



SITREP 20/15

LF test results in, review now underway

The 800-plus members who undertook the recent Leading Firefighter test should by now have been notified of the result. The independent assessor provided FRNSW with the names of the successful applicants for each location, as required by Award subclause 13.7, but neither the Department nor the Union has received (or will receive) the results or feedback for any individual applicant. Individual test results should be forwarded directly to each applicant by the independent assessment centre shortly.

Unlike the old system, success in this test has not meant automatic promotion to Leading Firefighter, which will not occur unless and until the Leading Firefighter Program is successfully completed.

Equally, unsuccessful applicants have not "failed". There have always been more applicants for positions than positions available – on this occasion over 800 applicants for 80 positions. These 80 positions were the first of at least 200 new LF positions and unlike the old system, which opened only once per year, applications will be continue to be called on an as-needs basis throughout this year and beyond. Unsuccessful applicants from this round may re-apply over the coming 12 months using their score from this test, or choose to instead wait to undertake another test at the next opportunity after that. An unsuccessful application now does not mean future success is impossible – an unsuccessful score now could very well be successful in a subsequent application round.

The Union and Department previously agreed that the new LF test should "*objectively assess and measure the applicants' suitability for a leadership role*" and would "*remain subject to ongoing joint review by the parties to ensure that the testing remains relevant, accurate and fair*". This joint review is already underway. Members have been loud and clear about problems with the initial test, including inadequate and noisy testing areas, malfunctioning computers, issues with booking test appointments, tests not commencing on time and applicants' I.D.s not being checked. We will be working to ensure that all of these complaints are investigated with a view to ensuring that they do not occur again.

But concerns over the test arrangements should be relatively easy to resolve. More difficult will be determining whether the testing itself was "*relevant, accurate and fair*" and, if the answer on any of those criteria is no, what changes are need to change that to yes.

The Union will report on the findings of this joint FBEU/FRNSW review as soon as it is concluded (hopefully before the end of July) and will call a General Meeting to allow members to consider and vote on the future of progression and promotion and the Award's Clause 13 shortly after that.

In brief ...

- Feedback since SITREP 16 on the proposal to replace the non-Award pantyhose allowance for 155 permanent members with a standard issue of 5 pairs on ESCAT (with additional packs on approval) for both permanent and retained members led the State Committee to approve the change last week.
- The Vanuatu dispute (see SITREP 15) has been settled, with the Department accepting the Union's position and the Union agreeing to discuss a new overseas deployment clause for the next Award.

Jim Casey
State Secretary

Friday 5 June 2015