

WCC terminations, resignations and payouts



The resignation or termination of a senior WCC officer has led to a substantial payout. Image: ABC

Analysis – Carol Altmann

When is a termination a resignation or vice versa?

The Warrnambool City Council's forthcoming financial report for 2015-16 contains an intriguing line, saying the substantial sum of between **\$390,000 and \$399,000** was paid out to a senior officer as a result of a "termination" of their employment.

As far as the public record is concerned, nobody has been terminated from the Warrnambool City Council in the past 12 months, but there has been a number of resignations, including director of city growth **Bill Millard**, who left last November, and that of former head of infrastructure **Peter Robertson**.

Mr Robertson left the council in January this year after losing the confidence of several councillors.

According to the council documents, the total payout of between \$390,000 and \$399,000 was a result of a “contractual payment” that was made in addition to the unnamed senior officer’s normal entitlements.

Given the highest salary for a senior officer (not including the CEO) is between \$200,000 and \$210,000, this is one heck of a payout and begs the question of where that extra \$100,000 has come from? Parking fees and fines? And what has been cut in the budget to accommodate it?

We will probably never know due to confidentiality clauses and a general reluctance by the Warrnambool City Council to reveal the salary arrangements of its public officers. After all, we still don’t know, officially, [exactly how much CEO Bruce Anson is paid](#) each year.

In the US, for example, it is widely accepted that if you are paid from the public purse – from the US President down – then you can expect full public scrutiny of your entitlements.

Given ratepayers are the ones footing the bill for the Warrnambool City Council, it should be exactly the same here.