



SITREP 32/17

RBRP threatens Retained system – update #6

The Department this week replied to our letter of 24 August (see SITREP 30/17), indicating agreement to some Union proposals (eg, measuring savings, liaising with affected stations and preserving current leave balances) and a willingness to meet and discuss others. The Department's letter can be found via a link from the online version of this SITREP.

Health and Fitness testing – update #4

There has been significant progress made in the IRC since our last update in SITREP 29, including on the question of testing regularity. Health testing will occur once every 5 years to age 60 and then no more than 3 years between 60 and 67, when annual health checks will commence. The remaining areas in dispute, namely (1) what (if any) medical information will be provided by the independent assessing doctors to FRNSW, (2) the details of the Health Standards document and (3) the final format of the fitness drills - will now be determined by the IRC following evidence and submissions from the parties.

SITREP 29 reported that fitness drills will commence in January 2018. These compulsory fitness drills will be held annually, locally and on-duty, with retained members being paid as a regular drill, but in addition to the two regular drills per month. These fitness drills will not be a pass/fail type test, and will instead serve as a guide to allow members to self-assess and understand their own fitness level.

The Department recently provided a draft fitness drill for negotiation and this draft can be found as a link from the online version of this SITREP. Members are encouraged to consider, discuss and trial the proposed drill and to provide feedback to office@fbeu.net on its relevance and appropriateness, and also on the ability of your station to carry out all of the drill's tasks using your station's equipment.

Rising Inequality: An Australian reality

The ACTU this week released a new report that shows Australia is at risk of becoming an Americanised society of working poor. Rising inequality is forcing working people into poverty, with the number of workers now on minimum wages rocketing a staggering 8% in 6 years to 2016.

Unions have been on the frontline of collective change for more than a century and it is only through our work that working people see positive adjustments to their pay and conditions. If the Turnbull Government continues to try to destroy unions, and with them working people's rights at work, then it will ensure that Australia becomes a society of high inequality and dead end jobs, with long working hours, no holidays, zero job security and poverty pay levels.

The report (which can be found as a link from the online version of this SITREP) confirms that:

- Inequality is greater than at any time in the last 70 years;
- Income inequality is bad but wealth inequality is worse. The top ten richest Australians have over \$77 billion dollars between them;
- Workers share of national income is at its lowest level in over 50 years.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary

Saturday 16 September 2017