

# Terry is back to work after union win

**Sacked painter took on State Government – and came out on top**



**YOU BEAUTY:** Organiser Eddy Harris with Terry Laming and CFMEU's Sean Marshall

**By Sean Marshall**

TERRY Laming returned to work at Ryde Hospital in the first week of September receiving a warm welcome from his workmates glad to see him back at his trade. He had injured himself outside of work and Northern Sydney Health had refused to provide him with a graduated return to work plan as recommended by the doctors treating him. Bizarrely they even offered him counselling over the fact they were about to sack him.

They insisted that he report for a full working week knowing full well that he could only work two days per week at that time and then sacked him after nine years service claiming that his contract of employment was 'frustrated'. This being an old legal idea usually applied to contracts affected by things like wars, earthquakes and revolutions.

Even though Terry was fit to return to full duties by the time of his initial conciliation before Deputy President Grayson in the NSW Industrial Relations Commission, Northern Sydney Health

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**Union Organiser,  
Eddy Harris**

still refused to give him his job back and in the meantime had contracted out his work.

'Important decisions were being made about me without any consultation, so I decided to contact the union,' Terry said.

At the age of 62 Terry's prospects of finding another full time job looked bleak. So he was overjoyed when he received the news of Deputy President Grayson's decision to reinstate him.

His organiser Eddy Harris said 'I could not believe it when I was told by Northern Sydney Health that they would not rehabilitate him.'

You would think that a hospital would look after its own sick workers. All they could think of was getting rid of another public sector job and bringing in contractors, they didn't care about throwing a loyal worker onto the scrapheap. Terry is a top bloke and you could see by the reaction of his workmates that he was well liked when we brought him back to work.'

Eddy said this was one of the rare cases where a worker had taken on the might of the bureaucracy – and won.

'Terry certainly couldn't have done this without the union. It's a great example of how it pays to belong,' Eddy said.

A delighted Terry is now happily back at work, painting away.

'Everybody came out and gave me a cheer when I came back to work. It was great knowing you had the support of your workmates.'



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