



PRESUMPTIVE CANCER BILL DEBATED

As covered in [Sitrep 25/2025](#), the NSW Opposition recently tabled a bill in the NSW Parliament in support of expanding the existing list of occupational firefighter cancers covered by NSW presumptive cancer legislation.

Members can find a copy of the Workers Compensation Amendment (Firefighters' Diseases Bill 2025) [here](#) and a transcript of the first and second reading speech from Hansard (6 August 2025) [here](#) and [here](#).

On Wednesday night, that bill was partly debated before the Upper House where it received strong support from some. Here's what we know so far:

- Our Cover our Furies campaign has not gone unnoticed, with Members of the Legislation Council (MLC) describing the 'relentless pressure' of FBEU members seeking a fairer jurisdiction for those in our industry. The importance of expanding presumptive legislation and the inherent risk of our work is clear to all sides of politics.
- Members of the Minns Government, while acknowledging that improvements to presumptive legislation are overdue, have flagged an intention to oppose the bill. They claim that the Government will propose their own bill at a more 'appropriate time'.

Advocacy from the NSW Liberal Party on expanding presumptive cancer legislation, whether genuine or purely political, has instilled a necessary sense of urgency in the NSW Parliament. That urgency is not unwarranted, and the FBEU welcomes any opportunity to progress this key priority of the membership. FBEU officials met with Minister Dib yesterday to progress these discussions. The FBEU position remains clear - presumptive cancer legislation is not a political football and the time for reform is now.

The debate is likely to continue next week. A transcript of the initial debate can be found [here](#). In the meantime, members are encouraged to head to the [Cover Our Furies campaign website](#) to send a message to the NSW Government.

IRC AWARD ARBITRATION DECISION – UPDATE

We attended the IRC yesterday for further conciliation before Commissioner McDonald regarding the drafting of the new 2024 Awards.

As you would be aware from the decision, the Court left various aspects of their decision to the parties to draft into Award clauses, a process we have been working towards with the Department. Yesterday's conciliation allowed us to clarify aspects of the decision and continue those discussions. We are hopeful the drafting will be complete in the coming few weeks, which will allow us to move on to implementation of key aspects of the decision including the Renumeration Taskforce.

The Department also advised us yesterday that unfortunately they have been delayed in processing award increases and back payments. We understand they now intend to process these payments on 2 October.

In the meantime, we understand that permanent members have been seeking clarity regarding entitlements to meal allowances while on overtime. We can confirm that as this matter was expressly addressed and resolved by the IRC in the Award decision. This is now an Award entitlement, which means members can claim the allowances and they should be processed and paid in the normal manner. If members have been denied a claim, as with any other entitlement, please contact us for further assistance.



CHANGE OF START TIME SURVEY

There have been requests made to the FBEU about changing the official 10/14 shift start time to 0700hrs, to reflect the current unofficial and widely adopted shift start time.

Given what appears to be a groundswell of interest in the idea, State Committee recently resolved to survey members to gauge the level of support or opposition for such a move. Such member-driven ideas are encouraged, as they are an important part of the FBEU's democratic process.

On Friday, September 26, Permanent members will receive an SMS survey which will require a simple Yes or No answer in reply.

The survey results will give your officials an understanding on whether the initiative should be further pursued or maintain the status quo.

In the meantime, members should use the online form at <http://www.fbeu.net> to make sure that their mobile phone number and other details are all current in the union's records.

In Unity

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L. Drury".

Leighton Drury
State Secretary