



# SitRep 2/2021

## COVID-19 Update

The COVID-19 restriction levels have been updated to the following:

**All Metropolitan East, Metropolitan South and Metropolitan West Zones are to adhere to Levels 1, 2 and 3 restrictions in the [attached document](#).**

**All other Zones are to adhere to Levels 1 and 2.**

Of note, Level 3 restrictions require all stations and appliances to abate attendance at other stations/FRNSW locations unless it is in the course of responding to an emergency during which all COVID-19 safety protocols should be followed (PPE, distancing, etc.).

**Additionally, all training is suspended unless it is essential or required to maintain operational capability.** If any of these essential trainings are delivered face-to-face, alternative delivery methods must be considered.

Please also note that PAT tests are not suspended until Level 4 is declared. As no zone is at Level 4 at this time, PATs will be going forward. Please continue to adhere to all COVID-19 safety protocols during these tests.

## Health Checks

The Union fought to protect the interests of members around the introduction of the Health Check Program and is continuing to do so as it is implemented.

The program has now been underway for a year and we are beginning to get feedback from members about their experiences. Much of the negative feedback is related to the external agency that conducts the program. Members have reported having to undertake additional tests without proper reasoning and have had to wait months for outcomes. We believe this in part due to the fact that the agency does not properly understand what we do on the job.

This is unacceptable and we are seeking an urgent meeting with FRNSW to discuss these problems.

Members should familiarise themselves with the attached [Health Check Program Guide](#). If you are having any issues with your health check, please contact the Union office.

## Medical Certificates

In SitReps [32/2020](#) and [43/2020](#), we updated you on our efforts to have FRNSW recognise and accept medical certificates provided by your medical professional to return to work. In [SitRep 1/2021](#), we outlined the Medical Assessment Form and how it can be used in some circumstances to assist with the return to work process.

We continue to insist that any medical documentation provided by a medical professional should be accepted by FRNSW to clear you to return to work. This includes the MAF form or a medical certificate. We are continuing to negotiate with FRNSW to make this process easier and fairer and will be meeting with them shortly.



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The direction from [SitRep 43/2020](#) remains in place:

**We are directing all members to contact us immediately if FRNSW asks you to provide additional medical information beyond what a medical practitioner has already supplied. Do not supply them with further information until you have spoken with us.**

## **Retained Fire Call Attendance**

The FBEU has been made aware of some stations and zones saying that Retained members must remain at the fire station for a certain amount of time for a fire call. Our advice for any member who is told to remain at station unnecessarily is that this is not the correct way to manage attendance at fire calls.

The procedure to be followed is as follows:

1. Appliance leaves with minimum crewing of at least four to attend incident.
2. Remaining firefighters contact OIC on the appliance. OIC advises if they require any crew to follow on or whether they will be required to assist with appliance cleaning or pack up when the truck returns.
3. If no firefighters need to follow on or assist with appliance clean up on its return, the OIC is to dismiss the staff remaining at the station.

The FBEU understands and appreciates concerns around firefighters showing up at the station and immediately signing off. We support the above procedure to ensure that all firefighters are engaging with their employment in a meaningful way while also making sure that they are not kept around unnecessarily.

It is important for all firefighters acting as OIC to ensure that they are not holding back crews without reason. If there is no meaningful work relating to the incident to be done, then the crew should be released. If there are any issues with the above procedure, please speak with your organiser.

## **FBEU State Committee Elections**

A quick note to all members that the election of officials starts 22 February. We will provide more detail once the NSW Electoral Commission confirms the timetable for nominations, ballot sending and return dates. I encourage all members to update your details especially if you have yet to receive your yearly membership card.

If any member is interested in becoming an official or learning more, please contact myself or another official. Our Union is stronger when we have members participating in forwarding our collective interests.

In Unity,

**Leighton Drury**  
**State Secretary**