



MEDIA RELEASE

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State Emergency Service whistleblower vindicated by ICAC

The Public Service Association of NSW (PSA) welcomes today's ICAC report which vindicates sacked whistleblower and State Emergency Service Deputy Commissioner Tara McCarthy.

"If the Baird Government wants to demonstrate its commitment to transparency then Deputy Commissioner McCarthy should be immediately reinstated," said PSA General Secretary, Anne Gardiner.

"The employment contract that Deputy Commissioner McCarthy and other senior public servants are required to sign means they can be sacked for any or no reason with no right of appeal."

"Misuse of these unfair contracts is clearly a recipe for corruption. It is critical that the NSW Government gets rid of these contracts so public servants feel safe to speak out when they encounter corrupt behaviour."

On 14 May 2013, Ms McCarthy was sacked without notice or explanation and escorted from her workplace after she had reported corruption to her superiors.

"I took my responsibilities as a public servant very seriously," said Ms McCarthy, a PSA member.

"The NSW SES consists of almost 10,000 men and women who give tirelessly and generously to the community during floods and storms. They do so as volunteers often taking unpaid leave from their own jobs.

"Their commitment strengthened my own resolve to uphold the values and integrity of the NSW public service even more acutely.

"I also believed in the protections for public servants contained in the Public Interests Disclosures Act. That if I uncovered and reported corruption I would be protected from detrimental action, including, dismissal. I was wrong.

"Today's findings however are fair and just.

"The community needs to be confident that public officials will report corruption. Public officials in turn must be confident that they will be protected if they do so," Ms McCarthy said.