

Defence victim speaks out

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One of the 847 victims who lodged a complaint with the DLA Piper review says he has never recovered from his abuse. The 63 year old man who wants to be known as 'Bill' says a Royal Commission is needed. He says he raised his abuse with a defence psychologist in 1968 but was ignored. He wants an apology and compensation.

Transcript

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- **TONY EASTLEY:** One of the 847 victims who lodged a complaint with the DLA Piper review says he has never recovered from his abuse.

The 63 year old man who wants to be known as "Bill" says a Royal Commission is needed. He says he raised his abuse with a defence psychologist in 1968 but he was ignored.

He wants an apology and compensation.

He spoke to our reporter Samantha Hawley.

BILL: One morning, fairly early in the morning, I was dragged from my bed by six or eight people. I was dragged out the back to the outside shower. I was stripped naked. I was bumped a couple of times. They threw me naked under a cold shower, scrubbed me down with a brush broom. And then somebody stuck the broom handle in a very embarrassing and inappropriate place shall we say. (Pause) Um, yeah.

SAMANTHA HAWLEY: And what impact did that have on you at the time?

BILL: Same impact it's got on me now. I just felt totally humiliated, um, I spent on and off the next few days bleeding. I was too frightened to go and get any help. I was only 18 and a half at the time.

Anyway, eventually I succeeded in getting a discharge on medical grounds. I got out with 30 per cent disability after 12 months service. I was 100 per cent fit when I went in. And it's never left me.

I haven't, I reckon I have probably had about 10 good nights' sleep since 1968.

SAMANTHA HAWLEY: What action do you think needs to be taken? Why did you put in the complaint to the DLA Piper review?

BILL: Um, so what do I want? I want it to stop happening, I want it to stop happening because you don't achieve anything by victimising or bastardising or bullying anyone.

As far as compensation goes, I'd like to see an apology, I would like to see, I would like to see some sort of compensation.

SAMANTHA HAWLEY: And do you think there needs to be a Royal Commission into what occurred?

BILL: Yes, without a doubt.

But in some of these older cases, particularly cases like mine, the simple fact of the matter is that half the perpetrators are probably bloody dead by now.

What I do think there should be and what I'd like to see - and there is nothing out there - I would like to see a, some sort of support group for people who have made submissions to DLA Piper, even if it was a secure website or something, where people could talk to each other anonymously because now it's very difficult carting all of this around and not having anyone to talk to about it.

I think you would find that for every one of us that put our hand up and complained, there's probably 10 or 20 more that didn't.

TONY EASTLEY: Bill, a defence force abuse victim, speaking to AM's Samantha Hawley.

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