms Mills said she had known him to drink during only two periods in their relationship — when he was diagnosed with the brain tumour and again during the alleged persecution by police. "It is simply wrong to claim he had a history of alcoholism," she said.

Nobody knows for certain the exact day Lee-Rogers died.

His mother became concerned in late September after repeated attempts to contact him failed.

On her request, Ms Mills went to the flat on Saturday, September 28, Grand Final day. "His mother rang me to tell me she had this feeling that Gary was dead," Ms Mills said.

"I went around there on the Saturday afternoon and bashed on the door, but there was no answer.

"He was found on the following Tuesday (October 1).

"Now I know he was probably already dead inside."

She and Lee-Rogers had lived together for almost six years, but their relationship could not survive the

pressure imposed upon it by the alleged campaign of persecution, she said.

Whether the people behind that campaign were also responsible for his death remains a matter of conjecture — for now.

STOP PRESS

The inquest is scheduled to be on 3 November 2003 in Queanbeyan before the Deputy State Coroner.

Telstra urges staff to dob in lax colleagues

Luke McIlveen

Australian, 28 May 2003, p. 6

TELSTRA employees will be asked to dob in corrupt or incompetent colleagues through a whistleblowers' website being developed to make the company more transparent.

The managing director of regulatory, corporate and human relations, Bill Scales, told a Senate estimates inquiry the website would be an avenue for lower-level employees to lodge complaints directly with upper management. "It's intended for our staff to give them confidence that they are able to bring serious allegations against management," Mr Scales told the inquiry.

He raised the whistleblowers' scheme after questions from Tasmanian Labor senator Sue Mackay, who claimed a female Telstra manager had arranged a lucrative construction contract at Telstra for a former employer.

The Perth-based middle manager allegedly organised the contract following a severe lightning storm in late March in which crucial sections of the Telstra network were damaged. Telstra confirmed that eight contractors were flown from Sydney and Adelaide to carry out the repairs, but denied there was any conflict of interest.

"We have not looked at this in detail," Mr Scales said. "What I can say is our internal systems are meant to ensure that there is no improper conduct in these circumstances," he said.

[...]

Letters and articles

Dealing with misleading advice from insurance companies

Besides their normal business, where the insured can count on being paid for a claim, it is good business for insurance companies and their salesmen as well to insure uninsurable cases, it would appear. Where the conditions for insurance acceptance are not normal commission, in most cases they can even avoid paying for claims by maintaining that the insured was insured under false pretences. This means a pure profit and is therefore very "good" business for them.

How do they do this? Consider my case, of which there are likely to be many more. I know of one among my friends. As an independent tradesman, I needed income protection for sickness and injury at work. The insurance company representative or insurance salesman filled out my application form and convinced me that he knew how to fill in the form to the satisfaction of the insurance company. He filled in the application and included an income which was far in excess of my actual income. My actual income was below the minimum income which the insurance company would insure. I signed the form believing that since I was paying increased premiums, it was acceptable to the insurance company and that I would receive a higher level of income protection. When I claimed assistance after an injury at work, my claim was denied because I was never eligible to be covered by that particular policy. The insurance salesman denied giving me misleading advice and the insurance company fully supported their representative.

My last appeal was to the Financial Industry Complaints Service and they did not answer my concerns relating to the way their hearing was structured to benefit the insurance company. They also ignored questions about the benefits that were available to insurance companies and representatives by insuring applicants who were clearly not eligible to be covered. The insurance salesman would get his normal commission and I estimate that an

insurance company could receive a profit margin of 4 to 5 times for applicants who were ineligible compared to those who were eligible. They also did not acknowledge information that I gave them of another person who obtained the same insurance cover under similar circumstances to mine. He obtained this same policy, despite my warning to him before his application was filled in and despite his mention to the insurance salesman of my situation.

I am interested to get any feedback about similar situations and would ask you to contact me.

