



9 September 2024

Media Release: Public sector unions call on Government to invest, not cut, ahead of the State Budget

Tasmania's public sector unions are coming together to issue a united call to Government ahead of Thursday's State Budget – invest in the State's public sector and rule out cuts or risk losing even more workers and increasing service failures.

Last week, the release of the McKell Institute's new report, 'Falling Behind: The Crisis in Tasmanian Public Sector Wages,' clearly outlined the impact of deliberate decisions to keep wages low by the Liberal Government.

Key findings from the Report include:

- Tasmanian public sector wages have fallen significantly behind the mainland.
- This is largely the fault of the Tasmanian Liberal Government keeping wages low through public sector wage caps and politically driven wage austerity.
- Tasmania has the fastest public sector vacancy growth in the country, lower starting salaries for graduates and crumbling public services brought about by chronic vacancies.
- Paying public sector workers a decent wage is an opportunity to drive private sector wage growth.
- Meaningful public sector pay rises would likely positively spill over into the broader Tasmanian labour market.

"The evidence is right before us – low public sector wages mean we can't fill jobs in Tasmania and, as our unions have been highlighting for years now, this means Tasmanians suffer due a lack of services," said Unions Tasmania Secretary, Jessica Munday.

"The McKell Report clearly lays out the impact wage caps and deliberate policies to keep wages low have had on the Tasmanian public sector, with increasing vacancies and under pressure services."

"Coupled with the Saul Eslake report that warned cutting public services or increasing efficiency dividends would have a harmful impact on vulnerable Tasmanians, the Rockliff Government should be using this Budget as an opportunity to invest in and rebuild the public sector for the benefit of all Tasmanians," said Ms Munday.

Event details

When: Monday 9 September @ 12:00pm
Where: Unions Tasmania, 212 Liverpool Street, Hobart
What: Leaders and workers from Tasmania's public sector unions, the Australian Education Union (AEU), the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF), the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU-SPSFT), the Health and Community Services Union (HACSU), the United Firefighters Union (UFU), and the United Workers Union (UWU) will speak to the media and call on the Government to invest in public sector workers in the State Budget.

For further information: Jessica Munday 0417 454 809