



HEAD OFFICE

Level 10, 227 Elizabeth Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000

PO Box A249, SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232

Telephone: (02) 9265 2999 Facsimile: (02) 9265 2988

www.fire.nsw.gov.au

info@fire.nsw.gov.au

ABN: 12 593 473 110

File No: CHO/08193

21 May 2012

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

Dear Mr Casey

I write in response to your correspondence dated 10 February 2012 in relation to the draft Incident Ground Refreshments and Meals policy (the policy).

I do not accept the Union's contention that the policy contravenes the Service's obligations under the *Crown Employees (Fire and Rescue NSW Permanent Firefighting Staff) Award 2011* or the *Crown Employees (Fire and Rescue NSW Retained Firefighting Staff) Award 2011* (the Awards).

In response to your points:

- a/ You state that the 'policy aims to circumvent the Department's Award obligations to provide tea, coffee and biscuits as part of the refreshment to firefighters at an incident...' As you would be aware, the Award makes no reference to an obligation to provide firefighters with tea, coffee or biscuits. In this regard, the Service is unable to agree to amend the policy to mandate the provision of tea, coffee, and biscuits, however it will be provided where possible.
- b/ The policy concerns the health and safety of firefighters whilst performing their functions on an incident ground by ensuring their energy levels are maintained and they are appropriately hydrated. Furthermore, this policy is distinct from the Hydration and Nutrition policy which covers general health and hydration as opposed to specific hydration needs on the incident ground.
- c/ FRNSW does not agree that 'when the Department does not provide tea, coffee, hot water and biscuits as part of incident ground refreshment, it fails to fulfill its obligations in terms of the provision of refreshment and/or meals.' In terms of the obligation to provide refreshments to firefighters, the current refreshment pack is far superior nutritionally to tea, coffee and biscuits. As such, a failure to provide tea, coffee, hot water or biscuits does not give rise to an entitlement to a refreshment allowance.
- d/ The Service rejects the FBEUs claims that Long Life Meal Packs (LLMPs) do not meet the Service's obligation to provide a substantial meal that is similar in standard to that provided by domestic airlines to in flight passengers travelling interstate economy class. The Service has previously received advice from Qantas in relation to the nutritional breakdown of a standard

domestic flight meal. The Service is pleased to confirm that the nutritional value of LLMPs sourced is far superior nutritionally to a meal provided on a domestic flight.

- e/ In relation to the stipulation of timeframes for the provision of refreshments or meals within the policy, the Service considers that as these timeframes are stated within the Awards they do not need to be restated in the policy.

I note your comments made in relation to the policy, however I strongly reject that the policy is 'a cynical attempt to circumvent Award entitlements'. The policy has been drafted to ensure that firefighters are provided with optimal refreshments and meals to ensure the safe and effective performance of their duties on the incident ground.

I would like to thank you for your comments and feedback. As the intent of the policy is to ensure appropriate refreshments and meals are actually provided rather than the payment of an allowance, I do not propose to amend the policy. I have attached a copy of the finalised policy for your information which will be promulgated in the next Commissioners Orders.

Should you have any queries or concerns regarding this matter, please contact Laura Iacumin, Senior Industrial Relations Officer on 9265 2903 or laura.iacumin@fire.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Greg Mullins AFSM
Commissioner



FIRE & RESCUE NSW



Policy

Incident refreshments and meals

Policy no [inserted by Governance Branch]

Version: 06 Final Draft – April 2012

Director Human Resources, (02) 9265 2625

Human Resources

Table of contents

1	Introduction	3
1.1	Purpose	3
1.2	Scope and application.....	3
1.3	Legal and policy framework	3
2	Policy statement.....	4
2.1	Policy principles and requirements.....	4
2.2	Policy implementation	4
2.3	Roles and responsibilities	7
2.4	Training and support	7
2.5	Monitoring and review	8
3	Further information	8
4	Document information	9
4.1	Related documents	9
4.2	Document control.....	9
4.3	Revision history	9

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document outlines how Fire & Rescue New South Wales (FRNSW) will provide firefighters with adequate fluid and energy for the safe completion of operational tasks whilst attending an incident.

This instruction should be read in conjunction with the *Hydration and nutrition policy* on page 198 of the Standing Orders.

1.2 Scope and application

To address the nutritional requirements and meet the organisations obligations under the relevant industrial instruments, service arrangements outlined in this policy have been entered into with providers of both refreshments and meals.

This policy applies to all firefighters, administration and trades personnel attending incidents. It does not apply to the supply of refreshments or meals to administrative, trades or firefighters not in attendance at an incident.

This policy rescinds and replaces In Order 2008/23.

