



15 December 2010

Mr Greg Mullins AFSM
Commissioner
New South Wales Fire Brigades
PO Box A249
Sydney South NSW 1232

Dear Mr Mullins,

I write with respect to the service numbers issued to permanent firefighters.

Last year, the Department moved to 6-digit service numbers for permanent firefighters starting from 900000, departing from the long established practice of issuing four digit service numbers. An exchange of correspondence took place from 25 May 2009 to 3 July 2009, surrounded by several informal conversations. The result at the time was that the department continued with the new numbering system.

In light of the departure of Mr Mark Kelly, and the 18 months experience of the new service numbers, we write to inquire as to whether the matter might be reopened and the issuing of service numbers in the old sequence be resumed.

The new process, by placing both retained and permanent firefighters, clerical staff and tradespeople in the same sequence, has generated considerable confusion. More seriously, the change in the sequence from which firefighters are issued and the fact this no longer bears any relation to seniority has generated confusion as to who is the ranking officer on the fireground.

The Union is open to a fixed formula for the conversion of the numbers as they are applied in common usage to a SAP-friendly variation, in the manner in which the conversion of station numbers to SAP cost codes is accomplished at present. However, we feel the restoration of the old sequence is important operationally and in terms of administrative convenience not to mention continuity with the history of our trade.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Casey
State Secretary

New South Wales Fire Brigade Employees' Union (FBEU)

1-7 Belmore Street Surry Hills NSW 2010

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12 April 2011

Mr. Greg Mullins AFSM
Commissioner
Fire and Rescue NSW
PO Box A249
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232

Dear Mr Mullins,

Re: Service numbers

On 15 December 2010 the Union wrote to you regarding service numbers, a copy of which is attached.

To date our records show that no response has been received. The Union therefore seeks a response as soon as possible, but in any event within 14 days of the date of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Read
Senior Industrial Officer



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Mr Greg Mullins AFSM
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New South Wales Fire Brigades
PO Box A249
Sydney South NSW 1232

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File No: 1085560

Jim Casey
Fire Brigades Employees' Union
1-7 Belmore Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Handwritten signature
Dear Mr Casey

I refer to your letter of 15 December 2010 requesting that Fire & Rescue NSW consider a way to reintroduce the original service number range for permanent fire-fighters. As I indicated to you, I support and understand the reason for this.

After consultation with HR and IT, it has been established that the current Employee Number range used for new permanent fire-fighters cannot be reverted to the old number range without considerable disruption to those employees' service records and the system in general.

However, because a permanent fire-fighter's Brigade service number has great meaning in terms of defining that person's place in the history of this great organisation, a sense of belonging and the context the number provides, it is something that should not be lost.

I have therefore instructed the IT staff to create a new field in SAP to store both the Employee Number and the "Brigade Number" where the Brigade Number is based on the old number range. For almost all fire-fighters, the Employee Number and the Brigade Number will remain the same. New fire-fighters will be able to view both their Employee Number and their Brigade Number on their payslip from July. The 141 firefighters recruited since the changes will be advised of their new Brigade number.

With this solution, all permanent fire-fighters will continue to understand their place in the history of Fire & Rescue NSW.

Should you have any queries or concerns regarding this matter, please contact Richard Host, Director, Information Technology on 0292652645 or richard.host@fire.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Greg Mullins AFSM
Commissioner

6 May 2011



Thursday 11 May 2011 - Number 513

CURRENT NATIONAL SECURITY ALERT LEVEL: MEDIUM

Fire Prevention Week, Brigade Kids Day and Open Day

Last week we launched Fire Prevention Week for 2011, starting with Brigade Kids Day on Sunday 1 May promoting the newly upgraded Brigade Kids website and supported by our community partner McDonald's. The day was a great success, raising over \$100,000 for the Burns Unit at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. Support from Channel 9 meant that FRNSW had numerous appearances on television programs throughout the week to help build fire safety awareness leading into winter.

The week concluded with Open Day on Saturday 7 May, another very successful day, supported by our Community Partner GIO. I attended Manly, Dee Why and Narrabeen stations, while Deputy Commissioner Rosemary Milkins visited Blacktown and Castle Hill stations. Deputy Commissioner John Benson and Superintendent Steven Baker visited Bulli, Wollongong, Shellharbour, Unanderra and Warrawong. Firefighters across the State did a great job promoting Open Day in their local communities. Thanks to everybody who participated, particularly Community Safety and Public Affairs who coordinated a huge amount of media coverage; it is great to be part of such a committed organisation.

Pride of the Illawarra Awards

Deputy Commissioner John Benson and Superintendent Steven Baker ZC Regional South 1 represented me at the *Pride of the Illawarra* gala event last Friday night where the combined Rotary Clubs of the Illawarra recognised and awarded the exemplary organisational and service efforts of paid and volunteer emergency service workers across the Illawarra.

FRNSW finalists Station Officer Tony Camilleri 503 Wollongong, Captain Ken Lawrence 210 Balgownie, Retained Firefighter Rachel Cooper 207 Albion Park Rail, and Deputy Captain Alfred Refalo 207 Albion Park Rail, along with their families, 300 guests and dignitaries attended. Congratulations to all nominees, and particularly to Station Officer Tony Camilleri who received the Emergency Service Officer of the Year award in the paid category in recognition of his emergency service contributions. See the [intranet story](#) for all the details.

