



SitRep 20

HFSV – BANS TO BE LIFTED

Today in a hearing in the NSW Industrial Relations Commission, Commissioner Constant made the following orders:

1. The Fire Brigade Employees' Union, its officers, employees and members employed by the Crown pursuant to s69 of the *Fire and Rescue NSW Act 1989*, are hereby ordered to cease taking industrial action, including the cessation of any ban or limitation upon work or withdrawal of labour in respect of the Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and /or Home Safety Visits (HSVs) program.
2. The Fire Brigade Employees' Union, its officers, employees and members employed by the Crown pursuant to s69 of the *Fire and Rescue NSW Act 1989*, are hereby ordered to cease and refrain from authorising, organising, supporting, encouraging or inciting industrial action, including any bands or limitations upon work or withdrawal of labour in respect of Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and/or Home Safety Visits (HSVs) program during the period 12 September 2019 to 12 March 2020.

Commissioner Constant, referred to the evidence the Union provided, including the inadequacy of training, the risks including the psychological ones to fire fighters in cold calling and the failure of FRNSW to consult with the Union on the increased numbers from 11000 to 60 000 per annum.

However, in her reasons for the decision, Commissioner Constant relied on the following:

1. The previous orders made over 3 years ago by Commissioner Murphy on 9 February 2016 about Home Fire Safety Checks, where the Union lost this issue.
2. Previous consultation and agreement by the Union over 3 years ago on the Guide on Home Fire Safety Checks in March 2016.

The Union will publish a transcript of the proceedings when it becomes available. There were some concerning comments made by FRNSW including that if the Commission didn't make the orders it was seeking for the Union to lift the bans, then it would have to consider downsizing its workforce.

FRNSW has confirmed that it will not discipline fire fighters who do not conduct HFSV when they have concerns about their safety. "When in doubt, stay out".



SitRep 20

DEREGULATION

"Trust us to do the right thing" was the mantra of governments looking to remove regulations on businesses.

The banks said "trust us we know what we are doing" as regulations were stripped away and profits increased for the top end of town. The recent Banking Royal Commission has now exposed how that trust was abused to the detriment of many people.

The property developers said "trust us to self regulate building standards certification" as property prices sky rocketed - we now have high rise building apartments that people cannot occupy due to poor building construction.

The FBEU attended a meeting with the Department on Monday regarding the removal of standards regarding response and minimum manning, along with other risk management proposals - the thinking is the same as above. "trust us to provide a safe workplace and a reasonable level of service to the community as we are the experts". Sound familiar?

The intentional removal of standards regarding response is a direct attack on firefighter safety and the safety of communities that we are all connected to.

Currently in NSW we have more than 60 fires burning across the state. At one point on Saturday, nearly all FRNSW resources were being utilized across the state as our members tended to all kinds of fires. We are in for a long fire season. It is important now, more than ever, that we stick together in fighting against the de-regulation being proposed by the Department.

CLIMATE STRIKE

Next Friday on the 20th of September, millions of people across the globe will be striking for our children's future. The organisers of the Sydney climate strike have reached out to the unions for their support in fighting for their future.

As we mentioned earlier, our fire season has already begun. We have seen our members out fighting massive fires across the state and even in Queensland. As firefighters, your conditions decrease and your workload increases as our climate continues to change and the fire season grows longer and longer. Our communities need more firefighters and resources, not less. Members of our State Committee of Management will be in attendance and we encourage you to join us.

ON THE ROAD



SitRep 20

Organiser Max Murphy has been on the road in Metro West and MS3 helping to identify station delegates. SCOM members Bob Callow and Adam Sciannimanica were at many of these visits. In the past two and a half weeks, 24 people have put their hand up to be station delegate in these three zones alone. The process to elect these delegates is underway, so keep an eye out for a delegate election form on your union notice board.

If you missed Max when he visited your station, feel free to contact him and request a visit if you need.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary