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Attn: News Editors, Producers

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Media Release

Local government concerned about the proposed changes to the Fire Levy

Councils are concerned with the very significant increases for many households in the Fire Service levy proposed in the new Fire and Emergency Services Bill.

For example:

Brighton – Commercial properties currently paying a fire service rate of \$17,000 will see this increasing to \$22,000.

Many residential properties in their rural districts are seeing a doubling of the levy.

Kingborough – Commercial properties currently paying \$2,500, increasing to \$34,000.

Huon Valley – Commercial properties average increase is \$1,119.

Residential properties in the Huon Valley average increase of \$129.00.

St Helens – Residential properties in St Helens will see a doubling of the levy they pay. Commercial properties up to six times what they are currently paying.

Some of the additional revenue generated is staggering, with approximately an extra \$3M collected in the Clarence municipality alone.

While there has been work occurring over some years, many of the details in the Bill have come as a complete surprise to local government, and with no prior consultation on the implications for councils or their communities.

LGAT President and Break O’Day Council Mayor Mick Tucker said that “councils are disappointed with lack of consultation with our sector, particularly given councils play a significant role in responding to emergencies.

“These significant changes to the cost for many households have not previously been discussed with the community and now we have been given only five weeks to digest the options and provide feedback,” Mayor Tucker said.

To make matters worse, there are a lot of details not contained in the new Bill.

“This feels like a half-baked Bill, that has been rushed out after the Government has gone slow over the past six years,” Mayor Tucker said.

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