



File Ref. No: FRN16/3
TRIM Ref. No: D16/75018

18 October 2016

Mr Leighton Drury
State Secretary
Fire Brigade Employee's Union of New South Wales
1 – 7 Belmore Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Dear Mr Drury,

Re: Risk Based Response Protocols Program

Further to discussions at the JCC held on Tuesday 11 October 2016, I write in relation to a Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) initiative to improve our response capability and performance. The Risk Based Response Protocols (RBRP) Program contains a number of revisions to current protocols that will improve response times and efficiency.

The RBRP Program involves three key initiatives developed from undertaking risk analysis of the protocols and improved operational response technologies. The three key initiatives are:

- Revised Response Protocols based on mobilisation
- Selective calling
- Revised response to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)

Revised Response Protocols based on mobilisation:

These protocols are designed to ensure the quickest resource is dispatched based on availability status, recognising that Retained crews normally take longer to mobilise than Permanent crews. A 'mobilisation time', being the assumed amount of time between when a Brigade is called and when it leaves the station to attend an incident, will be placed on all Permanent and Retained appliances.

This mobilisation time can be varied when appliances are already mobile or when a Retained crew is already at the station.



As you are aware this mobilisation protocol is already in place in the Illawarra, Albury and Bathurst/Kelso fire districts.

Selective calling:

Where a Permanent crew and a Retained crew are co-located, it is current practice to call both crews for all incidents. In future, Retained firefighters will not be called unless appropriate. Only those resources needed are mobilised, addressing the current issue of Retained firefighters responding to low risk, single pump incidents (such as rubbish and cars alight) where Permanent firefighters from the same station are already responding. This will minimise unnecessary disruption to Retained firefighters and ensure only the appropriate number and type of appliances are dispatched to incidents.

Revised response for Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs):

The usual default practice for an AFA in an urban area has been to initially dispatch two appliances from two different locations. As you may be aware, Fire & Rescue NSW responded to more than 48,000 AFAs last financial year, approximately 97% of which were false alarms. It is intended to initially send one appliance to lower risk premises' AFAs in the future. This will not have any effect upon the default initial response to premises regarded as having a higher risk, such as hospitals and nursing homes, which will remain at their current level and be routinely reviewed.

The benefits of these initiatives singularly and in combination with each other is expected to include:

- Dispatching the quickest, most appropriate type and number of resources to incidents
- Decreasing response times by improving resource availability and selection
- Improving the work/life balance of Retained firefighters
- Decreasing the risk of traffic accidents and disruption when FRNSW respond under emergency conditions
- Decreasing firefighter fatigue and risk of injury, and
- Increasing the time available for training, community engagement activities and other duties.

FRNSW understands that reduced attendances by individual Retained firefighters will impact on the dollar value of their store of leave (sick, annual and long service leave) and, without prejudice, will prevent this adverse impact by freezing the value of adversely affected employees' current leave balances at today's value.

In accordance with Clause 27 of the Crown Employees (Fire & Rescue NSW Retained Firefighting Staff) Award 2016, I request that consultation commence in regard to the implementation of Risk Based Response Protocols Program.

To this end I have requested Bernard King, Director Employee Relations to arrange a meeting with FBEU representatives as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



Greg Mullins AFSM
Commissioner