1.3 Legal and policy framework

1.3.1 Legal framework

FRNSW has an obligation to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees. A foreseeable risk in carrying out the duties of firefighting is dehydration and depleted energy stores due to the physically demanding nature of work being performed. To meet this positive duty and Award requirements, this policy complies with the following:

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

Crown Employees (Fire and Rescue NSW Permanent Firefighting Staff) Award 2011

Crown Employees (Fire and Rescue NSW Retained Firefighting Staff) Award 2011

Fire and Rescue NSW Corporate plan

1.3.2 Policy framework

This policy forms part of FRNSW overall strategy to maintain a commitment to safety. While this policy is aimed at ensuring adequate hydration and nutrition at incidents, the FRNSW Hydration and Nutrition policy provides further guidance in relation to preparation for attendance at incidents and advice relating to a well balanced diet.

Further, the Health, Fitness and Wellbeing policy provides guidance in relation to the health promotion support programs designed to improve the health, fitness and wellbeing of FRNSW employees.

The Occupational Health and Safety policy outlines the organisations' commitment to safety and the responsibilities of all stakeholders to meet the objective of ensuring 'safety is the guiding principle in everything we do'.

2 Policy statement

2.1 Policy principles and requirements

As reflected in the Values Statement, FRNSW is committed to ensuring the safety of all firefighters. To meet the nutritional requirements of firefighters, refreshment and meal options are based on expert advice and evidence that relates to best practice.

Fluid and energy requirements at incidents can be met by providing water, carbohydrate/electrolyte replacement, refreshment and meals.

The objective is to ensure firefighter hydration and energy requirements are always met. Only in exceptional circumstances where the above provisions cannot be met will allowances be paid in accordance with the relevant Awards and the Incident Controller will need to explain why adequate hydration and nutrition could not be provided.

2.1.1 Hydration at incidents

Incident Controllers and Officers in Charge should ensure that firefighters receive appropriate levels of hydration at all times. Water should be the dominant source of fluid replacement.

Firefighters are encouraged to consume carbohydrate/electrolyte replacement beverages to replace fluids, electrolytes and energy in the following circumstances:

- When they have been attending repeated incidents
- After one hour of strenuous firefighting or related heavy work activity
- When recommended to individual firefighters by medical officers/paramedics

Use of carbohydrate/electrolyte beverages should be restricted to one serve (42 g of sachet) per hour of strenuous activity to support energy, electrolyte and fluid needs. Inappropriate use of these beverages can result in adverse health effects.

These beverages need to be made up strictly as directed using 600 ml bottles of water stowed on appliances. Water should be consumed for fluid replacement in between using these drinks.

Note: Once mixed carbohydrate/electrolyte beverages need to be consumed within two hours, after which any unused portion should be discarded to prevent the risk of food poisoning associated with bacterial growth.

In accordance with SIMS, the esky on appliances must be stowed with 12 x 600ml bottles of water and 8 x carbohydrate/electrolyte replacement sachets.

Tea and coffee do not provide any additional hydration or nutrition benefits to those provided by water and carbohydrate/electrolyte replacement beverages. As such tea and coffee do not form part of the refreshment requirements to ensure the health and safety of operational personnel responding to prolonged incidents. However personnel may choose to consume tea and coffee if available. An inability to provide hot water, tea and coffee does not create an entitlement to a meal and/or refreshment allowance.

2.1.2 Refreshments

Long life refreshment packs (LLRPs) are provided for consumption by firefighters, at two hours after activation to an incident. These LLRPs meet the requirement for a “refreshment” and are stowed on all FRNSW appliances.

The nutritional requirement of incident refreshments is detailed in the below table and is based on research by leading dieticians.

Nutritional parameters of incident refreshments

Nutrient	Refreshment Pack
Energy	1,500kJ
Protein	>2-20g
Fat	<5g
Carbohydrate	30-60g
Fibre	>2g

The refreshment packs have a use by date printed on the pack label. Station Commanders must ensure that the refreshment packs have not expired. If the refreshment pack shows an expired use by date, the pack is to be removed and disposed of.

LLRPs must be stowed on the appliance in accordance with SIMS.

Replenishment of refreshment pack/ small parts box can be ordered by following the ordering instructions on ESCAT.

Note: Refreshment packs are provided strictly for use at incidents, not as a snack in other circumstances.

2.1.3 Meals

When a firefighter attends an incident for four hours or more, a meal will be provided. Arrangements have been made with an external caterer to provide breakfast, lunch, dinner and evening meals where required in the Sydney Basin.

The Communication Centre Supervisor will automatically request catering on activation of a 4th Alarm response.

If the Incident Controller considers meals may be required for incidents under 4th Alarm, they should contact the Communication Centre.