Back by popular demand: Permanent Firefighter Brigade Numbers

When our new Human Resources Information System, SAP, was introduced, so too was a single employee numbering system that covered all classifications: permanent, retained, and support staff. This saw the end of a long tradition of permanent firefighters having sequential numbers. FBEU Secretary Jim Casey and I have discussed this on several occasions and the FBEU asked that I have another look at this decision. In retrospect, the sequential Brigade numbers helped to identify each individual's 'place in our history' and my discussions during station visits identified that a return of the 'old' numbering system would be a very popular decision. While it would be extremely costly (and unjustifiable) to change SAP to accommodate different streams and types of employee numbers, our Director of IT, Richard Host and his team have identified a cost effective solution. Accordingly, once some minor changes have been made to SAP, the 141 permanent firefighters who have joined us since the change will be allocated the sequential numbers that they would otherwise have received, and all new permanent firefighters will be allocated both an employee number for SAP purposes, and a Brigade Number. There will be no need to remember both, as SAP will automatically map employee details from one number to the other.

Emergency Medical Response - Is it a *fait accompli*?

I am aware that there has been significant speculation on the FBEU Members' Forum and elsewhere that introduction of Emergency Medical Response (EMR) for FRNSW is a 'done deal' and is imminent. I can assure everyone that *it is not*, apart from a handful of existing Community First Responder units, and occasional calls for assistance when ambulances are unavailable for some reason.

During station visits and in the document on culture change that was circulated earlier this year, I have raised EMR as an example of how we need to keep abreast of the latest developments worldwide. The reason for raising this and other issues is that as an organisation, and as individuals, we need to be open to the fact that the world is changing, and we too may have to change in some areas. Unfortunately some of those with very strong negative views have tended to dominate current discussions and have (incorrectly) made assumptions based on the USA experience. This is however understandable given the lack of information until now on this issue.

The facts at present:

- fire services around the world are moving toward assisting with basic EMR, including Melbourne where it has been a part of firefighters' work for a decade. Fire services, including FRNSW, are up to 10 times less busy than our colleagues in ambulance services - we clearly have capacity to assist if needed
- there is NO current proposal for FRNSW to move into a formal EMR role, and if there were, it would have to come from the Ambulance Service of NSW which is the agency responsible for pre-hospital care, not from FRNSW



20 April 2012

Mr Greg Mullins AFSM
Commissioner
Fire and Rescue New South Wales
PO Box A249
Sydney South NSW 1232

Dear Mr Mullins,

Re: Reintroduction of Brigade Numbers

In correspondence on 6 May 2011, you confirmed that you shared the Union's view of the significance of the Brigade Number system to the culture of FRNSW, and that you had instructed that Brigade Numbers be issued to all firefighters, in addition to the separate payroll number that has been issued to those members who joined post 2009. In Commissioner's Corner of the following week you wrote "... all new permanent firefighters will be allocated both an employee number for SAP purposes, and a Brigade Number. There will be no need to remember both, as SAP will automatically map employee details from one number to the other."

I was further heartened when Chief Superintendent Mal Connellan contacted Senior Industrial Officer Chris Read to secure a list of the appropriate numbers that the Union had maintained for the newer recruits, and with the assurance that work was underway on an In Order which would set out how to use the Brigade Numbers.

Assistant Commissioner Milkens has now informed the Union that the Department has no intention of allowing the return of Brigade Numbers for any purpose relating to payroll, and will not be issuing guidance on the matter. Should this stand, it would effectively confirm the end of the Brigade Number system. As a fellow firefighter I'm sure you will understand that I am personally very disappointed, as well as surprised, by the apparent shift in the Department's attitude to this question.

Members continue to contact our office, following your commitments of last year, seeking clarification on this matter. Some clear advice from you regarding the Department's position would be welcome so we can all know where we stand.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Casey
State Secretary

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File No:

20 June 2012

Mr Jim Casey
State Secretary
Fire Brigade Employees' Union (FBEU)
1-7 Belmore Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Dear Mr Casey,

I refer to your letter of 20 April 2012 seeking clarity regarding the use of Brigade Numbers at Fire & Rescue NSW.


In good faith and as agreed, the Brigade Number was introduced almost a year ago based on the old Employee Number range. This has provided each and every new recruit over the last three years with a number that represents their place in our organisation's history.

In Commissioner's Corner of 11 May 2011, I wrote that new fire-fighters would be allocated an Employee Number and a Brigade Number with both being mapped to their name in SAP. Additionally, both numbers would appear on every payslip so one would not need to memorize the Brigade Number.

It has never been the intention for the Brigade Number to be used for any purpose other than to allow for permanent fire-fighters to understand their place in the history of Fire & Rescue NSW. Payroll Employee Numbers will continue to be used in the Occurrence Book and as the basis for user access to our computer systems.

I trust this provides the clarity you requested.

Yours sincerely



John Benson AFSM
Acting Commissioner