



SITREP 05/16

Back to Back sacked

The Union's State Committee has called time on the Permanent Award's unpopular Back to Back (B2B) Roster, dismissing the B2B as an experiment of the 1980's whose time had come. It was always intended to operate as a transitional roster for five or less years pending a move to 24/7 permanent staffing, and in most instances did, but it lingered for over a decade at the three stations still working it - 292 Doyalson, 341 Kariong and 452 Tamworth.

To his credit, Commissioner Mullins (an original architect of the B2B when he was an FBEU official) agrees, and negotiations are now well advanced for the movement of Kariong and Tamworth to 24/7 staffing and Doyalson to the Special Roster. The MN2 staffing changes (Doyalson -4 and Kariong +8) are expected to occur before the end of March. The Tamworth upgrade (+8) will take longer, but the Union and Department are working cooperatively to ensure this happens before the end of the year.

The State Committee currently intends to remove the B2B Roster from the next award, so any members still working it who support its continuation are urged to let us know asap.

SMART update #2

Further to last week's SITREP 4, the Department this week agreed with our suggestion to add A (available) to the current entry options of U (unavailable), L (on leave) and the system will be amended in the coming week to allow members to access this. The default for all members will remain blank, which will now mean neither available nor unavailable, thereby allowing members considerably more "real world" latitude about their availability than the current two-speed blank or U. Meanwhile, the members' feedback from the trial of the timesheet component in MN3 (see SITREP 2/16) has helped iron out more bugs, allowing the trial to be extended next week to both MN1 and RW1.

Extended eligibility for re-advertised positions

After previously failing to attract applications from Inspectors, LSOs or SOs on the LSO Program for the two Duty Commander positions at RW3 Leeton, this week's Commissioner Orders 2016/4 has now extended that call to all Station Officers with 24 or more months' service. This is in accordance with the 2016 Permanent Award changes to subclause 28.7 that open re-advertised Inspector vacancies to all Station Officers with at least 24 months service at SO rank, and re-advertised Station Officer vacancies to all Senior Firefighters with at least 36 months service at SF rank.

Note that successful applicants need to complete the LSO (or LF) Program before they can take up the position, and then complete the Inspector (or SO) Program within the next 12 months following that.

QUIT Smoking Program

Also in this week's Commissioner's Orders was the updated FRNSW Non-Smoking Policy, which as a result of Union intervention now includes a reference to the Joint Quit Smoking Program. The joint FRNSW/FBEU Quit Smoking Program has been in operation since 2004 and includes Nicotine Replacement Therapy (ie, "patches", or NRT) and numerous other support mechanisms. The Union secured the first 4 weeks' supply of NRT free of charge, and the remaining 4 weeks at cost. NSW Health also offer a call back system of information and counseling for people attempting to quit.



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Transfer Registers changing

Further to SITREP 4's "Sydney or the bush?" item, members are reminded that the new 2016 Awards will commence operation next Friday, including Permanent Award subclause 28.3.5:

28.3.5 An employee who accepts an offer of transfer pursuant to subclause 28.3.4 shall be released from their current position within twenty eight (28) days and transferred to that Transfer Register area. Declining an offer of transfer shall result in an employee's removal from the relevant Transfer Register. Employees who are so removed and who subsequently re-apply for placement on that Transfer Register will be required pursuant to subclause 28.4.6 to seek and hold residential priority for two years following their re-application in order to be elevated to that Residential Transfer Register.

So the current "three strikes" provision will end, as was intended and voted for, and any member who declines an offer of transfer will be removed from that transfer register altogether. Declining members will not be placed on the bottom of the register, and will therefore need to re-apply for placement on that register and serve the requisite two years on the General Register before being eligible for elevation to the Residential Register - even if they previously held residential priority.

This is expected to bite at least some members sooner rather than later. As reported last week, some members working the Special Roster have requested to return to Sydney and the Union has confirmed their right to do so. Consequently, there will soon be vacancies in those areas, including (but not necessarily limited to) the Maitland Transfer Register area. There are currently 34 members on the Maitland Residential Transfer Register, all of whom have declined at least one offer of transfer. There are another 232 members on the Maitland General Transfer Register, 194 of whom have also declined at least one offer of transfer.

Assuming the members on them remain true to form then the Maitland transfer registers are about to become significantly shorter. And as was re-affirmed last week, if no members apply then the vacancies will offered to retained members within the Fire District.

Solidarité avec les pompiers de Montréal

The Montreal firefighters' union, the Association des Pompiers de Montréal has contacted the FBEU requesting our support for their call to boycott the World Police and Firefighter Games to be held in their city in 2017. Why? Because as their www.wpfg2017.com website explains, the APM is "currently embroiled in a major dispute with the City of Montreal and the Quebec provincial government over forced changes to our collective agreements and pension funds" and their union is attempting (with growing success) to apply economic and political pressure on their employer.

The State Committee resolved to meet with the FRNSW Sports Association with a view to hopefully establishing a common position to support the boycott and actively encourage all 6,200 FBEU members to not attend the Montreal Games unless and until the Montreal firefighters advise otherwise. Our letter to the APM can be found with the online version of this SITREP. More to follow.

Jim Casey
State Secretary

Friday 12 February 2016