

28 September 2020



Committee Secretary  
Education, Employment and Small Business Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

By email: [eesbc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:eesbc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Secretary,

### **Re: Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020**

While The Services Union is broadly supportive of the proposed legislation, we submit that the proposed Bill's definition of "first responders and eligible employees, diagnosed with PTSD" be expanded for the purposes of presumptive workers' compensation. It is our very strong view that the draft legislation be expanded such that workers employed in Local Government and Not-For-Profit Social and Community Services Sectors who as part of their duties are obliged to come into contact with traumatic events and/or victims thereof, be included.

#### **First Responders**

We note that clause 9 of the proposed Bill, via the insertion of Schedule 6A (11) extends the definition of "first responder" to include "an occupation or profession performed in the private sector that corresponds to an occupation or profession mentioned in item 1, 3 or 4". We submit that, notwithstanding the intent of this clause, members of our Union employed by Local Government Authorities and engaged in the control of fires (and therefore likely to be exposed to similar trauma to their analogues in the government and private sectors) would still remain without the benefit of the proposed Bill. To remedy this, we submit that Schedule 6A (11) be expanded thus:

*"an occupation or profession performed in the private sector, or by employees of a local government or successor or transmitttee thereto (including but not limited to entities under the Corporations (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006) that corresponds to an occupation or profession mentioned in item 1, 3 or 4."*

We further submit that an additional sub-clause be added thus:

**6A (12) Network Coordination Officers (howsoever described) employed by the Brisbane City Council who, as part of their regular duties, are required to attend and secure the site of a critical incident in advance of the arrival of other first responders herein described. <sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> The first person on the scene of bus driver Manmeet Alisher's murder on 28 October 2016 was a Brisbane City Council Network Coordination Officer on mobile patrol duties.

**Eligible Employees**

We submit that many of our members in the Not-For-Profit Social and Community Services Sector perform work analogous to those employees captured by Schedule 6B (2) and (6). It is also the case that many of our members in the Sector provide counselling and other direct support for victims of Domestic and Family Violence and other trauma. To this end, we submit that Schedule 6B should have an additional clause inserted thus:

***(7) An occupation or profession performed in the not-for-profit social and community services sector that:***

- a) corresponds to an occupation or profession mentioned in item (2) or (6); or***
- b) involves, as an integral part of the role of that occupation or profession, the provision of counselling or other direct support to a victim of domestic and family violence or other trauma.***

We believe that the aforementioned amendments are in keeping with the general intent of the proposed Bill, and we trust that our submission be accepted accordingly.

Yours sincerely,



**Neil Henderson**  
**Secretary**