The following parameters must be met for catering to accept the request for services:

- Meals to be provided within the Sydney basin area bounded by Hornsby, Palm Beach, Penrith, Campbelltown and Wollongong
- Minimum of 50 meals
- 4 hours allowed for preparation and delivery of meals

The Incident Controller will be the single point of contact with external caterers and is required to:

- allocate a safe location for the catering facility
- validate the caterer's claim form by confirming the number of meals supplied
- address any issues relating to the service with the catering staff at the incident ground in the first instance.

Incident controllers requiring meals at incidents outside the Sydney Basin area or who require less than 50 meals are to source them from local food outlets where possible. The Incident Ground Meal Guide should be used to facilitate this process.

In the event that service agreements and local food outlets can not supply meals, Long Life Meal Packs (LLMPs) are to be used to provide firefighters with the energy requirements for operational duties.

LLMPs must be stowed on the appliance in accordance with SIMS.

Additional LLMPs can be sourced from LSVs, Regional Rehabilitation Vehicles, Rehabilitation Pods.

Replenishment of LLMPs can be ordered by following the ordering instructions on ESCAT.

The nutritional requirement of incident meals is detailed in the below table and is based on the research by leading dieticians.

Nutritional parameters of incident meals

Nutrient	Meal Requirements for Firefighters
Energy	2,773kJ
Protein	25-30g
Fat	15-25g
Carbohydrate	80-100g
Fibre	>8g

2.2 Policy implementation

Fire & Rescue NSW is committed to promoting the health and safety of all firefighters. As part of the commitment, this policy will be implemented for all firefighters attending incidents.

2.3 Roles and responsibilities

All employees have responsibilities regarding implementation of the incident refreshments and meals policy.

2.3.1 The Executive Leadership Team

The Executive Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Providing leadership concerning issues of incident refreshments and meals.
- Consulting with subject matter experts to develop strategies for timely provision of incident refreshment and meals.
- Ensuring compliance and active management consistent with the relevant acts and awards.
- Promoting compliance with this policy and associated procedures.
- Ensuring all managers are aware of this policy and their responsibilities.
- Providing resources for implementation of the policy.

2.3.2 Managers and supervisors

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

- Complying with and advising all firefighters of the intent and provisions within this policy.
- Promoting a positive workplace culture in response to incident refreshment and meals.
- Acting as a role model by complying with the provisions within this policy.
- Facilitating the supply of meals and refreshments in accordance with this policy when performing the role of incident controller.
- Meeting their obligations to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of their employees at incidents.

2.3.3 Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- Complying with the requirements and intent of this policy.
- Making every effort to maintain their hydration and nutrition when at incidents
- Maintaining a good level of health, fitness and wellbeing (including hydration and nutrition status) to maintain operational readiness.

2.3.4 Health and Safety

Health and Safety is responsible for:

- Providing support and advice with regard to health and fitness issues including advice on hydration and nutrition.
- Assessing and advising on matters of health and fitness.
- Providing education for firefighters and other staff on the interaction of hydration and nutrition firefighting activities.
- Liaising with dieticians to ensure evidence based practices are employed.

2.4 Support

Service agreements and supply contracts outlined above (2.1.1-2.1.3) have been established to assist with the implementation of this policy.

An Incident Ground Meal Guide is available for use by incident controllers, both electronically and in a hard copy format, to ensure that meals sourced through local arrangements meet the energy demands of work performed during extended incidents.

2.5 Monitoring and review

The effectiveness of this policy in providing firefighters with adequate hydration and nourishment will be monitored by the Incident Controllers.

Health and Safety will provide ongoing advice on research developments relating to incident ground refreshments and meals to the Commissioner for consideration.

3 Further information

For information relating to hydration and nutrition contact the Assistant Director Health and Safety.

For logistics and supply issues contact the Assistant Director Logistics Support.

4 Document information

4.1 Related documents

Hydration and nutrition policy

4.2 Document control

Policy Manager	Director Human Resources
Contact Officer	Assistant Director Health and Safety
Contact No	(02) 9265 2968
Document type	Policy
Applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permanent Firefighters <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retained Firefighters <input type="checkbox"/> Community Fire Unit Members <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative and Trades Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Contractors and Consultants
Status	Draft/Approved/Rescinded
Security	Unclassified [or other appropriate classification in accordance with the Information Security Policy]
File Reference	CHO/08193
Review Date	Date on which the policy will be reviewed. Default is 5 years from date of issue
Rescinds	In Orders 2008/23
Rescinded by	List the document/s that rescinded this document
Copyright	© State of New South Wales through Fire and Rescue NSW

4.3 Revision history

Version	Date	Status	TRIM Ref	Details
01	05/10/2011	Draft		
02	12/10/2011	Draft		
03	09/11/2011	Draft		
04	27/01/2012	Draft		
05	05/04/2012	Draft		
06	26/04/2012	Final		