Rob Leereveld
12 Heather Grove,
Belgrave South, Vic 3160
Phone 03-9754 5173, 0408 454 361

Justice and fair play for all citizens

I would like to canvass the opinions and experiences of your readers, and share with them some of my experiences in trying to get justice and fair play for everyday Australians. I live in the State of Queensland, and there is a Criminal Justice Commission and an Office of Ombudsman to whom one can appeal to investigate wrongdoing, injustices, etc. My first question is what do these taxpayer-funded offices stand for? What are they expected to deliver to the ordinary Australian? I am appalled and devastated by my personal experiences in dealing with petitions to these government offices. Where do ordinary Australians take their grievances for fair and impartial investigations of wrongdoing in government and semi and local government departments? Who is responsible to see that these offices do the job they are set out to do? In my particular instance, having got nowhere with both of these Offices, I personally spoke to the Premier of Queensland Mr. Peter Beattie, via the ABC Talk Back Radio. I was assured by the Premier that he would not tolerate any attempt at wrongdoing by any of those entrusted to serve the

community. However, when I sent in my formal complaint and evidence to him, it was referred to the Minister of Justice, and then it was forwarded to the Minister of Local Government, who very conveniently sent me a response that my matter has been investigated, and no further investigations will be undertaken. At a time when the High Court of Australia, in the decision in *Ainsworth vs Criminal Justice Commission*, declared that procedural fairness must be observed by the Commission in all proceedings and hearings, and in the discharge of their functions and responsibilities, who is taking the responsibility to make sure that this happens?

I believe this task lies firmly with the Premier of the state. I am still waiting for my Premier to grant me the justice and fair play I deserve, and what I am entitled to in my particular situation. If there is anyone still waiting for his/her day of justice, let us please join hands, and do whatever that is necessary to make sure that our leaders do the job they were voted in for.

Sandra Adams

The HealthQuest saga

Derek Maitland

It's not very often, as we all know, that a campaign against an unjust, nefarious and quite damaging government practice gets results, but Whistleblowers Australia can chalk up a victory of sorts in the NSW HealthQuest reform saga.

HealthQuest, it'll be remembered, is the medical consultation body within the NSW Health Department, presently under the direction of the Government Medical Officer, which conducts examinations on behalf of a range of government departments to determine if employees are, in its own abbreviated jargon, "FTC" (Fit To Continue) in their jobs.

The substantial majority of cases that it's been called upon to consider are employees themselves seeking grounds for voluntary medical retire-

ment. But as far back as 1997 it became apparent through complaints to WBA that HealthQuest was also being used, particularly in cases involving teachers, to “retire” on psychiatric grounds employees who were complaining about discriminatory, corrupt or questionable workplace practices and just wouldn’t back down.

The Government Medical Officer, Dr Helia Gapper, took the first round of the WBA campaign across her bows when members verbally savaged her over the HealthQuest complaints at the 1997 seminar on the Protected Disclosures Act at Parliament House, forcing her to flee the podium. Over the following four years the campaign was stiffened with two public protests, one outside HealthQuest’s Sydney offices and the other at Parliament House, at which the WBA called for an investigation of HealthQuest’s status and activities.

NSW Branch President Cynthia Kardell remembers both events fondly. “Many members threw themselves into it and got all dressed up, and carried papier mache figures, to emphasise HealthQuest’s less reputable aspects,” she recalls. “At the demonstration outside HealthQuest, Dr Gapper apparently hid in her office and had the staff lock their doors against enthusiastic members who wanted to take advantage of the TV and radio presence. The police were called.

“We were a bit nervous when the police arrived, being new at this sort of thing, and I must say the demonstrations took more to organise than a conference or AGM. But it was fun, and it was a crucial cause.”

Behind the banners and barricades, WBA conducted a survey of members and a newspaper advertising campaign for state employees who considered they’d been unjustly “retired” or stigmatised by HealthQuest on questionable psychiatric grounds. The actual target of all this was the validity of “Retirement Certificates” which HealthQuest was issuing on behalf of various government organisations, documents which, as a number of examples showed, were questionable enough to suggest victimisation. One in particular sought to retire an employee on grounds of a “personality disorder,” yet was diametrically opposed to a clean bill of health issued

by HealthQuest’s own examining psychiatrist.

All in all, about 30 suspect cases were submitted by WBA to the NSW Ombudsman’s office, and these in turn were forwarded to the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC). Another 14 or so complaints had already been lodged with the HCCC, but nothing much appeared to have been done about them. It was the Ombudsman’s intervention that finally triggered some action, with the HCCC formally requesting a Health Department review of HealthQuest and the system’s appeals body, the Medical Appeals Panel.

At the same time, a series of no less than 62 questions were directed at the Health and Education Ministers in the NSW State Parliament questioning the role of HealthQuest, its activities in the case of Lalita Bilandzic, a teacher “retired” on medical grounds that were then overturned by the Medical Appeals Panel, and the apparently questionable use of HealthQuest’s considerable powers in other cases by the two departments.

