

told no names were known. That annoyed him more than anything – they thought that they could fob him off with any old excuse rather than admit the mistake.

Mr Hossack complained to the Ombudsman. I do not know if the letter of the 3rd April 2002 went to her but if it did I find the conclusion of the enclosed report very odd. If the Ombudsman did not have the letter, surely this is further evidence of the DWP cover up culture. As stated above regarding the deceit from DWP in assisting the Ombudsman.

My concern is that because Mr Hossack sought to establish what happened and why, his card has been marked. He may be a trouble maker in the eyes of the DWP. There have been occurrences when he has thought the enquiries into the invalidity benefit which he receives are unnecessary. Will future benefit claims be prejudiced because he was not prepared to accept what anyone could see was a lie?

He felt, and still feels, so strongly about this that he has spent about £11,000.00 of his own money on secretarial and legal fees to try to prove that he was told lies. He has done that but all he has got from the DWP was about £200.00 compensation payments. How many more inadvertent breaches are there every day? If each one is defended as this one was the amount of staff time taken with up with enquiries and the preparation of reports etc must be enormous and very costly. I have advised him not take court proceedings. Indeed, I think it probable that the Data Protection Act prevents him from taking action against Government Departments. His only satisfaction now would come from knowing that this utter waste of time and money could be avoided in future if the staff of the DWP are not afraid to admit when they have made a mistake. I know it was my clients own decision to pursue this cause of action but he thought it needed doing.

This does not help the fact that Mr Hossack's costs have spiralled to £11,000.00 due to having to pursue the claim due to the actions of DWP. He hopes you may be able to help him recover all or some of these costs other than by the issue of proceedings.

Mr Hossack feels that if you were to ask questions of the Minister for Works and Pensions this might lead to a review of policy which in turn might lead to change.

Yours faithfully

Putsmans