



# SITREP 03/18

## 50/50 recruitment – update #1

A petition signed by over 60 members has been received requesting “a Special General Meeting to remove FBEU support of the 50/50 gender quota system implemented by FRNSW”. The petition does not comply with the Rule requiring a mover and seconder, but the State Committee’s decision to withdraw Union support for the recruitment process last September renders the proposed SGM unnecessary anyway.

Our last report on this issue in SITREP 18/2017 was followed soon thereafter by the emergence of a (then) new FRNSW “Current PFF Recruitment Process” information sheet which, contrary to previous assurances from the Department, confirmed the use of different test scores for men and women.

The Union wrote to Commissioner Baxter on 2 June to formally request that the Department amend its recruitment process to ensure that “a single minimum standard/score applied at each stage for all applicants, regardless of gender” and to meet, if necessary, to discuss the issue within the week. Having received no response, the Union wrote again on 7 August. The Commissioner eventually replied on 5 September to observe that “there is some level of complexity regarding a solution” and to propose a meeting, three months after I had asked for one.

That meeting achieved little except to confirm that that the main (if not sole) reason for the use of different scores for men and women is to save money on the number of psychometric tests conducted, which is crass by even the Department’s standards. The September 2017 State Committee meeting withdrew Union support for the current recruitment process with the following resolution:

*“That the correspondence from the Union to the Department dated 2 June 2017 and subsequent correspondence dated 7 August 2017 detailing the Union’s concerns over the Department’s application of different psychometric scores/standards for men and women applicants for permanent firefighter employment be noted and endorsed and that State Committee:*

- *records its disappointment with the Department’s failure to respond to either letter until 5 September 2017 and apparent disregard for the Union’s concerns and support provided to date on this issue; and*
- *reaffirms its resolution of 8 February 2016 to support the 50/50 initiative and its goal to significantly increase the number of women in our industry; but*
- *resolves to withdraw its support for the Department’s forthcoming recruitment campaign to commence October 2017 unless and until the selection process is amended to operate on the same pass mark/standard for men and women applicants in all recruit selection tests.”*

The Union’s letters to the Department and Commissioner Baxter’s reply can be found as a link from the online version of this Sitrep.

## 2.5% wage rise today

The second 2.5% wage increase under the 2017 Awards for FRNSW permanent and retained firefighters takes effect on and from today and will appear in the next pay run on 1 March.

Union dues and most allowances also increase today by 2.5% including (for all members) the kilometre allowance, which is now at \$1.28 per km, and (for permanent members) the relieving allowance (up to \$34.21) and all qualification allowances. Meal, refreshment and travelling compensation allowances are, however, adjusted separately each July in line with reasonable allowance amounts published annually by the ATO.



# SITREP 03/18

... continued from Page 1

## Union membership cards – update #1

All members should by now have received their 2018 Union membership cards. Thank you must go to Comrade Kernin Lambert for his excellent (as always) photograph that featured on this year's card. If you haven't received your card then it is almost certainly because the Union does not have your current address. Remember it's an election year, and you can't vote if you don't receive a ballot paper, and you won't receive a ballot paper if we don't have your current address. You can update your details by completing the online form at [www.fbeu.net](http://www.fbeu.net), by emailing [office@fbeu.net](mailto:office@fbeu.net) or by calling on 9218 3444.

## Recalls and kms

The commencement of the trial of the Department's e-Recall system next week is a good opportunity to remind members (and the Department) of the correct operation of Permanent Award subclause 9.8, which provides payment of the Award's kilometre allowance (now \$1.28 per km) for the transport of their gear when performing a recall at a station other than their own (ie base) station.

For most members, their base station will be the station to which they are permanently attached, and their entitlement to recall kilometres will be measured from that station only. However, for members who are claiming residential priority on a transfer register (any transfer register) the relevant station for the purposes of recall kilometres under subclause 9.8 is the permanently staffed station that is closest to their residence, not their own station.

For example, the recall kilometres for a member who:

- is attached to No. 1 Station City of Sydney; and
- lives at Cooks Hill in Newcastle; and
- is therefore claiming residential priority on the Newcastle Transfer Register

must always be calculated from No. 260 Station Newcastle, because that is the closest permanently staffed station to their residence. This member could perform a recall at City of Sydney without attracting any kilometres, because there is no transport of gear, but a recall performed anywhere else in the GSA (even, say, at Redfern or The Rocks) would require payment of return kilometres from 260 Station Newcastle rather than 1 Station City of Sydney.

While this example concerns the GSA and Newcastle, the same principle applies for any member who is claiming residential priority on any transfer register and will directly affect the allocation of recalls under the Department's e-Recall system, which will exclude recalls based on kilometres involved.

## Northern Rivers and Cyclone Debbie – update #6

The Supreme Court has listed our appeal on the Northern Rivers decision for 16 May. Members who attended the deployment should have received accommodation and meal payments in this week's pay.

Leighton Drury  
State Secretary

Friday 16 February 2018