Two questions in particular spotlighted the groundswell of concern that had built up at that stage regarding HealthQuest’s activities and the medico-legal cudgel that it allegedly wielded against “troublesome” employees.

(1) The Health Minister was asked: “Have allegations been made that many government employees, referred to HealthQuest for ‘Fitness to Continue’ examinations, are being certified by HealthQuest as suffering from a range of bogus mental illnesses, based on one consultation by a HealthQuest examining psychiatrist, and that such diagnosis may be contrary to the employee’s own treating doctors?” (2) “Have allegations been made that HealthQuest and the Medical Appeals Panel are being used as a back door method to get rid of employees who are critical of the system?”

What these questions and complaints were pointing to, in fact, was a situation all but tantamount to the use of psychiatry as a weapon against dissidence, something we all regarded with a certain horror during the heyday of the Soviet Union.

It wasn’t the first time that there’d been an attempt to reform the HealthQuest procedure. Premier’s Memorandum

98-1 in 1998 had identified several areas of possible abuse and issued guidelines aimed essentially at improving it from the employee point of view.

However, by late 1999, when the Whistleblowers campaign was going strong, it was clear that some departments were either ignoring the guidelines or not paying full attention to them. And it was really only when Whistleblowers lodged its file of cases with the Ombudsman, which in turn lit a rocket under the HCCC, that the wheels of justice at last began to turn.

The result was a full independent review of HealthQuest and the referral procedure, undertaken in 2000 by David Lowe Consulting. The review did not investigate any of the individual complaints, choosing instead to focus on “policies and procedures.” That came as very little comfort indeed to the people who’d been victimised and effectively thrown on to the retirement scrap heap by distinctly dodgy HealthQuest reports, and for many of the complainants there was also very little satisfaction indeed in the substance and jargon of some of the findings and recommendations.

Take this, for instance: “HealthQuest needs to place greater emphasis on building an organisational culture which develops a systematic awareness that effectively dealing with complaints provides the opportunity to address employee and employer concerns and to improve the administration and operations of the organisation.”

In the view of WBA and members who’d been victimised and their lives almost destroyed by HealthQuest, the only thing systematic about the whole issue was the extent to which abuses were taking place. But in amongst all the flak, the Lowe Review made it clear that among its prime targets were accountability and transparency within HealthQuest and the referral procedure; that HealthQuest needed to ensure it wasn’t being manipulated into getting rid of whistleblowers or “difficult” employees; that employees referred to HealthQuest needed to be informed at the point of referral of their right to appeal, and how to do it; and that when they did appeal, it would be to a full Medical Appeals Panel, not just a quorum of one, the Chair, which

Lowe found had often been making decisions on appeals up until then.

On top of that, the Lowe Review uncovered glaring neglect, mistakes and abuses in employer referrals to HealthQuest, cases in which there'd been a "lack of objectivity" and "no apparent health related issue," in referral reports, and, most significantly "the statement of a medical diagnosis, particularly in the area of mental health, by supervisors who are not qualified to do so."

In other words, there had been instances in which managers or supervisors had informed HealthQuest of an employee's emotional state, directly implying a psychiatric problem, when their opinion was based entirely on a superficial response to the stress of their situation and had no medical basis whatsoever.

Quite apart from these abuses, there were instances reported to WBA of a failure or neglect by HealthQuest and the government organisation in question to issue notice of the employee's right to appeal to the Medical Appeals Panel, which under the regulations must be given the moment the employee is referred to HealthQuest. The notices give them 21 days to lodge such an appeal. In some cases the appeals notice wasn't issued until well after the employee had been through the HealthQuest "retirement" procedure and was, for all intents and purposes, dismissed from their job.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Lowe Review, however, is that something has actually been done about it. A "Model for the Governance of HealthQuest" was drawn up by the Health Department last year, a full five years after the WBA first berated the Government Medical Officer in the Parliament House auditorium, and it's been displayed for public comment, or rather buried, on the internet under the department's "Workplace" heading in its list of services.

Not immediately easy to find unless you know what you're looking for, but then even the department's own public relations department knew nothing about HealthQuest when first approached by this writer. WorkCover, which has not accredited HealthQuest, didn't know anything about the organisation either, except that the new governance model was somewhere around.

