



MEDIA RELEASE

Community and Public Sector Union – Victorian Branch



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Unallocated with Case Overload the true culprit, says Gov't Statements

The Government's own witness statements reveal the true culprit of neglect when it comes to protecting Victoria's vulnerable children, CPSU Victorian Branch Secretary said today.

Ms Batt said 'let the Minister make an argument that piling case after case on exhausted professionals isn't unsafe in itself.'

'The number of unallocated cases combined with case overload, imposed by Departmental management, is the true culprit,' she said.

Ms Batt said, 'these irresponsible actions are finally exposed in the Government's statements lodged with Fair Work.'

'These are just amateurish efforts to shift the responsibility by those in self-preservation mode,' she said.

Ms Batt said, 'our limitations are designed by the professionals in the field and only deal with case management, giving kids at risk priority as a result.'

'Stopping case allocation to student placements and having a safe system of work has re-invigorated the workforce and the system.'

'The Government's own Inquiry will reach the same conclusion,' she said.

Ms Batt said, 'our child protection system is chronically under-resourced and playing silly guilt games doesn't help either party to settle our differences.'

'The union will vigorously defend the bargaining rights of all 35,000 government employees who work in 400 different specialist occupations across 23 agencies and 2,000 worksites.'

'The Government has chosen to pick winners but all crown employees deserve to have their right to bargain for a decent wage increase protected.'

'These rights must not be affected because some managers have to take a caseload,' she said.

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SUMMARY

Government Witness Statements

1. Sue Jamieson Manager Loddon Mallee Region concedes;

- 6 staff in Region dealing with 366 children in the Intake unit
- 8 staff in Region dealing with 297 children being monitored (response)
- ? staff nos identified in Long term units with 433 being supported but units are full.
- ten departmental staff who have experience in child protection have been sent from Melbourne to provide assistance but are not being allocated to individual children.

Blames caseload controls for leaving children without a case support worker.

Caseload controls commenced in the Bendigo office only last Friday 11/11.

2. Denise McLaughlin manager North West Metropolitan Region concedes;

12,200 reports of children in need of protection in NWMR and there are currently approximately **3,600** vulnerable children being monitored and protected by only **301** full time equivalent staff.

- **29** staff in Region dealing with **694** children in the Intake unit
- **70** staff in Region dealing with **1,010** children being monitored (response)
- ? staff nos identified in CYFE units with **970** being supported but **171** do not have a worker allocated now.
- ? staff nos identified in Aboriginal focus units with **338** children but **55** do not have a case worker now.
- ? staff nos identified in Community case management and Care unit with **1036** children and **77** unallocated now.
- Managers answering phones after 4.30pm – how indignant and unfamiliarity with CRIS (computer system) will result in delays helping children at risk

Blames caseload controls for leaving children without a case support worker.

Caseload controls commenced in Preston and Footscray offices only yesterday 17/11.

3. Elizabeth Armitage – Acting Director – Child Protection placement -prior, manager Eastern Metro Region

- **13 329** children involved with CP services
 - 2 715 intake
 - 4 816 response
 - 5 642 court orders- supervision etc
 - 536 being closed
- **55,178** reports were received in 2010-11, with only **1,479** child protection specialists and support staff employed.