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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GREAT OUTCOME FOR FIREFIGHTERS, WHAT ABOUT COPS?

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) welcomes reports that the United Firefighters Union—Aviation Branch (UFUA) has approved a proposed enterprise agreement that properly recognises the challenging role aviation firefighters play in protecting travelers and staff at Australia’s airports.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said that the UFUA were to be commended for their body of work on behalf of their membership, which has forced their employer, Air Services Australia, as well as the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), to concede that the Government’s restrictive bargaining policies have severely disadvantaged federal first responders for years.

“Obviously, exemptions were made by the APSC and Federal Government after representations were made by the employer, Air Services Australia, to allow for the additional allowances and an improved sign-on bonus and workplace conditions.

“The Australian Federal Police (AFP) should take a leaf out of Air Services Australia’s book and approach the APSC and Federal Government to request more support and funding to improve the offer for AFP appointees.

“AFP police officers and protective service officers are frontline first responders, just like aviation firefighters. It is good to see that the APSC and the Federal Government have acknowledged that aviation firefighters aren’t traditional public servants by allowing Air Services to improve the offer,” Mr Caruana said.

The AFPA is now calling on the AFP, APSC and Federal Government to work together to improve the offer to the AFP workforce or face the real possibility of a ‘NO’ vote in the future.

“The proposed EA for AFP appointees is extremely underwhelming and demoralising for most AFP appointees. When you compare it to the proposed EA for aviation firefighters, it looks even worse. A sign-on bonus of \$871 for AFP appointees is the same as that given to traditional public servants, and it pales in comparison to the healthy sign-on bonus of \$6000 proposed for UFUA members.

“The AFP is also heavily pushing some initiatives, such as flexible working arrangements, the right to disconnect, and family and domestic violence leave, as improvements to the proposed EA. These are, in fact, improvements made by the Federal Government and have already been, or nearly, legislated or included in wider Australian Public Service policy.

“The vast majority of frontline police officers, protective service officers and other AFP appointees don’t have the option of working from home,” Mr Caruana said.

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