Fighting for the NT Firefighters

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The process of claiming workers compensation will be made easier for firefighters, as today the Northern Territory Government announced a change in the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Legislation.

“The Northern Territory Government has made a decision to provide presumptive legislation to firefighters, including Volunteers of Police Fire and Emergency Services and Bush Fires NT,” said Minister for Business Peter Styles.

“Under the presumption, if a career fire fighter is diagnosed with one of the cancers listed in the legislations schedule, and served as a fire fighter for the relevant qualifying period, it will be presumed that the cancer is an occupational disease and is therefore compensable.

“The current Opposition Leader promised if she ever became Chief Minister one of her first actions would be to introduce presumptive legislation for firefighters. This is the same person who ignored firefighters and their illnesses for almost 12 years.

“The Giles Government is doing something real to help firefighters. It is the CLP Government which has taken action that will soon see the introduction of presumptive legislation for Territory firefighters.”

The amendments will make the process of claiming workers’ compensation less cumbersome for fire fighters, and recognises that fire fighters are at greater risk of developing certain types of cancers as a result of exposure to hazardous substances while performing firefighting activities.

Mr Styles said a Bill has been drafted and is expected to come before the House during the current sittings.

“This follows a comprehensive review of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensations Scheme,” said Minister Styles.

“The current scheme is expensive and out of step with national approaches and the Giles Government is about to change that.
“We expect future reductions in premiums, the introduction of the Bill will reduce costs for NT businesses and maintain the long-term viability of the NT Compensation scheme.

“Cabinet has accepted all recommendations from the review which includes the Presumptive Legislation for firefighters.”

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