



AWARD UPDATE

We were back before the IRC this week with another report back on the progress of negotiations. Unfortunately, there was little to report as FRNSW and Premier's Department has continued to fail to properly cost the productivity and efficiency measures inherent in our work and log of claims for the 2024 Awards.

Despite this lack of progress, FRNSW requested a further two weeks to continue negotiations which was granted to them by the Commission. In good faith we will of course continue to negotiate however we have been very clear that a true and proper costing of the value of our work needs to be reflected in any wages offer put to us.

To ensure the Awards aren't further delayed we have proposed to file our draft Awards with the Commission in that two weeks to allow arbitration to be timetabled at its conclusion if FRNSW and Government don't come to the party. We will be meeting with FRNSW Monday and will assess from there however it seems Macquarie Street might need to hear from us all again very soon.

11 JULY RALLY

As of today, FBEU members are still waiting for the Minns Government to understand and accept what each and every FBEU member already knows.

That the work we do, and the 24/7 service we provide, to assist and to often cover other agencies, **SAVES THEM MONEY.**

Whilst negotiations continue, this persistently gormless attitude by Government toward recognising the additional work we do remains. It is a simple concept understood by everyone except those holding the purse strings.

This is why we have taken action and why we will take more.

I want to thank every FBEU member who has taken time to rally outside MP's offices, and who has held the line on the recent Code Reds issued. These actions, whilst at times may be difficult, are making a difference. Pressure is mounting on Labor MPs, and though we are yet to have a resolution, your actions are being noticed.

FBEU member actions, and Government's unwillingness to negotiate, is now being noticed by other public sector unions, many of whom have award negotiations in the very near future. If The Minns Government's shiny new Mutual Gains Bargaining doesn't work for Firefighters, it's not going to work for them either.

You may have seen the NSW Court Sheriffs taking industrial action over pay and conditions on the news but they are not alone. Members of the HSU and PSA are angry, and industrial action is not far away for them.

This coming Thursday 11 July, these other Unions will be joining us in a rally outside Parliament House at 11:30am.

To provide a visual reminder for Government that the FBEU is there in numbers, I ask members to bring a FRNSW Multi Purpose Jacket to wear over their Union shirts.

I ask all available off shift members, along with their families and friends, to attend and help remind the Government that we are still waiting.

Waiting to be Respected, Protected and Valued by this Government.



This will be a family friendly event and a great way to entertain the kids in the school holidays. A family friendly venue is being arranged for members to debrief and share their thoughts post rally.

RETURNING FROM SICK LEAVE

We were also in the Commission this week following an ongoing dispute with FRNSW where they were requiring you to continue to use your own sick leave in circumstances where you had been off, but were now cleared for duty by your own doctor, and FRNSW was not accepting this clearance.

When we initially raised this issue with FRNSW, we thought it would be resolved quickly given the clause in the Award states:

“an employee will be provided alternative duties on the basis of no disadvantage to the employee in terms of pay, location and roster until such time as the health screen process, in accordance with the clause, is complete or, alternatively, if the employee is unable to perform any duties, or alternative duties are not able to be provided by the Department, the employee will be released from duty without loss of any pay, entitlements or leave of the employee”

Despite this, thanks to the involvement of Health and Safety Branch, we were forced to go to the IRC to get a simple agreement that FRNSW would comply with the requirements of the Award and employees who were not provided alternative duties in these circumstances would be paid special leave and that FRNSW would only be able to assess your return to work in accordance with the Health Standards.

Now that we have managed to once again reach agreement that FRNSW will comply with the Award they agreed to by consent only a year ago, a reminder to you all, if you are coming back from sick leave and FRNSW want to question your fitness for duty before returning, that is on their time and money, not your own, including medical expenses where they are seeking you attend appointments etc.

In Unity

Leighton Drury
State Secretary