

Initial briefing to: Surrounding Stations

Hey team, just wanted to have a quick word about the Tanker Strategy Project. Some of you might've heard bits and pieces about it, so I thought I'd fill in the gaps and give you a heads-up on what it means for us here.

What's happening?

This change is about rolling out a two-person tanker response model across 10 selected retained stations, mainly smaller, low-risk rural stations where it's been hard to staff full crews or respond with larger trucks. The model was trialled at Peak Hill, and it's worked really well. It's safe, efficient, and much more suited to their needs.

What consultation has happened with the FBEU?

After an initial period of consultation, we have agreed to consult with the union on the strategy for a further six weeks. In the meantime, Fleet and other involved areas are progressing with planning.

Why now?

Truth is, we've got some challenges with staffing, where populations are smaller and incident call rates are lower. This change helps make sure those communities still get good coverage while taking some pressure off resourcing.

Are we affected?

Not directly, no. This change isn't coming to us, and our station setup stays the same. But we might see a few flow-on effects—like working alongside crews in the new tanker setup during incidents or helping cover while their training's happening. Nothing drastic, just something to be aware of.

So what's the plan?

It's being rolled out in two stages:

First, three stations will get modified tankers. They are Bingara, Dungog, Walgett. Then, seven more will get new, purpose-built ones in the next financial year. The crews involved will be trained up before anything goes live. These seven are Balranald, Barham, Batlow, Berrigan, Boggabri, Bombala and Warren."

Does this affect our jobs or structure?

Nope. No changes to jobs, pay, or conditions. This project is specific to the stations selected. If anything, the plan helps ease pressure off the network, so it's a positive move overall.

What should we be doing?

Just stay in the loop. If someone asks about the project, feel confident giving them the basics, or point them to the comms or the project email:

TankerStrategy@fire.nsw.gov.au. If anything changes for us down the track, you'll hear it from me straight up.

Final thoughts

This is one part of a bigger strategy to keep FRNSW strong and sustainable. We're still doing what we've always done, protecting our patch with professionalism and grit. This change just makes sure other stations can do the same, even with tighter resources.