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Police Union Defends \$540M Pay Deal Amid Officer Backlash

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The Queensland Police Union of Employees (QPUE) has stood firm on its support for a \$540 million enterprise bargaining agreement with the state government, despite sharp criticism from within the police force.

Finalised in principle on 28 July 2025, the deal represents the largest-ever pay package for the Queensland Police Service (QPS), according to QPUE President Shane Prior. He told ABC News on 31 July that the agreement secures an additional \$163 million above the government's initial offer.

The package includes an 8% pay increase over three years, two \$4,000 retention bonuses for general duties officers, increased late-night shift allowances, and expanded incentives for regional and remote postings. The bonus payments will be delivered in two separate instalments, and the agreement also provides for revised classification structures to support career progression, according to Inside State Government.

Despite union leadership's support, the proposed deal has drawn widespread backlash online from QPS officers. Some have labelled it the "worst ever," with one officer comparing the negotiation to a "Facebook Marketplace" bargain, according to The Courier-Mail and The Guardian. Prior described the criticism as "deeply hurtful" to him and his family and apologised for the delay in communicating full details of the deal, which were emailed to members on 30 July.

He expressed confidence that officers would support the agreement once fully informed, highlighting benefits aimed at frontline workers amid an attrition rate of 5.8%, as discussed on 4BC's *Mornings* programme.

If rejected in a scheduled member vote in September, the deal will proceed to arbitration at the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC). Prior defended the terms, stating the government's 8% cap left no flexibility for a larger base wage increase.

The agreement has also stirred tensions across the broader public sector. The Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union (QNMU) and the Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) criticised the government's general wage policy. QNMU Secretary Sarah Beaman called the police package "phenomenal," noting that when allowances are included, the deal equates to a 17% wage improvement, according to *The Age*. Meanwhile, QTU members are planning a 24-hour strike on 6 August, and nurses have threatened further industrial action.

Opposition police spokesperson Glenn Butcher criticised the agreement as a "dud," predicting it would fail to gain majority support in the September vote.