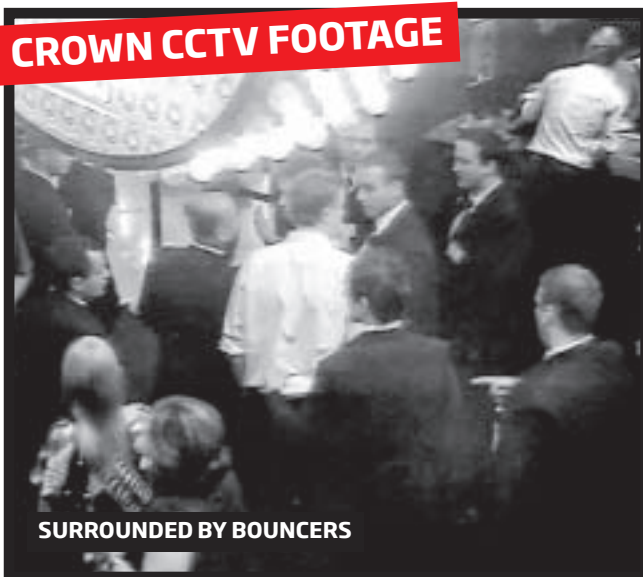


CROWN CCTV FOOTAGE



SURROUNDED BY BOUNCERS



WRESTLED TO THE FLOOR



PINNED TO THE GROUND

Two police officers say they were off-duty and having a quiet drink when Crown security guards set upon them ... now they want hundreds of thousands of dollars compensation

Casino accused of 'brutality'

TWO veteran off-duty cops, one decorated for bravery, are suing Crown casino alleging excessive brutality at the hands of security guards.

Casino security footage — which is rarely released publicly — shows a pack of security guards following the policemen through the gaming floor before pinning the two men's arms, placing them in headlocks and wrestling them to the floor.

The CCTV footage, which can be seen at heraldsun.com.au, shows one officer being held by both arms, taken to the bowels of the casino and placed in an interview room and held for an hour.

Lawyer Michel Margalit, of Thomas Arnold & Becker, said the men were suing but declined to give a figure.

Legal sources said if successful the two policemen could claim about \$400,000 each under the Wrongs Act for pain and suffering.

The incident comes just weeks after Crown came under fire over treatment of Anthony Dunning, who died after being pushed to the ground and restrained by up to six guards at the casino.

Serving officers Sergeant Glenn Saw and veteran Acting Sergeant Leigh Discher were involved in the fracas with Crown security on January 23 last year.

"I feared for my safety. I didn't know where I was. I had been separated from my brother-in-law and taken down to an unknown area," Sgt Saw said.

Crown spokesman Gary O'Neill did not directly respond to questions about the case or the CCTV footage.

"If the people you referred to want to raise concerns or make a complaint about their treatment or any other matter, then I encourage them to contact Crown and

SUE HEWITT

we are happy to talk to them. Otherwise, I have no comment to make," he said.

Lawyers for the officers released CCTV footage to the *Sunday Herald Sun* to highlight the "pack mentality" of the guards, the co-ordination of the confrontation and the forcefulness of their actions.

The two men both feared they would be physically injured.

Guards learned during the night that the pair were police officers.

The footage also reveals for the first time Crown's elaborate surveillance camera network.

The network can select and track individuals throughout the entire casino and entertainment complex, even zooming in on people or number plates, as shown in the footage.

Sgt Saw, who was awarded a bravery medal after being shot in the leg and foot by a criminal threatening a homeowner with a gun in 2006, said he had been genuinely fearful during the Crown incident.

"The shooting lasts eight seconds — this went on for hours," he said.

Sgt Saw and his brother-in-law, Acting Sgt Discher, were in a group of about five family and friends at the casino in the early hours of January 23, 2010 when Sgt Saw left the group to gamble.

He said he was sitting at a gaming table when security asked him to leave. The two men said they were not intoxicated though they had consumed a few drinks.

Neither of them was ultimately charged with any offences.

Footage shows a growing number of guards tailing Sgt Saw as he makes his way



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heraldsun.com.au



Footage shows when he went to leave the unlocked room at least 13 bouncers swarmed towards him.

"In this situation it can all turn bad in a blink of an eye. It only takes one person to decide to act, then they act as a pack," he said.

Sgt Saw was in the room until 3.05am frantically trying to call family and friends on his mobile, until other police arrived and walked him outside.

Meanwhile, Acting Sgt Discher, who had been taken outside by Crown security, had met up with a bouncer employed by a firm independent of Crown to patrol the area outside and explained

through the casino complex at 1.15am.

Two minutes later several guards were involved in a scuffle with him and Sgt Saw was spreadeagled on the floor, as shocked patrons looked on.

He was then frogmarched out of the casino.

Sgt Saw said he asked if he could return to meet his group so they could all go home and was told to wait 45 minutes. After he returned he met Acting Sgt Discher.

However, one of the

guards involved in the earlier incident said "I thought I told you to leave", so the pair started heading towards the door.

About 2am 12 guards can be seen in camera shot surrounding the pair.

There is no visible scuffle, but words appear to be exchanged before two guards make a pointing gesture and the rest of the bouncers form a tight circle around the two men.

A minute later a guard grabs Acting Sgt Discher in a

lock from behind and with a second guard wrestles him to the ground.

Two seconds later other guards wrestle Sgt Saw down and both officers are pinned to the ground.

While Acting Sgt Discher was marched out of the building, his friend was escorted through the bowels of the casino along long corridors into a dungeon-like area with about a dozen guards, then at 2.05am into a cubicle marked "interview room".