



SITREP 01/18

Northern Rivers and Cyclone Debbie – update #5

Sitrep 41/17 reported that the Local Court had decided against us in this case, which was broadly explained as concerning: *“when and where a recall finishes, and whether or not members can be stood down without pay during the course of a recall. The Union argued that a recall ceases when the firefighter returns to the station/location at which the recall commenced, and that members are therefore entitled to overtime for the entire absence. The Department argued that it could end a recall or stand down a firefighter on recall without pay whenever it saw fit (even if the firefighter is unable to return home) and as such, that it is only required to pay overtime for hours actually worked.”*

It was also reported at the time that the Union would reserve further comment on the judgment until we'd had the opportunity to carefully review it and its implications. Having since done so, the Union this week filed an appeal against the decision to the Supreme Court, so more to follow on this in 2018.

Union membership cards

Our 2018 membership cards (with dual 10/14 and 24hr rosters calendar on the back) have been held back a month this year, a Union election year, as a way of checking that we still have our members' correct addresses. The Union has always encouraged members to vote, but you can't vote if you don't receive a ballot paper and you won't receive a ballot paper from the NSW Electoral Commission if we don't have your current address. After the membership cards are posted we'll place another item in Sitrep in a couple of weeks warning members who didn't receive their membership card to check with the Union office that we have your correct address asap, otherwise they probably won't receive a ballot paper either.

There's no need to wait to see if you receive this year's card, though. Many members think that if they tell the Department that they've changed their address, that the Department then tells the Union. It doesn't, so if you've moved and haven't yet given us your new address – or even if you can't remember if you did – then please contact the Union office to check.

Health and Fitness testing – update #8

Sitrep 41/17 reported that a Full Bench of the Industrial Relations Commission of NSW had made a new Death and Disability Award following arbitration proceedings on 27 November and 20 December.

The Full Bench today issued a statement on those proceedings that can be found as a link in the online version of this Sitrep. The statement concludes that *“there remain some associated issues to be resolved concerning the content of the health pack and the health check questionnaire. These matters need to be resolved by 31 March 2018 and the Full Bench has reserved 15 March to deal with any matters that remain unresolved as at that time.”* The associated issues referred to include much of the detail about the tests required and the information to be provided, so there is much still to be done and argued between now and 15 March.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary

Friday 19 January 2018