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Australian Federal Police Association

AFPA opposed to efficiency dividend increase for AFP

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) opposes the commitment made by Treasurer Josh Frydenberg this morning to impose an increase in the efficiency dividend from 1.5 percent to 2 percent for the next three years if the Coalition returns to government.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said that the Australian Federal Police (AFP) already struggles with the current 1.5 percent efficiency dividend, and a further 0.5 percent would decimate the federal policing environment and workforce.

"The harsh reality is protecting Australia and keeping Australians safe is expensive. The AFP is already stretched and increasing the efficiency dividend risks Australia's national security and the health and wellbeing of AFP and AFPA members.

"The AFP is at the forefront of domestic national security. It is AFP officers who would be responding to and investigating any domestic terrorism threat. To hamstring and burden the organisation with a further 0.5 percent efficiency dividend would put the lives of Australians at risk.

As part of its federal election campaign **Operation Recognition**, the AFPA has called on all sides of politics to exempt the AFP from the efficiency dividend.

"Let's call this out for what it is; it's a budget cut. It's going to reduce AFP operational capabilities and reduce recruitment and retention of staff. So, the Coalition, while announcing this efficiency dividend increase, should also tell the AFP Commissioner what operational capabilities he should turn off to meet this commitment.

"If any government is serious about national security, organised crime and child exploitation, they need to fund the AFP properly and remove the burden of an efficiency dividend.

"The AFP, along with its intelligence agency partners, is protecting Australia and Australians every day, yet the thanks that the organisations and the members get from the Coalition has been wage freezes and an increase in the efficiency dividend," Mr Caruana said.

The last major review of Commonwealth law enforcement arrangements undertaken in 2009 found that the erosion of core funding undermined the AFP's planning and operations. In 2022, the announcement by Treasurer Josh Frydenberg will place the AFP in precisely the same position.

Mr Caruana said the AFP support services and corporate areas have been cut to accommodate previous efficiency dividends.



“The Coalition has already squeezed all the blood out of the AFP stone. There is nothing left to give. The only way the AFP can meet this 0.5 percent increase would be to reduce operational capabilities and putting Australia and Australians at risk. Police investigations and operational activity that protect Australia and Australians should not be restricted or prioritised by dollar signs.

"Policing and protecting Australia and Australians can't be done by contractors. So, it's time for the Coalition to stop treating the AFP as a traditional public service department. If they were serious about domestic national security, organised crime, child exploitation and protecting Australia and Australians, they would exempt the AFP from the efficiency dividend," Mr Caruana said.

END STATEMENT

For comments:

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