



POLICE ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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PRESS RELEASE

NSW Police Force Failed its Duty to Protect Police

The NSW Police Force (NSWPF) this afternoon was fined \$350,000 plus costs in the Industrial Court of NSW before The Honourable Justice Roger Boland as a result of a WorkCover investigation and prosecution into the exposure of members to drug exhibits at the Sydney Police Centre during an audit in March 2009.

The NSWPF pleaded guilty to their 9th criminal conviction under work health and safety legislation.

Police Association President, Scott Weber, said, "Once again NSW Police has shown its inability to protect its officers from injury by not conducting adequate Risk Assessments & providing, training, supervision and basic Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

"The NSWPF has failed in its duty of care to these officers. The health and welfare of the officers was obviously put at the risk and they are left to deal with the aftermath. They were perfectly healthy before being directed to perform the drug audit and found themselves seriously ill after breathing the toxic fumes.

"Since 2002 NSW Police have paid in excess of \$1 million in penalties for breaches of Workplace Health and Safety.

"How many convictions does it take for an organisation to learn that it needs to provide its officers with appropriate information, training, supervision and equipment to do their jobs safely?

"Our members deserve the very best as they go out and protect the communities of NSW on a daily basis.

"The NSWPF needs to finally step up, and do what's expected by all of us to protect police officers from preventable injury and illness into the future."

Footnote:

NSW Police currently has another WorkCover prosecution pending before the courts in relation to the Death of S/Con Bill Crews who was shot and killed during a search warrant.

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