
Good morning,

Please see below my official submission in regards to the annual adjustment of MPs wages in Victoria.

To the Members of the Tribunal,

I write to express my firm view that Members of Parliament (MPs) in Victoria should **not receive any pay rise at this time** and a freeze of salaries and allowances should be seriously considered.

1. What adjustments to the values of MP salaries and allowances should the Tribunal consider, if any?

Given the current economic climate and community hardship, I strongly believe that **no upward adjustment** should be made to MP salaries or allowances. MPs already earn significantly above the average Victorian income, with base salaries for backbenchers currently around **\$192,000**, and senior ministers and the Premier earning **over \$400,000** annually.

Over the last three years, MPs have received cumulative increases exceeding **10%**, while the vast majority of Victorians have seen stagnant wages, reduced real earnings, and increasing financial pressure. Rather than increasing MP remuneration, I urge the Tribunal to consider **freezing salaries** until such time as key economic and social indicators show genuine improvement for the broader population.

2. Which economic and financial indicators should the Tribunal consider in adjusting the values of MP salaries and allowances?

In determining the appropriateness of salary adjustments, the Tribunal should consider the following indicators:

- **Wage Price Index (WPI)** in Victoria: The latest ABS data shows wage growth remains below inflation, with many workers experiencing a **decline in real wages**.
- **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**: In Melbourne, the CPI rose **4.1% in the 12 months to March 2024**, especially in critical areas such as food, energy, and rent.
- **Median household income growth**: Many households are struggling to keep pace with inflation and housing costs.
- **Unemployment and underemployment rates**: Job insecurity remains a concern, particularly in regional and low-income communities.
- **Rates of homelessness**: The 2021 Census recorded **30,660 Victorians**

experiencing homelessness, a 24% increase from 2016 and in 2024, the ABC reported this number had increased to over 37,000 people.

These indicators reflect widespread hardship in the community. Rewarding MPs with higher salaries during such times undermines public trust and confidence in government institutions.

3. What other matters should the Tribunal consider when making the Determination, in addition to those listed in section 24(2) of the VIRTIPS Act?

Beyond the criteria outlined in Section 24(2) of the VIRTIPS Act, the Tribunal should consider:

- **Public perception and trust:** Increases to MP pay at a time of community struggle are likely to be perceived as tone-deaf and erode public trust in democratic institutions.
- **Leadership by example:** MPs are elected to serve, and leadership must include demonstrating fiscal restraint when the public is expected to do the same.
- **Equity and social justice:** In light of rising inequality, diverting public funds to improve services for vulnerable populations should be a higher priority than raising MP incomes.

Conclusion

Victorians are facing serious cost of living pressures, an ongoing housing and homelessness crisis, and stagnant real wages. In this context, it is unjustifiable for MPs to receive another pay rise.

Public office is a privilege, not a pathway to personal financial enrichment. At a time when so many people are being asked to make sacrifices, our political leaders must demonstrate genuine solidarity. Accepting yet another pay rise while tens of thousands are homeless and millions struggle to make ends meet sends the wrong message about leadership and public service.

I urge the Tribunal to demonstrate alignment with community expectations and the public interest by freezing MP salaries and allowances until the economic conditions for everyday Victorians have meaningfully improved.

Thank you for considering this submission and I hope you do take these matters seriously in line with community expectations.

Regards,

Tenique Hell

Carngham