



Friday 31 August 2007

## **NSW GOVERNMENT AND HSU STRIKE DEAL ON AMBULANCE DEATH & DISABILITY**

Minister for Health, Reba Meagher, today announced that the NSW Government and the Health Services Union (HSU) had reached agreement on the introduction of a Death and Disability (D&D) Scheme for Ambulance Officers.

This morning the Department of Health and the HSU filed a consent agreement in the NSW Industrial Relations Commission, which was endorsed by the Full Bench of the Commission.

“Ambulance Officers provide a valuable service to our community. They save lives every day. However it can be a difficult job, and often ambulance officers are placed in dangerous situations,” Ms Meagher said.

“This Scheme will provide protection and peace of mind for our Ambulance Officers and their families.

“I’m pleased we have been able to agree on the key aspects of the Scheme, which will provide protection for more than 3,000 Ambulance Officers.

Ms Meagher said the NSW Government had honoured its commitment to back-date the introduction of the Scheme to 10 November 2006. The NSW Government will contribute \$30 million to the Scheme over four years, with an additional backpayment of \$4.8 million.

“We have agreed that Ambulance Officers will pay the same employee contribution to the Scheme as the rate currently paid by Police Officers,” Ms Meagher said.

Based on the scheme which operates for police, the Ambulance D&D Scheme will offer Ambulance Officers compensation and income protection for any injury, disability or death suffered whilst on duty.

The Ambulance scheme will:

- Provide a lump sum payment to officers for work related injuries;
- Pay benefits based on the injured officer’s age and the degree of incapacity suffered;
- Pay benefits if the injury prevents the officer from continuing to work with the Ambulance Service of NSW or in the broader public sector; and
- Pay benefits to his or her spouse or estate if an officer is killed on duty.

The Scheme also provides for Ambulance Officers to make their own contributions to the Scheme to provide off-duty protection. The operation and contribution of D&D schemes for Police Officers and Ambulance Officers will be reviewed in 12 months time.

The Work Value and Special Case claims for Ambulance Officers are still before the IRC. The Department of Health and HSU will continue to negotiate over the coming weeks.

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