



SITREP 17/16

Contamination of FRNSW training sites update #1

As reported in SITREP 6/16, the Union is continuing to follow the historical use of firefighting foams containing PFOS and PFOA and the contamination of FRNSW training sites and various other ADF sites. Whilst the Department initially agreed to cover the costs of concerned members (retired and current) who sought to have blood tests, Commissioner Mullins has since withdrawn that offer on advice from NSW Health. The Union made its dissatisfaction with that development known in reply correspondence on 10 May, demanding that members be afforded a point in time record of their bloods for future reference given the present uncertainty around PFOS/PFOA.

Commissioner Mullins is yet to reply to my letter of 10 May, which does nothing to maintain the goodwill shown by the Union's officials and members thus far. Many of us are directly touched by this issue. My father and brother-in-law both suffered early deaths from cancer, and both were veteran firefighters, so nobody takes this matter more seriously than I do. I can assure all members, serving and retired, that your Union will continue to pursue the employer for a satisfactory outcome.

Strategic Operations Centre

The Union and Department have agreed to trial a new Strategic Operations Centre (SOC) starting Monday operating out of, and by, Sydney Comms over the next 6-8 weeks with a target start up date, if successful, of 1 October. The SOC concept has continued to evolve in the 12 months since it was first raised by the Department, with our latest discussions this week suggesting that it might prove to be more of a tweak of Sydney Comms than the radical de-staffing/re-staffing completely separate operation that was previously flagged.

The Department has agreed to attempt to ensure that every CommCen operator or supervisor who wishes to participate in the trial (will take place during normal rostered shift hours Monday to Friday) will have the chance to do so. A 7 member joint working group will be established, including 2 ComCen members (one SO and one FF) nominated by the Union. More to follow in 8 or so weeks.

Inquiry into violence against emergency services workers

The NSW Parliament has established an Inquiry into Violence Against Emergency Services Personnel, including firefighters. The Union is following these proceedings and will be making a submission. Interested members should submit your experiences and comments to office@fbeu.net by 30 June.

Threlfies

Tickets are already selling fast for the 2nd Rex Threlfo Annual Toast to be held at Doltone House Hyde Park on Tuesday 19 July which is sure to be another great event. Members are already sending us selfies with their ticket, so send us your #Threlfie and keep an eye on our social media to view them all in the lead up to the toast. Buy your tickets online now to avoid disappointment.

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

Darin Sullivan
President and Acting State Secretary

Friday 27 May 2016