However, this model goes beyond Lowe, in fact, pointing out that while most of the Lowe reforms have been implemented, "it is evident from the review that the integrity of internal [HealthQuest] processes would be best secured by a more appropriate governance structure." In other words, a major and much-needed shake-up.

According to the Health Department, the structure has now been decided upon, and is currently awaiting ministerial approval. What it's supposed to do, and hopefully will do in practice, is remove and safeguard HealthQuest from any undue influence by the government departments and other bodies that it will be servicing.

HealthQuest will be taken outside the Health Department's administration and set up as a separate independent statutory organisation legislated and regulated under the Health Services Act and funded by the Treasury. At present it's virtually hidden away under the department's Central Sydney Area Health Service.

The Health Minister will appoint a five-member board and a CEO, both of them responding directly to the minister. Significantly, the CEO will not be the Government Medical Officer, whose office currently has the role of HealthQuest director, and this, as the model delicately puts it, will "avoid the potential for conflict and confusion that may otherwise arise if the GMO, as an employee of the Board, was exercising functions outside the control of his or her employer."

A new three-member Medical Appeals Panel will be set up as a committee of the HealthQuest board, and apart from a permanent Chair and a medical practitioner it'll have one member experienced in "occupational health and administrative and procedural matters in the public sector." This means that the panel will now not just review the medical diagnosis of a complaint but the industrial processes as well.

All this is good news, of course, for anyone who comes into conflict with their department and HealthQuest in the future, but what about the 40 or more specific cases that WBA has sought action on in the past? The Health Care Complaints Commission and the Ombudsman pointedly declined to take them up as individual cases back in 1999, and they were all

lumped together as one issue which, while certainly suggesting systematic abuse in HealthQuest, did nothing to redress individual grievances. The Lowe Review just as pointedly declined to examine them individually, too, coming up with the rather lame excuse that there was "no time" in the terms of reference to carry out separate investigations.

We know that HealthQuest stopped issuing its "Retirement Certificates" in 2001, after the Lowe Review, suggesting there may well have been a lot more than meets the eye to claims that these were in fact phoney documents and in some cases based upon "bogus" medical conditions.

A recent judgement in the Industrial Relations Tribunal has set an interesting precedent, ruling that despite an employee's HealthQuest "retirement," the employee was technically never dismissed by the organisation in question and is therefore entitled to compensation for the years that the organisation failed to continue payment of salary.

This retrospectivity may prove heartening not just in this particular case but for anyone prior to 2001 who was "retired" from their jobs by HealthQuest and can satisfy at least two abuses pinpointed in the review — documented "retirement" on disputed medical grounds with no prior written notice of right-of-appeal, and information given to HealthQuest about their alleged medical condition by anyone not qualified to do so.

Submission to the WA Police Royal Commission Response to Discussion Paper on Corruption Prevention Strategies, and related issues

Jean Lennane
WBA National President,
April 2003

[For reasons of space, this paper has been slightly edited and the appendix, dealing with the Gary Lee-Rogers case, has been omitted.]

Whistleblowers Australia (WBA), founded in 1991, is a self-help group whose goal is to help promote a society in which it is possible to speak

out without reprisal about corruption, dangers to the public and environment and other social issues, and to help those who speak out in that way to help themselves.

From the beginning, it has been painfully obvious that law enforcement agencies throughout Australia are a major problem, and the gloomy forecast by Justice Athol Moffitt, Royal Commissioner into organised crime, in *A Quarter to Midnight*, published in 1985 when he retired from the Bench, was alarmingly accurate. The Fitzgerald Inquiry in Queensland was before our time, but since then WBA has been associated with stimulating the setting up of the Wood Royal Commission in NSW, and to some extent with the WA Royal Commission.

As we hope the Commission realises, eliminating corruption from law enforcement agencies is an impossible task. It is however possible to reduce it substantially, and although in our opinion neither Fitzgerald nor Wood were as thorough as they should have been (the former virtually ignoring the drug trade, and the latter failing to go to top levels in the search for corruption, or deal adequately with police protection of paedophilia) there is no doubt that currently the NSW and Queensland police services, following their respective inquiries, are somewhat less corrupt than those of other states.

