



# SITREP 13/16

## 426 Perisher Valley update #1

As flagged in SITREP 10/2016, the Perisher Valley dispute was referred by the Union to the IRC, where it was agreed that permanent members who make up the minimum of crew of four outside of rostered hours will be paid a four-hour minimum payment at overtime rates and any other permanent members who respond, but who are not making up the minimum crew, will be paid a two-hour minimum payment at overtime rates. So the Department's advice to applicants on this was proven wrong, and the Award's subclauses 9.6 and 9.7 will continue to apply.

The agreed conditions for permanent members working at 426 Perisher Valley Fire Station are now available under the *Fact Sheets & FAQs* tab on the Union's website. Members are reminded that claims should be made as soon as practicable and any member who has difficulties with claiming their entitlements should contact the Union for advice and assistance.

## Foley failing regional NSW

There are over 140 different NSW Government agencies and yet only two include the word "rural" in their titles - the Rural Assistance Authority and the Rural Fire Service. The former is sensibly located in western NSW, at Orange. The latter is inexplicably located in western Sydney, at Lidcombe, although not for much longer. The property's owner gave notice last year of its intention to evict the RFS by 2018.

Most reasonable people would consider this an opportunity to relocate RFS HQ to where it always should have been - in regional NSW. But not the RFS bosses (for whom the daily commute from Sydney's north shore is about to get a whole lot longer) and not NSW Opposition leader Luke Foley, who this week nominated "*finding a new home for the RFS in western Sydney*" as a Labor priority. Why? Because western Sydney has more need for jobs than regional NSW? Hardly. It was only this month that the Electrolux plant at Orange ceased manufacturing after 70 years, taking with it hundreds of jobs and tens of millions of dollars from the local economy.

We're not alone in saying that Foley has got this wrong - see <http://volunteerfirefighters.org.au/put-the-rural-back-in-rural-fire-service>

The Baird Government is yet to show its hand but if its decentralisation policy is anything more than lip service ("*the NSW Government should plan and implement a clear strategy to relocate appropriate public sector functions and jobs to regional NSW to stimulate regional economic development,*") then the RFS HQ's days in Sydney are numbered. Honestly, if the Rural Fire Service isn't appropriate for relocation to regional NSW then what Government agency is? More to follow.

## New Sub-Branch Executive Committees elected

The Union's Returning Officer has now declared the results of the Sub-Branch Executive elections for the 2016-2019 term. The results can be found on the Union's website. Thank you to all members who nominated and congratulations to those elected. We look forward to your input.

Sub-Branch Executive Committees contribute to our Union's democratic structures and in the policy making process. The more active they are, the stronger our Union.



# SITREP 13/16

... Continued from Page 1

## May Day 2016 – Sunday 1 May

The Sydney May Day march will be held Sunday 1 May, with members meeting at Belmore Park (near Central Station) at 1130 hours. Refreshments will be provided for members and their families after, so for catering purposes members intending to come are asked to let us know with an email to [office@fbeu.net](mailto:office@fbeu.net).

## New Country Rosters?

The Union has responded to CSB and SOSB member complaints about the Special Roster worked by Station Officers and permanent firefighters at various regional stations, and by non-24/7 (ie, 4 platoon) Inspectors, with two separate yet closely related proposals for both groups. Both draft rosters propose a four rather than five day week, and both propose the working of either 36 or 38 hours per week rather than the standard 42 hours currently required of all “full time” rosters under the Award. The reduction in ordinary hours for these members without a corresponding reduction in their weekly wages or leave accrual is proposed as a cost-neutral incentive to remain in or apply for these positions, which have become less attractive to most permanent members following last year’s introduction of 24 hours shifts.

Copies of both of the Union’s letters to the Department can be found as a link in the online version of this SITREP. All members (and particularly those directly or potentially affected) are encouraged to read these letters, to consider and discuss these proposals and to provide feedback through your Sub-Branche and/or directly via email.

## In brief...

- As reported in SITREP 12/2016, negotiations for the staffing of the new Cat 6 heavy CAFS tankers resumed this week, but with regrettably little progress made to date. The parties are scheduled to report back to the IRC by next week, so more to follow on this in SITREP 14.
- Permanent members are reminded that any and all time worked in excess of 24 consecutive hours is now paid for at double time. One member this week was found to have been incorrectly paid only at time and one half for overtime worked following a 24 hour PCOS. This has been corrected now, but members are advised to check your payslips regularly and to contact the Union if in any doubt.
- As a result of SITREP 11/2016, the Department has amended the SLANT tool so that permanent members working 24 hour shifts will not be flagged as taking two occurrences of sick leave if they are absent for one 24 hour shift.
- The Department will soon release its Recognition (of Prior Learning) Procedure, following significant review and input by Union. This procedure details the process for members seeking recognition of prior skills and experience and complements the Award’s recognition of prior service provisions. The Union will continue to monitor its implementation through the Training Review Committee.

Darin Sullivan  
President and Acting State Secretary

Thursday 21 April 2016