

## Woolworths in Denial Over Serious Workplace Issues

by mod *Saturday, Nov 29 2014, 10:00am*

international / prose / post

Whether it's arrogance or plain incompetence Woolworths' upper management has failed to even acknowledge receipt of letters raising serious workplace issues of harassment and victimisation of staff while it continues to demand more output from staff at the same levels of pay. We have been supplied with yet another letter, this time addressed to the CEO Grant O'Brien, due to the failure of the HR director to remedy or even acknowledge problems in the workplace.



We have been impressed by the clear and formal tone of the letters to date and are not surprised that the latest letter threatens legal action and mass media coverage if the company fails to adequately respond and remedy the appalling staff abuse situation.

We have also discovered online a "Code of Conduct" document (see pdf below) created by Woolworths; it is a far cry from what actually occurs 'on the floor' in staff relations, which would explain why Woolies is at pains to avoid directly responding to complaints. The company seems to be in damage control and is loath to formally respond to the letters; instead it is attempting to avoid and smother the issues and complaints raised in the letters.

Nevertheless, there is no avoiding or hiding from these issues, the seriousness of the complaints involves a number of regulatory bodies and not least the broader community that face similar problems in the corporate workplace.

We have received advice in relation to these letters and have been informed that Woolworths Ltd could face a class action by abused staff nation wide, which would seriously compromise the company, however, the upper echelon of the company continues to stubbornly refuse to acknowledge the letters of complaint and adequately respond. Woolworths is clearly displaying that its upper management is grossly incompetent by not dealing with these straight forward matters. So be it, we hope that legal action follows, as we have been informed that lawyers would jump at the chance to institute proceedings in this case.

Copy of the latest letter below:

REGISTERED MAIL

24 November, 2014

Grant O'Brien  
CEO Woolworths Ltd  
PO Box 8000  
Baulkham Hills NSW 2153

Dear Mr O'Brien,

RE: WORKPLACE BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND VICTIMISATION

I am writing to you to request your personal intervention in the above matters, which have been detailed in my two letters (enclosed) to your HR director, Mr David Guise, who has failed to date to acknowledge and adequately respond to the serious issues raised.

Over one month has elapsed since my first letter to your Mr Guise, who has not taken the trouble to even acknowledge my letters, fortunately the letters were sent by registered mail so there is no avoiding the very serious issues which have now been compounded by Mr Guise's inability to perform the tasks pertaining to his position in the company, notwithstanding matters of common courtesy, the deleterious effect continuing problems are having on my health and psychological well-being and not least, matters of managerial proficiency and professionalism.

Please refer to enclosed letters for detailed information.

I would add that Mr Guise's failures have only exacerbated the problems outlined in my previous letters, particularly regarding store management's bullying behaviour. I was recently ordered by the store manager, Mr -----, to perform check-out duties -- a task I am not medically fit to perform -- which I attempted under great duress, pain and physical discomfort. As a result I was forced to seek medical attention the next day; this situation and the continuing harassment by store management must cease, as I am sure you would well appreciate.

I look forward to your intervention, assistance and the immediate cessation of all hostile activity toward me by store management. Please also note that I am affording Woolworths Ltd every opportunity to resolve these matters within the company; however, if Woolworths fails to resolve these matters in a fair manner or take appropriate remedial action, I will not hesitate to take the advice I have been given by my legal representatives and optionally, to refer the matter to the mass media.

Please also be aware that this letter will be posted on the staff notice board.

Yours faithfully,

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Sender:

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CC  
Mr David Guise, HR Director

Encl.

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See links for previous correspondence:

<http://colescomplaints.zapto.org/news/story-64.html>

<http://colescomplaints.zapto.org/news/story-65.html>

 [Code of Conduct](#)

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Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-1363.html>