



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

Friday 30 October 2020

### **Fire Brigade Employees' Union statement on Bushfires Royal Commission**

The professional firefighters' unions of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia is today challenging the Prime Minister to answer why professional firefighters, who provided critical support and resources to combat the Black Summer bushfires, were not consulted as part of the Bushfires Royal Commission.

Leighton Drury, NSW State Secretary of Fire Brigade Employees' Union offers the following comments:

*"Together, the Unions represent 70% of professional firefighters across Australia. These firefighters were on the frontline as well as providing critical support during last year's unprecedented fire season, coordinating and deploying resources at an operational level.*

*The Firefighter Unions made a joint submission to the Royal Commission, however professional firefighters were not asked to give evidence before the Commission or engaged in the preparation of the final report.*

*It is commendable that the Commission sought the views of a variety of people, however we see critical failure in not engaging with our members. More people from the Australian Space Agency were called to give evidence than professional frontline firefighters.*

*While we welcome the action to prevent the destruction and devastation of the Black Summer fires from happening again, this sees some of the most critical evidence of professional firefighters left out of the Commission's findings.*

The Unions abovementioned are available to speak on this issue. Interviews can be arranged with:

- Leighton Drury, NSW State Secretary of Fire Brigade Employees' Union
- John Oliver, General Secretary of United Firefighters Union Queensland
- Max Adlam, State Secretary of United Firefighters Union SA
- Kevin Jolly, President of United Professional Firefighters Union WA

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