



NSW Police Force

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

Mr Bruce Notley-Smith MP
Chair
Legislative Assembly
Public Accounts Committee
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Our ref: D/2018/725173
Your ref: D/2018/21096

Dear Mr Notley-Smith,

I refer to your letter dated 31 July 2018 on behalf of the Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee seeking further information on recommendations arising from the Auditor-General's report – preventing and managing worker injuries 2016.

As requested, I have enclosed the response to the matters you have raised.

Should you have any further enquiries relating to this matter, please contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

M J Fuller APM
Commissioner of Police

04 SEP 2018



**Legislative Assembly
Public Accounts Committee**

Further information on recommendations arising from the Auditor-General's report – Preventing and Managing Worker Injuries 2016

Recommendation 1

Question

The response to the audit notes that NSWPF is completing a business case to support the rollout of the Workforce Improvement Program:

- can you expand on the current status of the rollout?
- is it intended to continue funding of initiatives beyond the 4 year funding period of the WIP?
- if so, which priorities will the Program pursue?

Response

In regards to the rollout of the Workforce Improvement Program (WIP), an evaluation of the status of the current WIP initiatives is currently underway to determine future sustainability post the end of WIP funding in June 2019.

The evaluation and the resulting recommendations are expected to be submitted for consideration during September 2018.

Recommendation 2

Question

The response indicates that there are delays to the implementation of Your Health First:

- what is the current status of Your Health First?
- are there any persistent funding issues?

Response

Delays regarding recruitment of the psychologist to undertake the Your Health First training resulted in the work being temporarily shared amongst the other psychologists in the team, with training provided as requested by commands.

In the 2018/19 financial year a marketing campaign will be developed to more broadly rollout the training to a wider audience within the NSW Police Force.

There is funding within the WIP program for the training to continue until June 2019. Funding options will be assessed with the aim of securing the continuation of funding beyond this date.

Recommendation 3

Question

The response states that the Medical Practitioners Forum has been replaced by a video and that the frequency of the forums has not been determined:

- how frequently are the Medical Practitioners Forums being conducted?
- is any other alternative training being provided?

Response

Medical Practitioners Fora are no longer run as originally planned. A forum was held in Newcastle and another in Parramatta but the initiative was discontinued because despite police efforts to encourage attendance at a third forum, there was no interest from practitioners.

The wider distribution of the video is being discussed with TAL and Employers Mutual Limited (EML).

Regarding alternative training, the *'Guidelines for treatment of post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) in Emergency Services'* recognises that Trauma Focused Therapy and Eye Movement Desensitising and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy are the two most prominent therapies to treat PTSD. Recognising this, the NSW Police Force and EML have partnered with Phoenix Australia to provide this type of training, aimed at high volume treatment providers for NSW Police Force employees.

Trauma Focused Therapy

- 33 treating psychologists have now been trained in trauma focused therapy for emergency service workers in line with the best practice guidelines.
- All successful practitioners have also received a marketing pack to assist them with promoting their skills to local GPs.
- The NSW Police Force is awaiting the final report from Phoenix Australia that will outline the success of the training based on the individuals who participated.

Eye Movement Desensitising and Reprocessing Therapy

- 22 treating psychologists are now being trained in EMDR therapy for emergency service workers in line with the best practice guidelines.
- All successful practitioners will shortly be sent a marketing pack to assist them with promoting their skills to local GPs.
- Feedback from the training has been extremely positive with psychologists already claiming to see some results.
- We currently have an extensive waiting list of psychologists wanting to complete the training when held again.
- Arrangements are being made to run further sessions to meet demand.

Recommendation 4

Question

The response discusses an active trial to improve return to work options post injury along with a review of deployment guidelines:

- has the return to work trial been successful?
- if so, is it being rolled out across the organisation?
- have the guidelines been updated to assist with the redeployment of injured officers?

Response

While the trial has not commenced at this time, the policy and guidelines relating to the trial are currently being finalised.

The draft policy position has been developed, circulated for comment and feedback obtained. The draft policy is currently under review in light of the comments received.

The draft deployment guidelines are currently being revised to remove any ambiguity and ensure consistency with the *Police Act 1990*. Once the revision is complete, the deployment guidelines will be forwarded to the Commissioner's Executive Team for approval.

Recommendation 5

Question

The response states that NSWPF is committed to negotiate and agree to a date for achieving the statutory cost target for the Police Blue Ribbon Scheme

- Has a date been set?
- What is the extent of progress towards meeting the statutory cost target?

Response:

While the date is yet to be determined, the NSW Police Force continues to work towards achieving the statutory target which is enshrined in the *Police Act 1990*. A new Commander has recently commenced within Workforce Safety. The new Commander is in the process of meeting with key stakeholders to examine further strategies to reduce the amount paid in premiums.

Workforce Safety Command continues to work to reduce premiums via:

- reactive interventions (providing counselling services or psychological first aid via EAP, Incident Support, RECONNECT)
- education initiatives (to enhance knowledge to improve health and wellbeing - i.e Your Health First) and
- strategic Initiatives (understanding why and how different people react to trauma - i.e., Wellcheck).

The Employee Case and Claims Management Team are also working with EML & TAL to commence Joint Case Conferences to drive best practice case management.