



Ambulance Employees Association of Western Australia



Ambulance Employees Association WA

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28th October 2021

Mr Antony Smithson
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Response to St John WA 'Proposal' dated 26th October 2021

Ambulance Officers & Paramedic Enterprise Agreement - *WITHOUT PREJUDICE*

Dear Antony,

Thank you for your interest in progressing the Paramedic Enterprise Agreement negotiations and for your letter dated 26th October 2021.

The AEAWA acknowledge the goodwill underpinning this communication and welcome your involvement in the process, however, it seems that some miscommunication may have occurred as to what discussions have occurred at previous meetings, and to the motivations of the bargaining groups.

The Transport Medic proposal was a direct response/counter proposal to what we saw as a deeply flawed and inequitable **Clinically Appropriate Model of Care (CAMC)** proposal set forth by St John WA. The CAMC model was unequivocally rejected by both AEAWA and UUU delegates as it did not address the real burden undermining Response Time KPI's, which was a

burgeoning low acuity caseload and significant growth in inter-facility transfers. The initial response from our membership was enormously critical of the CAMC proposal, and we couldn't have been more confident that it would be rejected outright.

It was during the process of highlighting flaws with the original CAMC model, that discussions naturally evolved into what an alternate model might look like, which AEAWA delegates believed may actually make difference to response times. As luck would have it, the concurrent negotiation of a Transport Officer Enterprise Agreement **in which St John WA sought the introduction of Registered Paramedics** meant the Transport Medic model may have been a potential solution to both negotiations.

To be absolutely clear however, the Transport Medic classification is not, and never has been a 'claim' by the AEAWA.

We respectfully reject the implied suggestion that St John WA, in 'accepting the AEWAWA proposed Medic classification in the PTS Agreement' have somehow bargained their position sufficiently to warrant the removal of all claims related to meal breaks, shift extensions and pre shift vehicle checks. The Transport Medic classification was not submitted in our log of claims in either the Paramedic or Transport negotiations.

Further, the rejection and/or dilution of all safeguards sought by bargaining representatives concerning crew formation, a lack of commitment to night shift rostering, and ambiguous work restrictions ultimately mean that we remain deeply sceptical of any real impact the Transport Medic classification may have on response times, on the ability to check vehicles, the ability to take meal breaks, and importantly for staff to finish their shift with only 'reasonable overtime' extensions. In addition, there remains a very real risk of that the organisation chooses to erode the Ambulance Paramedic workforce in favour of a predominantly Medic workforce.

The Transport Medic proposal was simply a proposal that we felt would help the organisation compete in the Transport sector, and if implemented correctly, would have potentially helped reduce the workload burden on the Paramedic workforce to enable more timely attendance at the sickest patients. However, St John WA should be aware the AEWAWA are far from 'wedded' to this Transport Medic model, and our membership are largely ambivalent to it, being quite rightly more concerned with operational pressures and undue shift extensions. As more and more resistance arises from St John WA in respect to our sought safeguards, St John WA should be aware that we are quite happy to **remove any support for this proposed Transport Medic classification**, and re-commence negotiations without further discussion of alternate classifications in either the Ambulance Transport Officers agreement, or the Ambulance Paramedic Agreement.

We have negotiated in good faith a model which would help St John WA achieve their claim for a Paramedic offering in the Transport Agreement. We have also negotiated in good faith, as did our UWU colleagues, to help St John WA establish their 4X4 proposal. The fact that St John WA have withdrawn the 4X4 claim does not identify a lack of willingness to engage with St John claims by the bargaining groups. However, we are very committed to certain claims and remain quite willing to seek an interpretation from the Fair Work Commission in respect to vehicle checks, meal breaks and 'reasonable overtime', as it seems to us that these are actually quite fair and reasonable claims in a modern, progressive ambulance service.

Kind regards

Mr John Thomas
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