



# SITREP 38/15

## **Additional public holiday 28 December**

Monday 28 December is an additional public holiday, so any member who works that day (0001 to 2400 hrs) will be compensated for all hours actually worked – permanent members with consolidated leave (Perm Award subclause 6.4.2) and retained members with overtime rates (Retd Award subclause 6.10.3).

## **Baird's new fire tax - Robin Hood in reverse**

The Baird Government has resurrected O'Farrell's aborted 2013 fire levy (see SITREP 18 of 2013) after failing to mention it once during the March state election or the parliamentary sitting year that followed. Emergency Services Minister David Elliott yesterday dismissed the 25% the state without insurance as "shirkers", exhibiting his contempt for the poorest and most disadvantaged who will be hit hardest while big business and the insurers skip away hundreds of millions in front.

It's not the first time they've slung millions at their insurance industry mates either (see "*Police D&D reforms 'value for money'*" in SITREP 2 of 2014). Anyone who believes their line that insurance premiums will fall, and then stay there, is having themselves on. The Union re-entered the debate yesterday (see our website for our media release) in a battle that is guaranteed to continue into 2016. More to follow.

## **Effective trade unionism on trial**

The Trade Union Royal Commission has again exposed its real purpose with the unprecedented arrest this week of two CFMEU officials on criminal charges of blackmail and intimidation.

These CFMEU officials are not accused of the sort of corruption recently (and rightly) exposed in the HSU and NUW. No, their "crime" was to attempt to pressure an employer (the aggressively anti-union Grocon, on whose sites 14 workers have died over the past 10 years) and their supplier (Boral) by organising boycotts of Boral if it continued supplying Grocon. Not for personal gain, but to force through the best possible deal for their CFMEU members. Compare this to the recent treatment of ex-AWU Secretary Bill Shorten, who was pilloried by the Commission for doing cosy deals and not fighting for his members. Too soft, or too hard? It'd be funny if it wasn't so serious.

If these two CFMEU officials are guilty of blackmail and intimidation then so too are we, because the FBEU routinely threatens the Department and Government (and vice versa) when discussions break down. It's how IR works. It's not always nice, or orderly, or even fair. The employers prefer court room battles fought by lawyers, which is OK to a point, however the FBEU's very best wins have never been won in the courts. It's not two CFMEU officials on trial here, it's effective and militant trade unionism.

## **Movember update – FBEU wins again**

Another successful year saw the Movember Fire team retaining first place on the leaderboard in the Triple Zero Movember Challenge raising over \$20,000. I'm pleased to note two State Committee officials in the top 20 fundraisers, and to once again record our appreciation for the efforts of tireless team captain (and FBEU President) Darin Sullivan and all members and associate members who participated.

**Jim Casey**  
State Secretary

Friday 11 December 2015