

Public Administration Committee

From: mbkilner
Sent: Monday, 24 July 2017 2:01 PM
To: Public Administration Committee
Subject: Worksafe Review Committee

Attention: The Review Committee

I have been a teacher with the Education Department for over thirty five years, having worked in Primary and Secondary schools.

I have been involved with the State School Teachers Union of W.A for most of this time and have been responsible for supporting teachers exposed to unsafe workplaces.

Over this time I have witnessed many incidents that illustrate the ineffectiveness of the Worksafe Legislation and how Worksafe fails to address this systemic problem.

In 2010 I was elected to the position of O.S.H Representative at [redacted] and found many of the safety issues that impinged upon the well being of our staff were beyond my influence because the management regime did not want to address these issues.

The cost of doing this made it a prohibitive and

My discussions with other O.S.H. Representatives across the State suggested this was the case in numerous schools across the system and a safe work environment in government education depended upon the School Administrators being willing to embrace the legislation. This should not be the case as it is mandated that a process should be followed in every school. However, this is not the case.

Back in 2010 I started the year trying to draw the Principal's attention to a dust extractor in the Design&Technology workshop that had not been working for at least five years .

No one really wanted to push the issue until I was elected and we created an O.S.H. Committee as prescribed under the Act.

Halfway through the year the dust extractor was fixed.

Our school in 2010 also had serious problems with behaviour management and a number of students created a threatening environment for a number of teachers/students.

The situation was not being managed well as these student were not compelled to follow individual behaviour management programs.

Consequently, towards the end of 2010 I presented the Principal with a Provisional Improvement Notice relating to the management of these students.

Two investigators from Worksafe came to the school and I was interviewed without a fourth person present. I knew at the time that this was inappropriate but I went along with the meeting.

This approach explains why AIR forms are rarely completed and Online Incident Notification Reports are not kept up to date.

In my time as an O.S.H. Representative I was not allowed time to do this job, prevented from contacting "all staff" and O.S.H. Meetings only happened on sporadic occasion:

This attitude is not confined to my school but is common throughout the State

Many schools in this State with difficult to manage students struggle to maintain a safe environment where staff and students come to school knowing they will not be abused or threatened daily.

The recent fiasco at _____ illustrated this clearly when D.E.T. refused to exclude a student who terrified the school.

I am at the end of my career and I feel sorry for the younger teachers who now enter an environment where there is a culture to hide the truth and present a picture of everything being "ok".

Things are not "ok" young teachers are only surviving five years in this brave new world and bullying is part of the job!

Worksafe and the stringent application of the Act is the only means of changing Departmental attitude regarding these safety concerns. I would appreciate the opportunity to appear before this committee and present my concerns about how Worksafe ignores the real issues in schools.

Regards

Mr. Bill Kilner