

FIREFIGHTERS — PRESUMED CANCERS

760. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Industrial Relations:

I refer to the government media statement on 5 August 2023 entitled “Presumptive cancer coverage expanding for firefighters” and the second dot point, which states “Provides protection for personnel who dedicate their lives to protecting the community”.

- (1) Why did the Labor government decide that firefighters were not worthy of such protection on 6 May 2023 when firefighter presumptive cancers were first expanded?
- (2) Why did the Labor government decide that firefighters were not worthy of such protection on 27 July 2023 when regulations were again amended to include communications systems officers within their scope?
- (3) What new information has been made available to the Labor government that was previously not known on either of these earlier occasions; and can the information be tabled?
- (4) Who did the government consult with prior to expanding the presumptive cancer schedule by regulations?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Industrial Relations.

- (1) The government acted to expand the list of presumptive cancers to cover malignant mesothelioma and skin cancer in May 2023 on the basis of the independent scientific review on presumptive firefighter cancers by Dr Lin Fritschi—I am sorry for mispronouncing his name—of Curtin University.
- (2) The government determined to extend the PTSD presumption to DFES communications systems officers following discussion with the United Professional Firefighters Union.
- (3)–(4) The government determined to further expand the list of presumptive firefighter cancers following consultation with the United Professional Firefighters Union, the United Firefighters Union of Australia and WorkCover WA.