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## **NSW's 893 'ghost cops' leaving communities at risk**

Local police commands are being stretched to breaking point and communities are being put at serious risk as a result of the NSW Government's refusal to fill the state's almost 900 'ghost cop' positions.

'Ghost cops' describes stations where police numbers are allocated, but actual officers have not been assigned.

Police Association of NSW President, Tony King, says the unfilled 'ghost cop' positions are leaving communities vulnerable.

"Almost 900 local policing positions across the state are currently being left unfilled, with the officers transferred to other vital policing areas," Mr King said.

"Some of these officers have been redeployed to specialist units such as counter terrorism, cybercrime and to bolster road policing – incredibly important projects – but by leaving positions unfilled, we are putting undue pressure on frontline police and hampering their ability to protect our communities.

"In some regions the number of unfilled positions is in the 100s - that's a recipe for stretching resources.

"It means fewer police on the beat doing the important work within the community.

"We are hearing from police across the state that they are now at breaking point. The government needs to urgently commit to not just addressing the backlog, but building the state's policing capacity.

"These 'ghost cop' positions need to be filled as a matter of priority. If they remain unfilled, communities will be put at risk.

"Past decisions have left our communities vulnerable. We need to rectify decisions made in the past so we can protect our communities today.

"With the state's population growing at more than 50,000 a year we need to invest in new police just to maintain the sort of protection the people of the state expect and deserve.

"More police on the street mean less crime on the street."

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