



SitRep 12

Station Closure threats – Budget cuts see TOLing resurface

Despite pre and post election commitments by the Berejiklian government that there will be no cuts to front line services, FRNSW is proposing to rescind InOrder 2008/22 and move to a “risk assessment model” for fire services. Simply put TOLing (Taking stations Off line) across the state in order to reduce costs.

The Union met with FRNSW and expressed our concern that such a measure puts the public at risk. The Union continues to oppose TOLing and identified the increased overtime costs as a consequence of under-resourcing. The FBEU is concerned both about the impact these budget cuts have on firefighters and the community. FRNSW has committed to further discussions with the FBEU about InOrder 2008/22. If you become aware of any intention to TOL your station please contact your SCOM Rep or the office. More to follow.

Systems upgrades underway in your union office

As the NBN rolls out in the Surry Hills area, the Union has had to assess its current requirements. After careful consideration of all the tenders we received, the State Committee of Management has carried that TPG will be the suppliers of our new and improved internet service, replacing our existing Ethernet with much faster Fibre. This will also include a new VOIP phone system. Installation is scheduled for the coming weeks.

With the new fibre connection in place, we can better plan for the future of our IT, not just a well overdue upgrade of our computers, software and servers, but also factoring in the networking requirements of our new organising team who will be out and about meeting members around the state.

Plans are also afoot for a much needed redesign of the Union’s database, which will have the capability to integrate with all of our new technology and give us better tools to keep abreast of members issues and respond in a more efficient and timely manner. Our new improved database will complement the new intake system we are developing to ensure members who contact the office for information, advice and support are responded to quickly and your matters are allocated to the staff member best placed to support and advise you. We’ll report more on that system, and our Member Service Commitment, in the next couple of weeks.

The Rex Threlfo Toast send us your #Threlfie

Tickets are available now for the Rex – book early book often – with limited tickets available we encourage you to book your spot for the August 19 event on line at:

<https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?eid=522789>

A reminder: If you have joined the job and the FBEU or you have retired (with 10 or more year’s membership) in the last 12 months you will be the FBEU’s special guests and the cost of your ticket will be reimbursed to you following the event.

The Rex is a great afternoon and gives members an opportunity to catch up with firefighters from across different jobs, platoons and areas. I hope to see you there.



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E-recall update

For a long time, the Union has been advocating to ensure that members have more flexibility when it comes to e-recalls. Members have been telling us that the current method being used leaves them with little to no flexibility in selecting e-recall availability and can be very unpredictable. This unpredictability can amount to tough penalties for missing recalls.

At the last SCOM meeting, FRNSW presented their new app, which has been designed to allow members to switch their availability for being recalled in real-time. The app will work on all smart phones and allows members to set either time or day parameters of when they are available to be recalled. The presentation included a demonstration of the app's functionality and it appears to be simple to use and understand.

Once it is released we ask members to send in any feedback they may have.

Survey highlights – Engagement and Communication

We are analysing the results of the survey as we speak and designing member engagement and organising plans based on your contributions. Over the coming weeks we will report back about some of the results and the work coming out of the survey.

Here are some grabs from questions about communications and engagement we think are really interesting. Watch this space as SCOM think through how we can better communicate and engage with more members more effectively.

An overwhelming majority, more than ninety percent of members, read SitRep. (*waves* Hi!). Almost all of those who read SitRep read it by email with only twelve percent saying you read it by fax and six percent of you say you read it on the website.

Only twenty-five percent of permanent members and ten percent of retained firefighters say you have ever read and commented on the union's forum and forty percent of permanents and more than sixty percent of retained firefighters say they don't use the forum at all. In comparison, more than fifty percent of permanent members and sixty percent of retained members say you are a part of Facebook groups about your work.

Ninety percent of you told us that you talk about work, pay, condition and other work related matters with your co-workers. Despite this, more than fifty percent of respondents said you can't remember or have not ever attended a union meeting at your station (65% of retained and 43% of permanents).

Watch this space for some new and different ways for you to get involved and active in your union.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary