



SITREP 11/18

2018 Election of the State Committee Voting now underway

Ballot papers were mailed to members' last known addresses on 5 April. If you haven't received yours yet, then it is likely that you did not advise the Union of your last change of address. Members who have not received their voting material, or who lose or spoil their ballot paper should contact Andrea Jackson at the Electoral Commission of NSW directly on (02) 9290 5447 as soon as possible.

Unsure who to vote for? Sitrep can't tell you, but there is a candidates' info page to help you on the Union's website at www.fbeu.net where 16 of the 20 candidates for the 8 separate offices being contested have accepted our invitation to submit a photo and up to 200 words in support of their candidacy.

The Electoral Commission advised that 770 ballot papers had been returned by the close of Thursday 12 April. This means that over 5,500 members either haven't voted yet, or their ballot papers are still in the post. Voting is simple, and free for participating members, so please vote and return your ballot paper in the envelopes provided before the deadline of 1700 hours on Thursday week, 26 April.

Tathra review

Sitrep 10 reported on the Government's review of the response to the Tathra disaster and of call taking and dispatch arrangements of both services across the state, with submissions due by Monday 16 April.

Instead of the FBEU, RFSA, FRNSW and RFS once again all arguing for their own sectional interests, the Union proposed that the Fire Services Joint Standing Committee (on which all four organisations are represented) should meet and at least attempt to reach a consensus. Everyone put down their guns? No chance. On 22 March the Union requested an urgent FSJSC meeting. On 9 April a "special" FSJSC was finally called for next Wednesday 18 April, two days after the close of submissions. More to follow.

In brief ...

Recalls and kilometres – Having heard nothing more from management on this issue since meeting with them on 16 March, the Union wrote to the Department last week requesting a written response by 19 April, so more then. A copy of our letter can be found as a link in the online version of this Sitrep.

Health and Fitness checks – The finalisation of the Health Check Pack and associated details has been deferred for another week after the Department dumped its latest shoddy position on the Union late on Thursday and then expected the IRC and Union to deal with it all yesterday morning. More in Sitrep 12.

MFR is injuring NZ firefighters – Commissioner Baxter must have cringed earlier this month when his former colleagues at Fire and Emergency NZ conceded that *"the evidence is quite clear that more of our staff are struggling with [mental] illness"* since taking on MFR in 2014. See the online version of this Sitrep for a link to the full 2 April online story *"Mental illness, suicide rates among NZ firefighters on the rise"*.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary

Saturday 14 April 2018