



SITREP 25/16

This is my first SITREP following my appointment to the office of State Secretary by the State Committee of Management under Rule 24 to fill the casual vacancy left by Jim Casey's resignation (*see SITREP 24*).

For those members who don't yet know me, I joined the Union and NSWFB in 1999 and have served in both western and northern Sydney, attaining the rank of Senior Firefighter. I also served on my FBEU Sub-Branch Executive Committee from 2010 until elected to the State Committee in 2012 as Sub-Branch Secretary, and again in 2015 as Vice President. I'm humbled by my appointment and look forward to working with and behalf of all members over the remaining 2015-18 State Committee term.

Higher Duty rates for LSOs on leave

The Union has secured agreement from the Department for LSOs who successfully apply for Country Inspector or Operational Support Inspector positions (see Award subclause 7.5) and who proceed on leave to continue to be paid at the Inspector rate. Award subclause 7.8 requires that leave is to be paid at the member's substantive rate of pay (LSO), however this was negotiated with our expectation that the revised Inspectors' Program required for promotion from LSO to Inspector would be available and LSOs will therefore continue to be paid at the Inspector rate of pay until it is.

Victoria CFA dispute update #1

SITREP 20 reported on the the CFA/UFU Enterprise Agreement dispute in Victoria and the RFSAs' provocative intervention by seeking *"an assurance from the Premier and you as our Minister that at no time will the NSW Government attempt to register an enterprise agreement that overrides State legislation that defines and regulates volunteers/volunteer based emergency services and protects the volunteer rights and operational systems."*

Whilst the Minister quite sensibly, did not give the RFSAs such an assurance, the Union has placed both the Baird Government and the RFSAs on notice that any attempt to block or interfere with firefighters' industrial arrangements due to the alleged concerns of volunteers will be responded to by the FBEU in the strongest possible terms. Copies of the Minister's response to the RFSAs and the Union's correspondence to the Minister are available with the online version of this SITREP.

Turnbull Govt turns on fires - update #1

Further to the above item and SITREP 23, the Turnbull Government will next week introduce its bizarrely titled *Fair Work Amendment (Respect for Emergency Services Volunteers) Bill 2016* into Parliament in order to give volunteers a guaranteed right to intervene in the Fair Work Commission when making enterprise agreements - which is a right that no union, employee or employer currently has. The Bill also seeks to invalidate any agreement that undermines the capacity of firefighting bodies to properly manage their volunteer operations - which is frankly so broad that it could mean just about anything.

Despite serious doubts as to the constitutionality of the Bill, and Minister Michaela Cash's train-wreck interview this week on Sky News where she admitted to not having read the proposed CFA agreement and was unable to identify which provisions would cause CFA volunteers trouble, cross bench senators including Derryn Hinch, the Nick Xenophon Team and Bob Day have all indicated support for the Bill. Only Labor and the Greens have declared their opposition. More to follow.



SITREP 25/16

... Continued from Page 1

Recycled helmets go west

A lead story posted on the FRNSW intranet yesterday celebrated the cleverness of management in one zone for devising and implementing a new system of helmet recycling for their retained staff. Too clever by half. This initiative not only breaches repeat Union instructions (*see SITREPs 13 "2nd hand PPE banned" and 27 "Reuse turnout gear, refuse duty wear" of 2011*), it also offends both an industrial agreement reached between the Union and the Department for the 2011 Awards and the Department's own Standing Orders (*see Commissioner's Orders 2011/20: Re-usable personal protective clothing*) which plainly state that *"the Re-usable PPC policy applies to outerwear only. Outerwear consists of firefighting coats (tunics), firefighting coat capes, bushfire coats and overtrousers. Used duty wear, boots and all other items of personal protective equipment are not covered by this policy and are to be dealt with by the Station Commander in accordance with the Disposals policy.."*

To top it off, Roads and Maritime Services has this to say about using second hand helmets - albeit in a road-use sense, however the principle remains the same: *You should not purchase a second-hand helmet, as you can never know its exact history. It may have been involved in a crash or have experienced UV degradation, nor should you lend your helmet to others, as it can affect how the helmet fits your head when returned.*

Members are therefore instructed to ignore zone management and to observe both FBEU and FRNSW policy by ordering, supplying and accepting new (ie unused) helmets only.

The Union will be seeking both a retraction of the Zone instruction and a reassurance from the Department that our industrial agreement for the recycling of specified outerwear only will be respected and further, that Standing Orders are not simply guidelines. More to follow in SITREP 26.

RTAS outage

Early this morning Retained stations were notified by teleprinter that the Retained Telephone Alerting System (RTAS) was down and that Retained Firefighters should ensure they carry their pagers.

Great advice, but unless you were physically present at your station this morning, there was no way for this advice to be received, whereas a call to the Station Commander would have ensured that all members were made aware the system was down and to make themselves available for calls on pager.

I will be raising our concerns with the Commissioner but in the meantime, any member who believes they missed a call or calls due to this RTAS outage should claim the time lost (*see SITREP 45/2011's "Retained pager pain: don't get short-changed"*), and contact the Union if your claim is questioned or rejected.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary

Friday 26 August 2016