



Public Service Association of NSW

General Secretary Stewart Little **President** Nicole Jess

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In reply please quote: MP:mb

9 April 2024

Commissioner Karen Webb APM
Commissioner of Police
NSW Police Force
Police Headquarters
1 Charles Street
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

Attention: Assistant Commissioner Stacey Maloney APM
Communications and Security Command
NSW Police Force
Sydney Police Centre

By email: malo1sta@police.nsw.gov.au

Dear Assistant Commissioner Maloney,

Re: East Coast Weather Event – First week of April 2024

I am writing to you on behalf of the Public Service Association of NSW (**the Association**), regarding members within the Radio Operations Group of the Communications and Security Command (**the Command**).

Over recent years, the Association has persistently advocated for measures to ensure operational preparedness and sufficient staffing levels, particularly in anticipation of known weather events. These concerns have been repeatedly brought to the attention of the Command through various channels, including discussions at the Joint Consultative Committee, which serves as the primary forum for addressing member concerns.

Despite assurances and undertakings provided by the Command, including reviews of planning processes, assurances of adequate rostering and provision of overtime, and commitments to improving coordination during multi-agency events, it has become evident that these actions have not been effectively implemented.

Consequently, our members remain ill-equipped to cope with the extreme workload accompanying such events, posing risks to their health and safety, as well as the safety of operational police officers and the community at large.

The recent East Coast weather event serves as a stark example of the consequences of inadequate preparation.

Despite ample prior warning, no additional measures were taken to mitigate risks for our members. As the event unfolded and flood warnings were issued by the State Emergency Service (**SES**), it became apparent that local staffing levels were insufficient to manage the anticipated workload and ensure safety.

Despite repeated requests, including calls for additional staff and an SES liaison to be rostered, these requests were denied. Consequently, members were left severely understaffed during a critical period, resulting in merged channels, minimal personnel, and an overwhelming volume of incidents to manage.

This situation persisted despite the recognition, as highlighted in the 2022 NSW Floods Inquiry, that flooding incidents demand meticulous attention and continuous monitoring for effective resolution and risk mitigation.

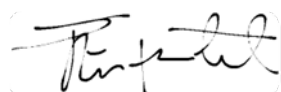
The impact of these challenges extended beyond operational difficulties with members facing prolonged shifts without relief and logistical difficulties exacerbated by flooding preventing some from reaching the Illawarra Radio Centre.

It is deeply concerning that despite our ongoing efforts to address these issues, they persist without resolution. The current situation is untenable, and we urge the Command to allocate sufficient resources to meet operational demands immediately.

We request urgent engagement with the Association to resolve these outstanding issues and implement long-lasting solutions that adequately address the concerns raised.

For further discussion or response, please contact PSA Organiser, Marko Petrovic (mpetrovic@psa.asn.au) or PSA Industrial Officer, Ben James (bjames@psa.asn.au).

Yours sincerely,



Marko Petrovic
for **STEWART LITTLE**
GENERAL SECRETARY