



## **Berejiklian's budget a disaster for FRNSW**

Last week's Berejiklian Government 2018/19 budget was a disaster for the NSW public sector generally, and FRNSW in particular. An unexpected increase in the so-called 'efficiency dividend' from 2% to 3% means even deeper cuts across the sector. Forget about extra jobs and new stations, this year's budget allocation doesn't even cover our already-scheduled 2.5% wage increases. The Department will react by squeezing its workforce (ie, you) even harder, ensuring even more industrial disputes and raising the risk of strike action.

The next state election is in 9 months' time. Berejiklian's budget was a road map for her third term, and confirmed that anything short of a Labor victory will mean station closures and job losses. It's that serious.

## **FRNSW Plus Plan launched – update #1**

SitRep 15 warned six weeks ago that members would be instructed to cover FRNSW's provocative new medical response and counter terrorism appliance signage if it was rolled out without our agreement. Copies of the subsequent letters to and from Commissioner Baxter on the subject can be found as a link from the online version of this SitRep, but the short answer is that he did not respect our concerns or our request to pause the rollout and consult, leading yesterday's State Committee meeting to resolve:

- a) to commence covering the offending signage with stickers provided by the Union for this purpose; and
- b) that once the offending signage on a particular appliance has been covered by the Union's stickers, those stickers are not to be removed by any Union member and if the stickers are removed by anyone else, then no member shall ride, check, maintain or respond on that particular appliance until the Union's stickers are replaced, or the offending signage is removed, or an alternative appliance without the offending signage is provided.

If any appliance at your station has the new "medical response" and "counter terrorism" signage then please contact your State Committee official or the Union office to arrange to have an official attend your station and cover the offending signs. The Union will maintain a register of every appliance that has been covered, which from that point onwards will be subject to the State Committee direction at point (b) above.

Commissioner Baxter can avoid another dispute by doing what we requested and stopping the rollout of this provocative, misleading and definitely not agreed signage. We won't be bullied into MFR on the cheap.

## **Contamination of FRNSW training sites - update #4**

The Union is following the media reports, both in the US and here, of new studies released and legal action against 3M and others responsible for polyfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFAS), including firefighting foam. Over 90 sites across Australia are now under investigation for PFAS, including numerous FRNSW and RFS training centres, however the Union's action on this threat stretches back in 2007 when we were forced to ban the use of 3M AFFF foam after the Department refused to remove it.

We again found ourselves fighting the Department over the PFAS threat when FRNSW refused to include (and pay for) PFAS testing as part of the wider pathology tests for the firefighter Health Checks. We'll have more to say on that shortly, and again call on the Berejiklian Government to join the Labor Opposition in supporting presumptive cancer legislation for firefighters in NSW and to fund additional research into firefighter exposure to chemicals. More to follow.



## Rescue Training Backpay win

The long-running dispute regarding back pay for rescue training has resulted in a big win for members. Upon successful completion of all four modules of the Primary Rescue Operators Program, the period eligible for back pay will be the cumulative total period from when the member has notified the Department they are ready to be assessed, to when the member is subsequently assessed in each module. As an example:

	Applied for assessment	Assessed	Days between
Phase 1	20-06-14	14-07-14	24
Phase 2	14-07-14	15-09-14	63
Phase 3	15-09-14	26-03-15	183
Phase 4	01-07-15	05-11-15	138
Total			408

A member in this circumstance would be entitled to 58 weeks of the rescue allowance at the 2015 (\$48.02) rate, which is equal to \$2785.16. Members should submit any claims for unpaid allowance to the Department, and send a copy of each claim (by fax or email) to the Union, as we will be monitoring the backpay process.

## 2018 Rex tickets selling fast

Tickets are now on sale for the 4th Rex Threlfo Annual Toast to be held at Doltone House Hyde Park on Tuesday 24 July and selling fast. Tickets remain at \$45 for current and Associate members, and \$94 per head (ie, at cost) for all others. See the online version of this SITREP for a link to our ticket sales site.

**Leighton Drury**  
State Secretary