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# Police seek wages parity

## Tassie's 'finest' say they're underpaid

**MICHAEL STEDMAN**  
Political reporter

AUSTRALIA'S finest police force will also be the nation's lowest paid unless the State Government agrees to an income nexus, the Police Association says.

Tasmanian police, whose average wages are 6 per cent below the national average, are pushing for wage equity with their interstate counterparts.

Police Association of Tasmania president Randolph Wierenga said the log of claims would include annual pay rises in line with the national average, alternative leave options, extended maternity leave and

changes to squad allowances.

"The Government is continually referring to us as Australia's finest and basking in the glory of the lowest crime rate in the country and it is time for them now to match the rhetoric with appropriate remuneration," Mr Wierenga said.

Australian police have not gone on strike since 1926 and the last time Tasmanian officers imposed work bans was 1991.

However, Mr Wierenga did not rule out industrial action as a last resort.

"What we have seen from campaigns of larger public sector unions is that where offers have been rejected and they resorted to industrial action, their outcomes have been improved," he said.

Premier David Bartlett said he was committed to constructive discussions with the Police Association.

"We will enter into these discussions with good will and a desire to see our police officers paid well for the good work that they do," Mr Bartlett said.

"Across the board over the

last 10 years public servants in Tasmania, nurses, police officers, teachers, have achieved largely pay parity with their interstate counterparts.

"We continue to want to invest in frontline services."

Greens police spokesman Paul O'Halloran said pay parity was crucial to retain and reward hard-working police officers.

"The most important thing is recognising and valuing police who work in trying and difficult conditions," Mr O'Halloran said.