In NSW, WBA has been involved since 1996 in the Internal Witness Advisory Council that was set up in response to requirements from the Wood Commission that police whistleblowers (the term 'internal witness' was preferred by those involved) should be supported and protected. This has been a very useful exercise for us, as there have been some very positive — and when tested, practical — developments from that committee. Unfortunately, a promising start has not been maintained, with things in our opinion going backwards for the last 2-3 years; but there is no reason why the WA Royal Commission cannot benefit from that experience, both in what to do, and what to try to avoid.

The discussion paper is good as far as it goes, but from our experience omits several vital considerations, which must be dealt with in any serious attempt to combat police

corruption. Some of these are as follows.

Political involvement

The inevitability of this was emphasised by Moffitt, and indeed, like most things involving police, has probably been there since the colony was founded 200 years ago. When a service is corrupt, one of the first things that happens with any new police minister is to 'get something on him.' Often some offence/illegal activity is known to police already, but if not, officers may be ordered to participate in setting him up. (We have first-hand accounts of this happening in several police services.) The information is then used, not to deal with some illegal activity such as sex with underage males, but to keep the minister in line. And not just police ministers. Allegedly the police commissioner in one state kept photos locked in his desk, showing the premier leaving the premises of 'Brett's Boys,' an underage male brothel. This was referred to as 'the Commissioner's job security.'

Corruption at top levels

This is a reality not faced by the Wood Royal Commission. If a police service has had substantial levels of corruption for many years, then the likelihood of a particular officer being actively or passively (i.e. turning a blind eye to colleagues' corrupt activities) corrupt must increase as you go up the hierarchy. This occurs as honest recruits who are not prepared to be actively or passively involved are weeded out of the service; or failing that are denied promotion, so they remain at the lowest levels. This phenomenon, although its cause hasn't been acknowledged, has been demonstrated in research in Australia showing anti-corruption attitudes are strongest at the lowest levels. The unfortunate end result is that a substantially corrupt service will always have heavily or completely corrupt top management; and a cleanskin commissioner brought in from outside, like Ryan in NSW, will find him/herself completely isolated, and in due course undermined and ousted.

Homicide by, or aided by, law enforcement officers

This issue is highly relevant to WA, a classic example being the unsolved

shooting of a Gypsy Joker bikie chief, in which ex-high-ranking WA police officer Don Hancock was — or should have been — a chief suspect. The failure to deal with that in a way where justice could be clearly seen to be done led to a chain of most unfortunate events culminating in Hancock's car-bomb 'execution' a year or so later. This sort of lawlessness is highly regrettable, and can and should be prevented, by having nationally accepted policies and procedures for dealing properly with such situations as soon as they arise.

It is also worth noting the recent result of the inquiry in Northern Ireland regarding law enforcement agencies' involvement in informing Loyalists of the activities and whereabouts of their opponents, who were then murdered by them. Very similar situations arise in Australia, where however the parties concerned are people blowing the whistle to law enforcement agencies on activities of the drug trade. It appears the drug traffickers involved are warned, and told the identity and whereabouts of the whistleblower, who then dies in mysterious circumstances. The case of WA drug informant Andrew Petrellis is an example of this. As is typical, it has never been solved.

There is a clear need for a national protocol to deal with such cases, to avoid the usual situation of police investigating their mates. A task-force of 'untouchables' is a possibility, but obviously could easily become a travelling circus, analogous to the 'Triad Renunciation Scheme' that allegedly operated in Hong Kong. The record of national law-enforcement agencies, the NCA and AFP, does not inspire confidence in the ability of such bodies to keep clean. The main prerequisite, for whatever system is chosen to deal with this problem, is complete public accessibility and accountability, with the results reported to all Australian parliaments at least annually — cases notified, cases investigated, charges, and convictions.

Protection, nurture, and encouragement of police whistleblowers

This is absolutely vital to any attempt to prevent and deal with police corruption. The WA Royal Commission has unfortunately made an egregiously

inauspicious start with this, in its treatment of Lewandowski. The Fitzgerald system, of offering — and upholding — immunity for police who ‘roll over’ to the Commission, as long as they tell everything, is essential in our view, and the failure to honour the undertaking to Lewandowski must have been seriously counterproductive.

However, Royal Commissions aside, whistleblowers will always remain the key, and the policy to nurture, protect and encourage them has to come, and be seen to come, from the top. This will only work if the police commissioner of the day has nothing to hide, hence nothing to lose from a culture that encourages whistleblowing.

Commissioner’s Awards for Whistleblowers: One important way to get the message across is to give Commissioner’s awards for blowing the whistle, awards for moral courage analogous to those already given for physical courage. This has been started in NSW, although so far the only well-known, ‘difficult’ case to receive such an award did so posthumously. Awards must be given publicly, unless the recipient specifically needs to remain anonymous, and at the same ceremony at which other important awards are made.

Penalties for victimising whistleblowers: Another way, equally important, is to prosecute or otherwise discipline officers who victimise colleagues who have blown the whistle. This is the other side of the standard ‘reward good behaviour, punish bad’ system for training humans and animals. (The Royal Commission needs to recognise that the system in place in most law enforcement agencies in Australia operates in exactly the reverse direction.) So far however only one such case has been pursued in NSW, and as far as we know was not successful.

Internal Witness Support Unit: Another way, equally important, is to set up the equivalent of the Internal Witness Support Unit in NSW: that is, a small, central unit, dedicated to the purpose, which police officers blowing the whistle can contact at any time for support, and which has the support of top management in handling issues that arise, such as victimisation and harassment. Having a central data collection is vital for the research

described in the next section and for getting a handle on what shape the service is in. The unit has to be run by the right person, for the right reasons, and with total support from the Commissioner down. This has at times been the case in NSW, but not always. However the framework as developed there is we believe a very practical and effective model, and would be readily available to the WA Royal Commission. We would be happy to comment further on the details if required.

Independent research to monitor the health, welfare and promotion prospects of police who blow the whistle compared with those they blow the whistle on: NSW has pioneered this important research, whose rationale is that in a corrupt service, what happens to police who blow the whistle follows a clear pattern that can be relatively easily and cheaply monitored. For the research to be meaningful, it has to involve significant numbers (100-200 cases per year in NSW), and be performed by an independent and reputable body. For logistical reasons, there also needs to be an easily accessible central register of whistleblowers, another reason for having the equivalent of an Internal Witness Support Unit.

The ‘normal’, corrupt pattern is for a police whistleblower to have an unblemished, often above average, service record until the time they blow the whistle, after which they rapidly accumulate negatives, such as disciplinary and often criminal charges, failure to gain promotion, greatly increased amounts of sick or stress leave, and Workers’ Compensation claims. Such negatives are concrete and easily measurable, and are then compared with the group of police on whom they blew the whistle, and a group of controls. Controls continue in their previous pattern; the ‘whistleblowers’ do as well as, and usually better than, controls; and whistleblowers do spectacularly worse than both other groups.

The aim is to produce a service where this pattern is reversed; where whistleblowers do at least as well as controls; and ‘whistleblowers’ do worse. NSW managed to achieve this three years ago, a very creditable feat. (Unfortunately it is doubtful that this has been sustained.) Since each research project costs around \$50,000,

it is a very cost-effective way of monitoring the moral health of a police service — certainly very much cheaper than a Royal Commission. It would be possible to set up a system where a Royal Commission would be mandatory once the results reached a certain level — always remembering, of course, that in a very corrupt system, results could be corrupted. Openness, and public scrutiny, would be needed to help to prevent that.

Recommendations

i) Commissioners must be held formally and legally responsible for significant corruption found in their service. This has to be a condition of their employment, with a clear understanding that ignorance will be no defence.

ii) If a Commissioner is replaced, most or all top-level officers should be replaced at the same time. (Suitably-qualified female officers, usually being excluded from ‘the brotherhood’, and therefore substantially less likely to be or have been actively corrupt, may provide a means of retaining corporate memory if such a wholesale replacement occurs.)

iii) A specific offence should be created of using police information to bring pressure to bear on members of the public, including politicians, judges, and other prominent citizens.

iv) A national policy should be developed for dealing with homicides involving police, with cases reported centrally, investigated by police who are administratively and geographically separate from victim and potential accused. Overall results should be reported directly to Australian parliaments.

v) Police Royal Commissions must give, and uphold, immunity to police who ‘roll over’.

vi) Police Commissioners must give awards for the moral courage involved in blowing the whistle, analogous to those for physical courage.

vii) Police Commissioners must support the prosecution/disciplining of officers victimising whistleblowers.

viii) Police Services should all have the equivalent of the Internal Witness Support Unit in NSW, which must have the full support of a clean Commissioner.

The legacy of the Pentagon Papers

Brian Martin

Who ever said that whistleblowing never makes a difference?

