

Department of Premier and Cabinet attempts mean and tricky pay cut to Ministerial Drivers

We may have reached new levels of cynicism with the Department of Premier and Cabinet's (DPC) treatment of Ministerial Drivers.

Currently the Drivers get an allowance above their base rate that covers all overtime apart from Sundays and Public holidays and makes them available 24/7.

As part of the latest round of restructuring the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) now want to classify Drivers as a Clerk 1/2, remove their allowance, and put them on a morning or afternoon roster Monday to Friday. They will still need to be available to the needs of the Ministers but will no longer be properly recompensed for it. They will get limited overtime because casuals will be used in their place in most instances. Many Drivers will effectively be given a **\$30,000 pay cut!**

In making this change they have seemingly forgotten that conditions of employment are not changed at the whim of management. Restructures can't be used to take away Industrial arrangements. Also to be noted is that the PSA recently lodged an Application with the Industrial Relations Commission to turn their conditions that are currently under a Determination into an Award. DPC are trying to circumvent that. The next date in the IRC is currently listed at 2 July. The consultation period in DPC's Change Management Plan provided this week is up until 23 June.

Perhaps they believe they can do this because they have changed the Ministerial Drivers' title. They will now become Logistic and Business Support Officers. Based at the Minister's office, they can do a bit of clerical work here and there between driving assignments.

In truth, they are still Drivers with a few extra tasks added on.

Part of this change is under the guise of Work Health and Safety. The Government argues it is to address fatigue. They will have defined rosters but any suggestion that this will deal with excess hours is misguided at best. It is simply untrue. When the Minister needs to start earlier or leave later (planned or unplanned) the Driver will be there to perform those duties and support the Minister.

Until now the Drivers took the cars home and commenced work from there. If the Minister needs to start at 5:00a.m. the Driver would get in the car and go straight to their address to pick them up. They would commence work once they started the car. They are Drivers. That's what they do. The cars are the tools of their trade.

But now they will have to get up well before the crack of dawn, drive to Parliament, pick up the car, drive to the Minister's address, drive the Minister to where they need to go (possibly to Parliament where they picked the car up from in the first place).



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At the end of the day we go through the same sad routine in a reverse order. When it gets really late the Driver might get approval for an Uber to get home. Perhaps they can give the Uber driver some hints.

The benefit to DPC is that the driving to and from home doesn't have to happen under its watch and it no longer consider it a WHS issue. Same amount of time on the road but less responsibility, and fewer hours recorded. Smoke and mirrors.

The Drivers are a vital part of this state's public service. They help to keep Government going. The PSA recognises Ministers require this role to be in place. The Drivers go above and beyond to perform a job that they value. What is going on here does not help the Ministers. It destroys the lives of the Drivers and it defies logic.

The PSA is fighting this cynical and misguided action and will be seeking the assistance of the Industrial Relations Commission. We will keep members updated as we fight these mean and tricky pay cuts.

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