

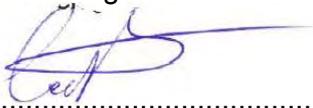
## SUBMISSION OF STATEMENT OF CON PATRALIS

1. I, Con Patralis, Corporate and Technical Employee, with MFB, [REDACTED] in the State of Victoria, say as follows:
2. I have been employed by the MFB for 33 years. I am currently employed as the Multicultural Affairs Coordinator.
3. As well as holding the rank of Multicultural Affairs Coordinator I hold the following qualifications/memberships:
  - i. Advanced diploma Community services management
  - ii. Peer Support Qualification
  - iii. Critical Incident Stress debriefing Qualification
  - iv. UFU Membership
  - v. South Melbourne Football Club Member
  - vi. Southern Ethnic Communities Advisory Council Member
4. I have also received Victorian Multicultural awards for Ethnic Communities Engagement and Hobson Bays Youth Programs

### **Meeting with Con Patralis**

5. In my time at the MFB I have seen increased bullying and intimidation of MFB Corporate Staff members by MFB senior management over the last 3-4 years. As a peer and a UFU delegate I feel I can honestly attest to this and have in fact experienced in myself.
6. During the period of being a union delegate I was offered career development opportunities such as Secondment to CFA as a multicultural expert. Once MFB Management had changed the secondment with the CFA was unsupported;
7. As part of my responsibilities in ensuring the program was successful I received positive performance appraisals from CFA management and Emergency Management Victoria Hierarchy in the form of verbal/written communication from my superiors.
8. I consider myself to be a valued employee and have always performed my job professionally as can be demonstrated by my commitment to advancing the fire services and community protection in the above areas. Also my commitment to fellow employees and the MFB can be demonstrated by my significant contribution and role in which I was engaged in regards to the MFB peer support program. This role was performed for approximately 23 years including being the peer support coordinator for 10 years. I commenced my activities as a union delegate in 2009, however after a change in management 2011 the opportunities afforded to me by my employer were taken away and no additional opportunities were offered. This was done without explanation.

9. On a number of occasions after the change of management I sought an explanation from my superiors as to why these opportunities and career development matters had ceased occurring. I can only conclude that the reasons my employer's attitude changed was due to my role in becoming in a delegate in 2009. Initially I thought this would pass but it became entrenched and has affected me deeply given my commitment to my employer, the community as a delegate. The project I referred to above and opportunities were systematically and chronologically removed during my time as a delegate.
10. As stated, my employers treatment of me during my period as a delegate resulted in anxiety and depression. I submitted a work cover claim in relation to this matter and was referred to an independent psychiatrist for assessment as part of the work cover process the outcome of which confirmed the initial prognosis from the Brigade Medical Officer.
11. As a result of the independent assessment my Work Cover claim was accepted however it was for a limited period of time.
12. In consultation with the unions work cover advisor I went through a process of conciliation to dispute the limitation as this matter was unfair. My claim under work cover has been successful, I currently have an accepted claim which supports an exposure and attributes that to work related incidents. I feel vindicated that what was identified by the BMO was supported by the independent Work Cover assessment.
13. It is my strong belief that had I not performed the role of union delegate that my employer's attitude prior to me becoming a delegate would have continued and I believe I have received unfair attention and had my career development opportunities removed. During my time as a union delegate there was a long and drawn out bargaining process with my co-workers for a new EBA. During this time protected industrial action was put in place.
14. This was a protracted and fairly adversarial environment of which I believed that the tactic in limiting my employment opportunities was a direct result of being the lead delegate in these negotiations.



.....  
Con Patralis

Date: