



# SITREP 30/16

## Retained relief rip-off reversed

The Union recently secured back pay for retained members in MW3 who performed Relief Duties at other retained stations after they were originally paid only the ordinary hourly rate (\$31.73) rather than the Relief Duties rates (\$106.38 for the first two hours and \$70.94 per hour thereafter).

Management originally argued that higher rates did not apply because the members moved up as a crew in an appliance rather than as individuals in their own vehicles, which is plainly wrong. Relief Duties rates are payable whenever a retained member "is required to maintain minimum staffing due to the non-availability of retained or permanent firefighting staff at another station, or permanent firefighting staff at the employee's own station". The means of transport (including a pumper) or the number of members performing the relief has nothing to do with it.

Members who suspect they have been paid incorrectly for Relief Duties performed (see subclause 6.7 of the Retained Award) should contact the Union office for further advice and assistance.

## No limits on PCOS

Management wrote to several permanent members this week to order them to perform no more Part Changes of Shift (PCOS) until their accrued PCOS debits to other members returns below 200 hours.

The Union and Department have agreed on PCOS arrangements and this is set out in the joint *Default rosters, Alternative rosters and Changes of shift* FAQs. There was (and still is) no set limit on the number of PCOS hours that can be performed. If local management is concerned about a member's PCOS balance then they should discuss their concerns with the member first. 9 times out of 10 there will be an immediate and good reason, and no reason for any further concern, but there is currently no limit.

If the Department provides evidence of real problems with PCOS then we will review our agreement and the FAQs, but until then members who receive these letters and orders are advised to ignore them.

## The Coalition hates motherhood (and you)

SITREP 21/2015 reported on the-then Abbott Government's planned cuts to the paid parental leave scheme set up by Labor in 2010. The changes focused on those who accessed both employer-funded schemes and the paid parental leave scheme, who Abbott deemed to be "rotters" and "double dippers".

PM Turnbull is rapidly making himself as unpopular as Abbott, announcing this week that the proposed changes will again be put to Parliament to deal with the same "double dippers". The changes will, if passed by the Senate, mean that any worker whose industrial award or agreement provides maternity leave more generous than the Commonwealth's will lose the Commonwealth benefit. This will bite FBEU members because our Awards (both Permanent and Retained) entitle us to paid parental leave.

Leighton Drury  
State Secretary

Friday 28 October 2016