The leaking of the Pentagon Papers is one of the great whistleblowing sagas. The Pentagon Papers was the name given to a 47-volume top-secret "History of U.S. Decision-making in Vietnam, 1945-68," written by specialists within the US Defense Department at the request of Defense Secretary Robert McNamara.

The Pentagon Papers were political dynamite because they told what had really been going on in Vietnam. That was in contrast with the official line, regularly presented by top government and military officials, who blatantly lied to the public about the Vietnam war. For example, the official line was that the war was going well, when actually there was plenty of inside information that it wasn't.

On 4 August 1964, President Lyndon Johnson announced on television that North Vietnamese boats had deliberately attacked US ships on routine patrol in international waters in the Tonkin Gulf. On the basis of this claim, Congress supported a resolution that was used to expand US involvement in the war, a war that ultimately claimed the lives of 50,000 US troops and two million Vietnamese. But the reports of a North Vietnamese attack in the Tonkin Gulf on 4 August 1964 were uncertain, probably wrong. Furthermore, the US ships were on a secret intelligence mission within North Vietnamese territorial waters. This is just a sample of the many lies to the public and Congress involved in a single incident.

Daniel Ellsberg served in Vietnam and worked for the Pentagon and the Rand Corporation, which did lots of work for the Pentagon. Like many others, he knew that officials systematically lied to the public. Like many others, he believed in "the unbreakable rule of the executive branch": "You could not have the confidence of powerful men and be trusted with their confidences if there was any prospect that you would challenge their policies in public in any forum at all."

Ellsberg had access to the Pentagon Papers and believed that they showed that US policy in Vietnam was misguided. He first tried internal channels. He approached various officials, including national security adviser Henry Kissinger, encouraging them to read the papers, but basically they weren't interested.

In the late 1960s, popular opposition to the war increased dramatically. Ellsberg came in contact with Janaki, a nonviolent activist from India, who opened his eyes to a different set of values. Previously he had thought the best way to help stop the war was to use his influence on the inside. Now he thought it might be more effective to take his concerns to the public.

Ellsberg copied the 7000 pages of the Pentagon Papers, an extremely lengthy and tedious process in those days of slow photocopiers. He offered the papers to politicians but could find no one who would make full use of them. So eventually he went to the press, offering the papers to the *New York Times*, where the first story appeared on 13 June 1971.

The government took out an injunction against further publication, the first such prior restraint in US history. This attempt at censorship generated enormous interest in the papers. Ellsberg went underground for two weeks, day-by-day feeding parts of the papers to different newspapers. As they published material, the government eventually stopped issuing injunctions. The Supreme Court ruled against the injunctions, allowing the Pentagon Papers to be published in full.

Ellsberg was a marked man. He was indicted, along with Rand colleague Anthony Russo, who had helped copy the papers. But his defence lawyers discovered that, amazingly, there was no US law against leaking government documents. You could be dismissed but, unlike Britain or Australia, there was no official secrets act.

The history revealed in the Pentagon Papers finished in 1968, before the election of Richard Nixon that year. The Papers showed that officials had lied about the Vietnam war under previous US presidents, but had nothing about Nixon's administration. Nevertheless, Nixon wanted to "get" Ellsberg in order to deter other

officials who might reveal secrets about his own administration. White House tapes, later revealed, include this conversation:

Mitchell [Attorney-General John Mitchell]: No question about it ... This is the one sanction we have, is to get at the individuals ...

President: ... Let's get the son-of-a-bitch into jail.

Kissinger: We've got to get him.

President: We've got to get him. ... Don't worry about his trial. Just get everything out. Try him in the press. Try him in the press. Everything, John, that there is on the investigation, get it out, leak it out. We want to destroy him in the press. Press. Is that clear?

Kissinger and Mitchell: Yes.

Part of the Nixon-inspired effort to destroy Ellsberg was a burglary of Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office undertaken by the "plumbers," a secret unit set up by White House staff. But this backfired in a big way. When information about the burglary became public, the judge dismissed the case against Ellsberg.

The plumbers were also involved in a more famous burglary, of the offices of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate building in Washington DC. The Watergate scandal engulfed Nixon, eventually leading to his resignation in 1974. But from Ellsberg's perspective, it had an even more important effect.

Nixon claimed that he was winding down the war in Vietnam. He was lying, as usual. He actually had plans to dramatically expand the war. He vetoed a motion by Congress to withdraw financial support for the war effort. But it was too much for Nixon to undertake two major tasks at once, to both build support for his war plans and to stave off the looming Watergate crisis. His own survival took priority, and so his escalation of the war did not occur.

