

## Submission to the Covid-19 Response Inquiry

I write this submission as one of the many Australians who suffered a detrimental impact as a result of the Federal and State Government handling of the pandemic. I, like many Australians, do not believe that the Government can look back on their pandemic response and conclude 'we handled that well'.

To the contrary, like in the aftermath of any crisis, an *honest* review (albeit with the benefit of hindsight) will likely reveal many areas for improvement.

However, such an *honest* review must also be open to the opinions of independent, highly-credentialed experts in their relative fields of study (such as virology, epidemiology and vaccinology) - and Australia is fortunate enough to have many of these, *outside* of agencies such as the TGA.

Any 'performance assessment' or evaluation completed by those responsible for their own policies will be of little value. The scientific method is characterised by a rigorous competing of ideas - not the censorship of alternative views, as we saw during the pandemic. Such suppression of alternative schools of thought must be avoided at all costs if this review is to be worth anything - it must be open to input from the *entire* scientific community.

Never was the censorship of competing schools of thought more apparent than with the issue of vaccination. It is this area that has affected me personally the most. To be clear - the vaccination policies and messaging of the Federal Government and the State Government (in my case [REDACTED]) - devastated my family and I financially and emotionally.

Specifically, in relation to the 'Terms of Reference', my submission relates to '**key health response measures (vaccinations and public health messaging)**'.

My story (which is a similar story to that of over 1 million Australians):

I am a healthy, working-age person with no underlying co-morbidities. I have a healthy immune system. I have [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I am tertiary educated (Bachelor of Science) and for the last 20 years have had a distinguished career as a police officer (including many years as a detective).

At the end of 2021, in the face of low vaccine uptake, the [REDACTED] police commissioner mandated Covid-19 vaccinations for the entire workforce, regardless of circumstances.

Now don't get me wrong. I concede that - IF the Covid vaccines stopped *transmission* in the workplace - this would have been a 'reasonable' direction (or, at least, understandable). But the glaring truth of the matter is - there was never any data that supported this assertion! Indeed Pfizer has since admitted (to the European Parliament) that they did not test for transmission.

So - somehow - I (like many other Australians who said no) found myself being accused of being 'selfish' and - despite my medical history - labelled an 'Anti-vaxxer'! I even identified an alternative Covid vaccine I was prepared to take, and offered to take my long service leave until that was achieved - but was still summarily suspended without pay.

I remained suspended without pay for over 2 years, **ultimately leading to the sale of our family home and other assets that we had worked all of our lives for.**

While this Inquiry may be tempted to flick responsibility for mandates to the State Governments and their departments, it is clear that Federal authorities were a party to it - or at the very least complicit with mandates by their refusal to outlaw such measures when given the opportunity to do so in parliament.

People had many different legitimate reasons for not wanting to take the Covid vaccines - whether they be medical, religious or ethical... but none of these reasons were acknowledged.

Governments made lip service only to the various iterations of Human Rights legislation around the country - and then trampled all over a freedom that could be broadly termed 'bodily autonomy' (the right to choose what goes into one's own body).

Then minister for Health (Greg Hunt) famously stated that the vaccine rollout was 'the largest clinical trial ever'. This statement in itself correctly pointed to the fact that the vaccines were only 'provisionally registered' with the TGA.

That is to say that - no matter how promising the vaccines may have appeared on paper - they were still only 'provisionally registered' (with data still being collected as the clinical trial went on). It is my considered submission that **any participation in this clinical trial should have been strictly voluntary.**

There is a massive ethical issue with what then transpired - as vast cohorts of the population were **compelled** to take part in a clinical trial (at risk of losing their employment).

That is a vastly different scenario to what should have transpired (and hopefully will be the case moving forward): **the public should never again be compelled or coerced to take provisionally registered vaccines - participation should be voluntary only.**

That last bit in bold - is hardly a controversial statement!

The Australian Government recently recognised victims of another medication (Thalidomide) and that tragedy provides a useful analogy: for many years, the *leading regulatory authorities advised that Thalidomide was 'safe and effective'*... (in much the same way that the Covid vaccines have been decreed 'safe and effective' by the TGA. The reality is that such a statement can *never* be made while a clinical trial is ongoing (indeed that is part of the reason *for* a clinical trial!).

The truth about Thalidomide was discovered some 5 years later - and it was pulled from the shelves. It begs the question - how much more will we know about the mRNA vaccines in 5 years time..? Will history repeat? Until such certainty exists (as is the case with the other childhood vaccines) there should never be any compulsion to participate.

The other question that remains to be seen is - will this Covid-19 Inquiry effect the changes required to avoid similar pitfalls in the future...?