



UPCOMING PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Members are advised that the Award clauses relating to consolidated leave for Permanents and overtime for Retained require that the public holiday either be Easter Sunday or an "additional public holiday", in order to access those entitlements. The upcoming Labour Day public holiday on Monday 5 October 2026 is not an additional public holiday. You can see all upcoming public holidays, including additional days, [here](#).

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION ACTIVITIES - VOLUNTARY

The Department is placing increased pressure on members to complete community risk reduction activities, including Home Fire Safety Visits in Rural Fire District and Hard of Hearing Smoke Alarms.

It has never been communicated to the FBEU that any of these activities are compulsory. Our expectation is that operational response, operational preparedness, training, and any other station-based activity will always take priority over community risk reduction activities.

Managers are reminded that increasingly unrealistic targets should not be used to direct or pressure stations and crews to perform community risk reduction activities.

Members are reminded that community risk reduction activities are voluntary. If you are directed to perform these activities, get in touch with your [SCOM Rep](#) or the [FBEU Office](#) for advice.

PROPOSED RULE CHANGE - ELECTRONIC VOTING FOR PLEBISCITES - UPDATE

Unfortunately, the State Committee is unable to consider this proposal today as it expected to do so, as outlined in [SitRep 28/2026](#).

As such, I advise that this rule change is proposed to be adopted by the State Committee on Thursday 29 October, 1000 hrs, at the FBEU Office located at 1-7 Belmore St Surry Hills NSW 2010. The rest of the original notice is replicated below.

At last week's State Committee of Management meeting, in accordance with Rule 47, a proposed rule change was endorsed by your SCOM. This rule change continues our ongoing efforts to modernise the FBEU Rules.

This rule change will allow us to use electronic voting methods when the Union is conducting a plebiscite, like the one upcoming on the additional rule changes.

Currently, our Rules require a postal ballot when conducting a plebiscite. Postal ballots, however, are now not only expensive, but take significant time and resources.

This proposed rule change will modernise our voting methods for plebiscites and will be cheaper and quicker.

The ease of electronic voting will hopefully also increase member turnout in these votes, ensuring our democratic processes reflect the views of as many members as possible, while maintaining integrity and security of our voting systems.



To be clear, this rule change will not impact elections of SCOM officials. These elections will continue in accordance with the current Rules and will be conducted by the NSW Electoral Commission.

This rule change allows for electronic voting in the case of Union plebiscites only.

You can view a full copy of our current rules by [clicking here](#).

We ask all Delegates to please print and place this notice on the noticeboard in your workplace. Any questions regarding this proposal can be directed to your SCOM rep or the FBEU Office.

You can find a copy of the proposed rule change below. Note that text in red is new or changed.

Rule 27 – PLEBISCITES

(1) Any plebiscite required under these Rules upon any matter shall be conducted by the Returning Officer and any other persons the Returning Officer considers necessary. The Returning Officer shall fix all proper and necessary dates for the conduct of the ballot after consultation with State Committee of Management.

~~[No previous provision]~~

[Added] A plebiscite may be conducted by secure electronic voting means, provided that the system used ensures secrecy, integrity, and accessibility for all financial members.

(2) All financial members of the Union shall be entitled to vote in a plebiscite, including the Returning Officer.

(3) A plebiscite shall be conducted by the Returning Officer upon the State Secretary receiving a written request for such a plebiscite signed by at least one-tenth of the financial members of the Union.

(4) The Returning Officer shall conduct a plebiscite upon any matter if directed to do so by the State Committee of Management.

(5) The Returning Officer shall decide all questions which are relevant to determine the result of the plebiscite and the Returning Officer's declaration of the result shall be final. The Returning Officer shall declare the result of a plebiscite by posting to the President and by posting up in a prominent place at the Registered office of the Union a declaration signed by such Returning Officer.

(6) If a majority of members voting, vote in favour of the motion, the motion shall be carried and shall have the effect of a decision of the State Committee of Management.

Rule 28 – BALLOTS (Tracked Changes)

All elections and all plebiscites shall be by secret ballot and subject to the Act, conducted by the Returning Officer specified by these Rules and shall be held in accordance with the following:

~~All elections and all plebiscites shall be by secret ballot~~



SitRep 31/2026

[Revised] Elections shall be conducted by postal ballot in accordance with these Rules. Plebiscites may be conducted either by postal ballot or by secure electronic voting means, as determined by the Returning Officer in consultation with the State Committee of Management.

(1) The Returning Officer shall have ballot papers printed and obtain and retain a certificate from the printer as to the number printed.

[Clarification] This requirement applies only to postal ballots.

(2)(a) Ballot papers for an election shall be set out with the names of the candidates for the respective offices. The order of the names of candidates on the ballot paper to be determined by drawing lots.

(b) In a plebiscite the Returning Officer shall formulate the matter or matters the subject of the plebiscite in the form of proposals which are proposed or decisions which have been made under these Rules. Ballot papers for a plebiscite shall set out each proposal or decision to be determined and shall provide for satisfactory wording which will accurately reflect the intention of the plebiscite.

[Added] Where a plebiscite is conducted electronically, equivalent secure electronic ballot forms shall be used.

(3)–(14)

[Added Note] Sub-Rules (3) to (14) apply to postal ballots. For plebiscites conducted electronically, the Returning Officer shall ensure equivalent security, secrecy, and verification measures are in place, including appropriate instructions for members.

In Unity,

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

Leighton Drury
State Secretary