Read all about this, and more, in Daniel Ellsberg's revealing book *Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers* (New York: Viking, 2002).

Whistleblowers Australia contacts

New South Wales

"Caring & Sharing" meetings We listen to your story, provide feedback and possibly guidance for your next few steps. Held every Tuesday night 7:30 p.m., Presbyterian Church Hall, 7-A Campbell St., Balmain 2041.

General meetings held in the Church Hall on the first Sunday in the month commencing at 1:30 p.m. (or come at 12:30 p.m. for lunch and discussion). The July general meeting is the AGM.

Contacts: Cynthia Kardell, phone/fax 02 9484 6895, or messages phone 02 9810 9468; email ckardell@iprimus.com.au

Website: <http://www.whistleblowers.org.au/>

Goulburn region: Rob Cumming, 0428 483 155.

Wollongong: Brian Martin, 02 4221 3763.

Canberra contact: Peter Bennett, phone 02 6254 1850, fax 02 6254 3755, email customs_officers@iprimus.com.au

Queensland contacts: Feliks Perera, phone/fax 07 5448 8218. Also Whistleblowers Action Group contact: Greg McMahon, 07 3378 7232 (a/h).

South Australian contacts: Matilda Bawden, 08 8258 8744 (a/h); John Pezy, 08 8337 8912

Tasmanian contact: Isla MacGregor, islamacg@southcom.com

Victorian contacts: Anthony Quinn 03 9741 7044 or 0408 592 163; Christina Schwerin 03 5144 3007; Mervin Vogt, 03-9786 5308.

Western Australian contacts: Avon Lovell, 08 9242 3999 (b/h); John White, 08 9382 1919 (a/h).

Whistle

Brian Martin, editor, bmartin@uow.edu.au, 02 4221 3763, 02 4228 7860; Don Eldridge, Isla MacGregor, Kim Sawyer, associate editors

Letter to the editor: drugs/corruption

Mr Frank Evitt of Yamba, in a letter in the *Daily Telegraph*, exposed the real weapons of mass destruction in today's society, namely the rampant drug culture which continues to grow unchallenged.

Several years ago a Mr Mick Skrijel discovered part of a shipment of heroin which had been dropped from a sea-going freighter off the coast of South Australia.

Being the civic-minded trawlerman that he was, he reported it to the relevant authorities and in the process, interfered with the money-flow to people in high places who were instrumental in attempting to warn off Mr Skrijel, but to no avail.

What followed for Mr Skrijel can only be described as an appalling abuse of power as his family was subjected to having his house fire-bombed, his wife's car also fire-bombed along with his trawler, which was burnt to the water-line. Also his young daughter was threatened with physical violence and he was framed by the authorities over the alleged ownership of a marijuana plantation.

Besides appearing in numerous newspaper articles, he took his plight to the steps of Parliament House in Canberra and to several current affairs programmes Australia-wide in the pursuit of justice.

To sit at the back of the Supreme Court and observe 15 to 20 barristers and solicitors working over-time to deny Mr Skrijel any semblance of justice was quite sickening and only reinforced to me the perception that successive governments are not fair dinkum about eradicating the flourishing drug trade and, in the process, a large percentage of drug-related crime.

The disgustingly corrupt children overboard fiasco and the more recent cover-up and protection of an unsuitable, inept Governor-General only serves to illustrate that this current government lacks honest and realistic ambitions to seriously address the rampant drug trade and its inevitable consequences.

Edward John Regan

Whistleblowers Australia membership

Membership of WBA involves an annual fee of \$25, payable to Whistleblowers Australia, renewable each June. Membership includes an annual subscription to *The Whistle*, and members receive discounts to seminars, invitations to briefings/discussion groups, plus input into policy and submissions.

If you want to subscribe to *The Whistle* but not join WBA, then the annual subscription fee is \$25.

Send memberships and subscriptions to Feliks Perera, National Treasurer, 1/5 Wayne Ave, Marcoola Qld 4564. Phone/Fax 07 5448 8218.

The activities of Whistleblowers Australia depend entirely on voluntary work by members and supporters. We value your ideas, time, expertise and involvement.

Whistleblowers Australia is funded almost entirely from membership fees, donations and bequests.