



SITREP 08/18

Operational Support dispute resolved

Sitrep 25/17 reported on the Department's attempt to employ permanent and retained firefighters as clerks in ComSafe in order to avoid our Awards' higher wage rates, and to employ non-firefighters in our Operational Support (OS) jobs. Further updates followed in Sitreps 26, 29, 33 and 37 of 2017, the last of which confirmed that ComSafe vacancies had been advertised and open to both permanent and retained members due to Union pressure in Commissioner's Orders 2017/22.

The advertising of those Training Officer ComSafe positions was the first step to the settlement of this long running dispute. The advertising in last week's Commissioner's Orders 2018/05 of the Deputy Manager ComSafe position as an OS Level 3 position open to all permanent firefighters with 48 months service was the final step, ensuring that all three positions will now revert to firefighter jobs.

The results of this dispute after months of IRC hearings can broadly be summarised as follows:

- The Department will cease advertising our permanent Operational Support (OS) jobs to clerks;
- OS vacancies in ComSafe (only) will be open to retained members if there are no suitable permanent applicants in the first round. Retained members who successfully apply will be employed as permanent firefighters in ComSafe for a minimum of three years;
- There is new special "ad hoc" Award rate of \$79.09 per hour for members (permanent or retained) who perform casual ComSafe work;
- Several OS positions will in future be advertised as both OS Inspector and OS Level 3 and open to any permanent member with 48 months service; and
- The Permanent and Retained Awards have been amended by Order of the IRC to give effect to these arrangements (these variations can be found as a link in the online version of this Sitrep).

Prior to this dispute the Department was paying retained members who performed casual ComSafe work at the Captain's rate of \$40.48 per hour, or \$323.84 for an 8 hour day. The Union's success means that members will instead now be paid \$79.09 per hour and \$632.72 per 8 hour day, which translates to a 95% wage rise for retained members performing this work.

It took over 9 months of direct negotiation and conciliation before the IRC to achieve a good result that saves firefighter jobs, stops management from making up their own rules and delivers significant wage rises, although more remains to be done around training and qualifications.

2018 Election of the State Committee – update #2

There was an error in the list of nominees provided to the Union by the NSW Electoral Commission last Friday, and therefore the list that was published in Sitrep 7. The Electoral Commission today confirmed that Matthew Graves had nominated for the offices of Senior Vice President and Junior Vice President as well as Country Sub-Branch Secretary. The confirmed list of the candidates for all contested positions and the officials elected unopposed will be reported in Sitrep 9 on Thursday.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary

Monday 19 March 2018