



Greg Piper, MP
Member for Lake Macquarie



Media Release

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Lake Macquarie MP Opposes Cuts to Fire Brigade

Greg Piper, Member for Lake Macquarie, has rejected the NSW Fire Brigades' option of funding a wage increase by reducing services.

The Government is offering an interim increase of 2.5%, which is well below the inflation rate.

In its submission to the current wage case, the NSW Fire Brigades says that a "risk management" approach to reducing services would be adopted if the Industrial Relations Commission awards an increase of more than 2.5%. It proposes that "retained" stations manned by on-call staff could be taken off-line to limit the wages bill.

This system could allow four of the five stations in the electorate to be without staff. Toronto station could be left to carry the workload while Morisset, Wangi Wangi, Teralba and Boolaroo are inoperative. The next nearest permanent station is Cardiff.

'I will be calling on Emergency Services Minister Nathan Rees to support his dedicated staff,' said Mr Piper.

"Brigade officers and the community should not be forced into accepting reductions in service just to provide an increase lower than inflation." "I'm opposed to a wage cut for fire fighters and I'm opposed to a cut in services. Funding must be found so that wages and services can be maintained."

"Small stations respond to many call-outs and are often first on the scene. There's no justification for making people wait longer for fire brigades to respond from further away."