

Frank Ogle
Director
State Service Management Office
GPO Box 123
HOBART TAS 7001



Dear Frank

Ambulance Tasmania Enterprise Agreement 2018 – Industrial Action

I am writing to confirm, that all our Members covered by the above agreement will commence industrial action, on Monday 5 November 2018.

- Members will wear HACSU branded t-shirts, badges, caps and other items pertaining to the campaign at their choosing and shall speak with members of the public about the campaign if the opportunity exists.
- Members are endorsed to undertake discussions with the media when requested to do so by their union.
- Members will attend rallies and participate in meetings designated as part of the broader public sector campaigns including speaking at rallies or meetings if asked.
- Members will work to rule, claim all allowances, take their breaks on time as appropriate.
- Members will put themselves first in relation to fatigue management and only accept overtime shifts at their choosing, members will not accept any rostered overtime.
- On Road Staff will undertake chalk writing on Ambulances, as determined by the AESB Executive.

We have met with our members state wide and they have endorsed this industrial action.

HACSU members have been patient and have been considered. The view of our members is that the need for harsh wage constraint is over.

Tasmania needs a pay rise including government employees. The high costs of living such as paying rent, groceries and paying other bills have outgrown the artificial barrier imposed by this draconian Government policy.

You will note that Paramedics in Tasmania are significantly underpaid when compared to their mainland counterparts and this should be rectified in this negotiation process. We know we have trouble attracting and retaining staff, we have a significant proportion of staff either at or beyond breaking point and workers generally feel unsupported by their employer.

It is extremely disappointing that the negotiators have insisted the State Government Wages Policy cannot be altered, therefore there has been zero capacity to negotiate in a fair way.

Resourcing in Ambulance Tasmania has failed to keep up with demand, as reviewed internally, and in both the independent commissioned ORH Service Development Planning reports from 2010 and 2014.

Tasmanians have a significantly worse Ambulance Service than other States of Australia, as confirmed by the latest report on Government Services (ROGS).

HACSU is available to meet to discuss this matter and I encourage you to contact me on [REDACTED] or via email to [REDACTED] at any time if you are in a position to make a reasonable offer that would deliver a decent wage increase and improved conditions for Ambulance Tasmania Employees.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Robbie Moore
Assistant Secretary

1 November 2018

Neil Kirby
CE - Ambulance Tasmania
GPO BOX 125
HOBART TAS 7001

Via email: neil.kirby@ambulance.tas.gov.au

Dear Neil

Lack of Paramedic Resources

We refer to our letter of 18 June 2019, to which there has been no response.

There has been no meeting as requested. As discussed at the ACC on 2 July 2019, we believe that you, Ambulance Tasmania, are breaching your obligations about providing a safe place to work.

The reliance upon overtime is extreme. Our information suggests that almost 80 paramedics are not available to be deployed in their primary role. This is for various reasons including workers compensation, secondments to other (internal) roles and long-term sick-leave. We have fundamental concerns that the 'extraction ratio' applied to your service provision is grossly inadequate; this was clear and apparent when the SOC staffing was reviewed by Mingara in 2018/2019.

We do not believe, nor have we seen any evidence, that you have undertaken even a rudimentary risk assessment about lack of deployable staff.

You have a surge plan which is largely ignored (ATSEP).

In recent weeks, you have invited volunteers to work in the urban environment instead of following a thorough business continuity plan or your ATSEP. We remain very concerned that there is no 'go to' procedure for any lack of resources.

You force your staff (DMCs, RDMs, RMs, SMOCs) to make individual decisions about what should be reasonably foreseeable circumstances, which should be properly "assessed and developed" plans which can be reviewed if deemed deficient; there is no risk based approach to the hazard, which is a lack of available staff.

Our members tell us they are exhausted, they say that you have little regard or concern for their welfare, they say that Ambulance Tasmania is causing them harm by continuous exposure to unsafe working conditions. They are fatigued at work, they are fatigued by overtime forced on them by shift extensions, by lack of access to breaks during shifts, and further fatigued by exposure to requests to come to work on days off and while on annual leave etc.

Can you confirm that you expect or require staff to attend work on their days off on overtime?

We are extremely concerned by the use of 'single response officers' instead of a full crew. Presumably because there simply aren't enough resources, paid or volunteer (in country areas), this is a significant risk which is broadly uncontrolled.

It is our understanding that your utilisation rates, particularly in the urban environments of Launceston and Hobart (and semi-rural country stations) are the worst in the nation.

We understand that your FTE is established and restricted by the Tasmanian Governments budget, however, we remain concerned that these constraints have not been correctly assessed by those making the decisions.

We do not agree that Tasmanians currently have access to an adequate pre-hospital care service; essentially this is because there has been a significant increase in demand and inadequate growth of employee numbers and associated resources.

We do not believe that your planned SOC 'secondary triage/referral service' will deliver any short-term benefits and we remain sceptical about long-term solutions without the introduction of suitable alternate pathways in Tasmania.

We believe that you have enough information to hand from your internal structural review in 2017/18 and the ORH reports from 2014 and 2010 that staffing and supporting infrastructure is inadequate. Combine this with 'real time' data relating to absenteeism for all the possible reasons is a significant indicator that the service is in crisis.

Again, we urgently request a meeting to specifically understand what is occurring to address these unacceptable risks. We would like to meet urgently and by no later than 22 July 2019.

I can be contacted on 0447 471 015 or via email to chris.kennedy@hacsutas.net.au to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely



Chris Kennedy

Industrial Officer

16 July 2019

cc: Debra Salter – debra.salter@ambulance.tas.gov.au