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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BALLOT FOR PROTECTED INDUSTRIAL ACTION APPROVED BY FWC

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) welcomes the decision by the Fair Work Commission (FWC) to grant approval for Australian Federal Police (AFP) appointees to undertake a ballot regarding potential future protected industrial action.

The AFPA lodged a request to the FWC seeking approval for the protected industrial action ballot on Wednesday, 14 February 2024.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said the decision by the FWC was a positive step in negotiations between the AFP and AFPA to finalise a new enterprise agreement (EA).

“The approval to go to a protected action ballot is a crucial step, and we welcome the FWC’s decision in this respect. The ballot will determine whether AFP appointees have the option of taking industrial action in the future.

“We’ve taken this course of action due to the restrictiveness of the Government’s *Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy 2023* and the non-APS bargaining parameters,” Mr Caruana said.

The ballot of AFP appointees will be conducted by an independent Ballot Agent.

The AFPA will continue negotiating with the AFP EA Bargaining Team for a new enterprise agreement.

Mr Caruana said that the relationship with the AFP EA Bargaining Team remained strong, with open communication between parties.

“The AFP has been placed in a difficult position by the Federal Government’s *Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy 2023* and the non-APS parameters.

“We believe that the AFP wants to reward appointees but is hamstrung by the policy and locked into an 11.2 per cent pay rise over three years, with no new allowances. We want to be proved wrong, but we don’t think the Government and APSC are willing to allow the AFP to improve their offer.

“This is a clear demonstration that the key personnel within the Government and the Australian Public Service Commission do not understand an operational policing environment or the risks AFP appointees face every single time on shift.

“The government should be embarrassed by their belief that the same police officers and Protective Service Officers that protect them and ensure their safety aren’t worth more than a blanket pay rise figure calculated by people with little understanding of operational policing.

“AFP appointees don’t enjoy the benefits of flexible workplace arrangements readily available to other Commonwealth employees and public servants. Stopping child exploitation and counterterrorism can’t be done from your kitchen table and spare bedroom,” Mr Caruana said.

The AFPA recently surveyed its membership, with 1800 members participating. An overwhelming majority (75 per cent) of the participating members endorsed industrial action in support of a better pay claim.

For comments:

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