



2018 Rex tickets, don't miss out

Tickets are almost sold out for the Rex Threlfo Annual Toast to be held at Doltone House Hyde Park on Tuesday 24 July, but there are some left if you hurry. Tickets are \$45 for current and associate members, and \$94 for all others. See the website version of SITREP to buy tickets online or contact the Union office directly.

Minister Grant, can't take what his Gov't gives

Since our last SitRep, Emergency Services Minister Troy Grant announced he will not be running in the next state election. He told the Sydney Morning Herald *"The political landscape has changed dramatically since 2010. It's a nastier place than it was back then"*. Well that is something we can agree on - budget cuts, job losses, accusations of bastardy and a total disregard for public sector workers. Yes, it did get a lot nastier!

Qualified Firefighter back pay agreement

Members undertaking the QF units of competency will be aware of the sudden halt on assessments after the Department discovered that it did not satisfy all of the national standards for carrying out those assessments. On becoming aware of the issue, the Union secured the Department's agreement to back pay members affected by this issue.

So, if your progression to QF has been delayed because the Department has been unable to assess you then, upon successful completion of the outstanding assessment(s), you will be back paid the QF rate of pay from the date you reached 24 months service. Additionally, you should not be excluded from accessing the SF program, or rescue and aerial training, because you have been prevented from completing the QF program.

In brief:

Recall kilometres: This dispute was returned to the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) last week, with the Department now agreeing to review all recalls performed since November 2014 and to identify the kilometres owed. The parties are finalising the process for the payments to be made and are back in the IRC next week.

Keelty's Tathra Review: This matter too will be heard in the IRC next week, with the Union demanding proper consultation on the findings and which of the recommendations should or shouldn't be implemented. The Government's handling of this matter is not unsurprising, but it is unacceptable. The Department may have gone along quietly with the Government's recommendations, but the Union will not. More to follow.

260 Newcastle rescue and aerial allowances: The Department continues to argue, despite mounting evidence to the contrary, that moving the rescue appliance out of the Newcastle CBD makes operational sense. Clearly as Liberal state budgets get tighter, management tries to squeeze more and more out of its limited resources, and when that fails it reaches directly into members' pockets. The matter is due to return to the IRC next week, where the Union will continue to press for the maintenance of allowances for affected members.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary