Peter Chandler
Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

**Labor votes against Legislation to support fire fighters with cancer**

25 March 2015

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services said it is crazy that Labor would prefer to vote against ground-breaking Presumptive Fire Fighters legislation and leave sick Fire fighters exposed.

Mr Chandler said Labor's decision to vote against the legislation tonight made a mockery of their previous calls for such legislation.

“It is absurd that on the verge of introducing the best Presumptive Fire Fighters legislation in Australia the Labor Party wants it stopped so it can continue to try to exploit the very same fire fighters it ignored during 12 years of Government,” Mr Chandler said.

“The Labor Party should be celebrating legislation that outshines any other jurisdiction in Australia and opposing it, is shameful and reckless.

“When we met with long term fire fighter Tom Lawler and United Voice we gave a commitment we would listen to their concerns.

“Our word is good. We have listened and delivered, only to have Labor stand in our way.

“Tom Lawler and United Voice raised some important issues and the Country Liberals Government responded.

“The Territory's first presumptive legislation has been back dated to July 4, 2011 when the former federal Labor Government enacted its legislation.

“Further, we are proposing a three month sunset period that would give living career fire fighters who are sick a window in which to make a claim under the presumptive legislation as if the new laws had an open commencement date.

“We have also said that cancers which are not currently captured in the new laws can be considered for inclusion if scientific evidence comes forward that provide a compelling reason for them to be added.
“The Country Liberals Government has achieved in two years what the previous Labor Government failed to do in almost a decade. Our legislation goes beyond anything the Labor Opposition proposed.

“Labor’s lack of sincerity in this whole issue has been demonstrated tonight on the eve of giving the Territory’s fire fighters the best legislation in Australia they’ve instead opted to play politics by trying to stop it.”

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