



SITREP 12/16

Code Red re Heavy CAFS rescinded

Dispute proceedings in the IRC today resulted in a recommendation that the Union lift its Code Red instruction of 15 April and the Department respond within 72 hours with a detailed proposal for the staffing of the Cat 6 heavy CAFS tankers, with the parties to then report back to the IRC. The Code Red issued on Friday 15 April has therefore been rescinded, effective immediately, and the Cat 6 heavy CAFS tankers are to be staffed in accordance with the policy set out here below until further notice.

Staffing and checking of "orphaned" permanent appliances

Where the Department has located an additional appliance at a station with permanent staffing (including jointly staffed permanent/retained stations) but has not provided the additional permanent firefighters needed to staff that appliance then the appliance is not to be used or responded unless:

- 1) spare on-shift permanent firefighters are available; and/or
 - 2) off-duty permanent firefighters are recalled; and/or
 - 3) for pumpers and non-Cat 6 tankers only, retained firefighters are called in on relief duty rates;
- and in all three cases, that safe and effective minimum staffing for that appliance is present.

For example, and following on from the LSVs, the Department last year began locating CAFS tankers at numerous permanent stations including Lane Cove, Miranda, Narellan, Kellyville and Cranebrook without attaching any additional permanent firefighters to those stations to staff them. These "orphaned" appliances are not to be staffed by on-shift firefighters unless they are genuinely spare, or by overtime, and then only if there are two such firefighters available for that appliance.

Under no circumstance are a station's staffed appliances to be grounded or reduced below their safe and effective minimum staffing levels in order to staff "orphaned" appliances. An immediate response is ordinarily possible for permanent appliances because they have permanent staff attached. These appliances do not have permanent staff and therefore will often be incapable of immediate response.

While this is regrettable, it is not our fault. If the Government will not fund FRNSW to the extent necessary to staff these appliances then a slower response and lower capability is the inevitable result.

This also extends to the checking of appliances. Permanent members should not check or maintain any appliance at their station during a shift unless that appliance is staffed during that shift (including by spares or overtime). An appliance that is staffed by only one firefighter should be checked but not otherwise used unless and until safe and effective minimum staffing for that appliance is present.

Again, if the Department wants an appliance to be checked every shift then it can staff it every shift, even if only for the time necessary to perform those checks. One manager last week commented that *"If this vehicle is required at short notice either through a blow up situation or at the direction of the Commissioner we are not going to say 'well we now have to wait until the appliance has been checked before it turns out'"*. That's exactly what we'll be saying. In fire services, as in life, you get what you pay for.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Sullivan".

Darin Sullivan
President and Acting State Secretary

Monday 18 April 2016