

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services:

NT Police Mandatory Retirement Age

The Northern Territory Police Force are the only Northern Territory Public Sector Employees that are forced to retire after they reach the age of 65. The mandatory age of retirement for Northern Territory Police was raised in 2007, from 60 to 65 years of age.

Question:

1. Why are Northern Territory Police Force subjected to mandatory retirement?

Answer:

The age of retirement is legislatively mandated in the *Police Administration Act 1978 (PAA)*, specifically section 22 as follows:

- (1) *A member who has attained the age of 55 years may retire from the Police Force; and*
- (2) *A member who attains the age of 65 years ceases to be a member of the Police Force.*

Question:

2. Do you intend to abolish mandatory retirement for Northern Territory Police Force? If so, when?

Answer:

No.

Question:

3. If not, what is the rationale and justification for keeping this potentially discriminatory policy?

Answer:

The safety and wellbeing of the Northern Territory Police Force is paramount. All policing roles are operational and all members are expected to be able to perform the full range of responsibilities and operational duties.

Question:

4. Why are no other Northern Territory Public Sector Employees subjected to mandatory retirement?

Answer:

Question to be referred to Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment for response.

Question:

5. Is mandatory retirement a form of age discrimination?

Answer:

No.

Question:

6. In lieu of the difficulty in recruiting and retaining Police in the Northern Territory, has the Government or Police Commissioner considered lifting the age of mandatory retirement for Police?

Answer:

No.

Question:

7. For Northern Territory Police that wish to keep working beyond 65 years of age, is there any recourse for them? Is there any case or circumstance in which they can continue their employment with the Northern Territory Police after the age of 65?

Answer:

No.

Question:

8. According to section 22 (2) of the *Police Administration Act (NT)* "A member who attains the age of 65 years ceases to be a member of the Police Force". What is the process by which Northern Territory Police are dismissed from their employment at the age of 65 years of age? Is the dismissal immediate at their 65th birthday? Can they extend beyond their birthday?

Answer:

The member will be automatically ceased with final separation payments progressed to them within any final salary and/or entitlements owing to them.

Question:

9. Why Police are not considered capable of working after they turn 65 years of age, when other public sector employees are, for example nurses, fire fighters, rangers, electricians, engineers and doctors?

Answer:

As per answer to Question 3.