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Australian unions support police industrial action.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) voted unanimously to support the ongoing police industrial action.

On 30 June this year the Police Association of NSW (PANSW) advised NSW police officers to cease assistance to Commonwealth Agencies unless there is a risk to the life or welfare of a person.

NSW police officers are not providing assistance to Commonwealth Agencies including the Australian Federal Police, ASIO, Border Force, and the Australian Attorney-General's Department.

The unprecedented industrial action was commenced when the Federal Government failed to resolve a tax problem that hits police officers with hugely inflated tax bills, prevents them making superannuation contributions, and denies police access to essential support like childcare rebates, child support, parental leave and health rebates.

Because policing is so dangerous, police officers in NSW are covered by a mandatory Death and Disability insurance policy. The Federal Government counts those insurance premiums as contributions to police officers' superannuation, even though that money is taken straight out to be paid to the insurance company.

This has a disproportionate effect on female police officers and police officers with children, in particular single mothers.

The Labor Government has been promising to resolve the issue since 2013, but with the failure to do so by 30 June, tax bills inflated by thousands of dollars are once again rolling out to police officers all over NSW.

On Wednesday, the ACTU Executive formalised the peak body's support for police officers.

Paul Farrow, National Secretary of the Australian Workers Union (AWU) spoke in support of the police industrial action.

"Workers in dangerous occupations deserve the same protections as every other worker. Punishing those workers because protection is expensive is unfair and unacceptable. Police in NSW deserve to be able to save for the future like every other worker. The Federal Government didn't cause this issue, but it's best placed to deliver on the promises that have been made to police by previous governments for the last 10 years."

Commonwealth Public Sector Union (CPSU) General Secretary, Melissa Donnelly also spoke in support.

"The way this system disproportionately impacts policewomen and especially those with families is simply unacceptable. The Federal Government didn't cause this issue, but there has been a reasonable solution on the table for years and the Government should implement the solution urgently."

The ACTU Executive voted unanimously to support the ongoing police industrial action.

The ACTU is part of a long list of figures that have called on the Federal Government to fix the problem, including Senator David Shoebridge and the Australian Greens, Senator Jacqui Lambie, NSW Premier Chris Minns, NSW Treasurer Daniel Mookhey, NSW Police Minister Yasmin Catley, Aware Superannuation and the Welfare Rights Centre.



PANSW

POLICE ASSOCIATION OF NSW

“To have widespread, unwavering support, including the support of the entire national union movement, inspires our members to maintain their industrial action, but also go on keeping the community safe,” PANSW Secretary, Pat Gooley said.

“This Government promised “no one held back, no one left behind.” Yet the Federal Government is punishing those who risk their lives to keep us safe, and the biggest impact is on policewomen with children. A Government that cancelled unfairly attributed RoboDebts, yet in the same building 11,000 debt notices were being issued to NSW Police Officers simply because their job is so dangerous that their Death and Disability insurance is very expensive.”

The PANSW has provided the Assistant Treasurer and the Prime Minister with draft legislation that will fix the issue.

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