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Dear Ms Cusworth

REVIEW OF THE EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission as a member of the State Emergency Management Committee on the *Review of the Emergency Services Levy* (the Review) conducted by the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA).

The Issues Paper on the Review establishes that the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) is an annual property-based levy that is used to fund the costs of providing emergency services in Western Australia. The ESL was established to ensure that all property owners contributed to the costs of emergency services and that emergency services were appropriately funded.

I note that currently, the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner receives revenue raised via the (ESL). The ESL is credited to an operating account of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and any such credit may be applied only for the purposes of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998*, *Bush Fires Act 1954* and the *Fire Brigades Act 1942*.

The terms of reference provide that in conducting the Review the ERA will consider among other things;

- The current ESL expenditure applied to managing the emergency services (prevention of, preparedness for, response to and recovery from natural hazard emergencies).

The State Emergency Management Policy provides a strategic framework for emergency management in the State and identifies the roles and responsibilities of Emergency Management Agencies and other public authorities.

Western Australian emergency management legislation defines 27 hazards, which are managed by eight different hazard management agencies requiring allocation of expenditure to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards.

At 3.1, the Review observes that while the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner is designated as Western Australia's natural hazard risk management agency, it is not the only agency responsible for natural hazard risk management in the State. Of the 27 defined hazards, eight may be considered natural hazards for which the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner is responsible for six, namely cyclone, earthquake, fire, flood, storm and tsunami.

WA Police submits that the premise for which the ESL was established was not specific to funding emergencies only relating to natural hazards, and the ERA may wish to consider extending the ESL to all hazards prescribed in the Emergency Management Regulations 2006.

Yours sincerely



KARL J O'CALLAGHAN APM
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

KJ February 2017