

# Media Release



10 May 2024

**Message to AFPA members, as sent by AFPA President Alex Caruana**

I am sure by now you have read the latest email from the AFP titled *Enterprise Agreement – An update on drafting and superannuation changes*, circulated yesterday (Thursday 9 May).

This message will be blunt and to the point. The details in the AFP's email are blatantly misleading and insulting, and they are most definitely not in the scope of good faith bargaining.

The email attempts to convey (false) hope that members will be significantly better off under the proposed EA.

What the AFP is not telling you is their figure of 29.6% is heavily based on:

- i) band progression,
- ii) a Use of Force allowance and
- iii) working unsocial hours.

You would already naturally be benefitting from these incremental progressions (e.g., from a Band 4.1 to 4.2, 4.3, 4.3 and so on based on your length of service) **unless:**

- i) you were already at the top of your pay band,
- ii) the AFP implemented another wage freeze or
- iii) the AFP rolled back the band levels.

These incremental progressions aren't a new thing and aren't a result of the new proposed EA.

The AFP should be making a "like-for-like" comparison between the old and new agreements, i.e., how much better off would a Band 4.3 employee be under the new EA compared to the current EA? It is extraordinarily deceptive for the AFP not to provide such a comparison in



their capacity as a Commonwealth employer. It is certainly not consistent with other employers of choice.

A member just informed the AFPA that at their level of Band 5.3, they would be 14 per cent better off — but mostly because they will now get a Use of Force Allowance. Who exactly is going to be “29.6%” better off?

Undermining and pressuring a ‘yes’ fear vote from members without giving them all the information to allow informed decisions disrespects not just the process but you as individuals. It is downright insulting, deliberate, and a huge indictment of the AFP Executive and Commissioner Kershaw.

Members do not even have a copy of the proposed EA, which would allow them to do their own fact-finding and give them the opportunity to separate the truths and mistruths. The AFP is spruiking a pay offer almost double the previous agreement. For clarity, the previous agreement was two per cent per year pay raises, so the base was extremely low to begin with. Moving to around four per cent per year is hardly a reason to celebrate, especially when inflation, mortgage rates and the cost of living are much higher today when compared to the last agreement period. **This offer will still see members’ real wages decrease.**

Offering a one-off cash payment, now with back pay (this is the first time we have heard about back pay), to impose their will on the membership is insulting. Remember, the Air Services Aviation firefighters got a **\$6000 one-off payment**, and the best the AFP and Government are willing to offer you is a paltry \$871.

A Use of Force (UoF) allowance of \$3000 per year does not value the roles and responsibilities of members required to be UoF qualified and the heightened risks they face in their day-to-day jobs. Our position is that \$5000 per year would go a long way towards appropriately recognising these skills and risk factors. **Your skills are valuable, and they need to be recognised.**

Improvement to Flexible Working Arrangements will not benefit an exceptionally large cohort of AFP members. The AFPA received the following written advice from the AFP:

*There are a significant number of AFP employees who will not be able to work from home appropriately, given their particular duties. We consider that this would include:*

- i) Close Personal Protection,*
- ii) Aviation,*
- iii) Forensics,*
- iv) Protective Service Officers,*
- v) community policing (including ACT Policing),*
- vi) Surveillance,*
- vii) Specialist Response Group,*
- viii) Property & Exhibits,*
- ix) and any roles which require access to the secret network.*

How can the AFP trumpet better Flexible Working Arrangements when their own legal counsel is saying there will be a significant number of AFP employees who will not be able to work from home?

In relation to Higher Duties Allowances being paid from day one of the acting arrangements, the AFP is failing to tell you that this payment must be agreed upon by the delegate. The default position is that you must work ten consecutive days (or an aggregate of more than 20 days in a financial year); the AFP doesn't have to pay you from day one if the delegate decides not to agree to it. **The position of the AFPA is the higher duties allowances MUST be paid from day one.**

The AFPA will continue to urge you to vote '**NO**'. We believe you deserve better. You deserve better from the AFP, and you deserve better from the government.

A 'myth-busting' document will shortly be circulated by the AFPA. This will highlight in greater detail the mistruths that the AFP is circulating, along with shining a light on information the AFP is not telling you.

**A 'NO' vote now will send a strong message that you lack confidence in the Government and the AFP. This is your time to send a clear message.**



If you vote 'yes' to this disappointing EA, you are voting 'yes' to the continuation of being among the lowest base-paid law enforcement appointees in the country.

Please continue to undertake Protected Industrial Action (PIA) where you can. Wear your wristband and lanyard, do not fill out vehicle logbooks, put up posters (remember to time record), and if 'the job' asks you to volunteer for duties outside of your core responsibilities, say 'no' unless you are going to be remunerated for this extra work.

In solidarity,

Alex