



16 January 2023

Sarah Crema
A/Workplace Relations Strategy Lead
Ambulance Victoria
375 Manningham Road,
Doncaster, VIC. 3108

By email sarah.crema@ambulance.vic.gov.au

Dear Sarah,

Re: Ambulance Employees Australia (Vic) (AEAV) Withdrawal of Support for the Extension of the Surge MOU

I write today in response to Matt McCrohan on behalf of Ambulance Victoria (AV) of 29 December 2022. I raised this pragmatic approach with AV Acting COO Carlyon on 13 January in a regular catch-up. In this meeting, I advised the AEAU's continued advocacy to the government regarding appropriate staffing levels to ensure that AV staff can work safely and the Victorian community continues to receive expected levels of care will continue.

AEAV's reluctant support of an extension to the Surge MOU was contingent upon meeting several conditions and final discussions. Those conditions still need to be met, and extensive consultation has occurred with affected members.

Our affected members have informed us that the mental health fatigue and harm associated with working as a member of a surge crew is unrelenting and exhausting. Additionally, the AEAU is concerned that Surge is fast becoming an essential component of Business as Usual (BAU). The AEAU cannot support Surge as a BAU response.

As COVID-19 is now an endemic part of Victorian society, a permanent increase in the operational Paramedic and Non-emergency staffing FTE numbers is the only enduring solution for the ever-increasing demand for ambulance services (COVID-19 related or not) and hospital ramping issues.

At the risk of conflating two issues, the AEAU believes People Based Rostering (PBR) is not a panacea. PBR and Surge are separate issues but are somewhat linked as PBR attempts to make more crews available. Whilst we highly support the removal of 10/14 rosters, the proposed model needs to effectively address the increased demand for services, especially at night. PBR is a step in the right direction but has a long way to go. Again, the more enduring solution, given the issues within the Victorian health system, the lack of GPs, and increasing demand for ambulance attendance, is a permanent increase in FTE positions (acute and non-emergency) and thus adding permanent roster lines into branches. Surge crewing is neither a sustainable nor acceptable solution.



Therefore, the AEAU, on behalf of its members, will not support a further extension to the Surge MOU at this stage.

Should you require to discuss this issue further, don't hesitate to get in touch with Darren Law.
Sincerely

Fiona Scalon
National Ambulance Coordinator
United Workers Union

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