



SitRep 3

2.5% wage rise today

The third and final 2.5% wage increase under the 2017 Awards for FRNSW permanent and retained firefighters took effect today and will appear in the next fortnightly FRNSW pay run on 28 February.

Union dues and most allowances also increase today by 2.5% including (for all members) the kilometre allowance, which is now at \$1.31 per km, and (for permanent members) the relieving allowance (up to \$35.07) and all qualification allowances. Meal, refreshment and travelling compensation allowances are, however, adjusted separately each July in line with reasonable allowance amounts published annually by the ATO.

Recall kilometres and review of transfer registers

Further to SitReps 32/18 and 1/19 and the Union's win in the IRC's arbitration of recall kilometres dispute, the Union took the Department back to the IRC on Monday demanding a firm deadline for payment of the \$500,000 in backpay owed to our members. The result was the week's Commissioner's Orders 2019/03, which confirmed that backpay will be made to all 580+ affected permanent members on 25 April. The Department will use the intervening 10 weeks to finalise the outstanding payments, and to allow members time to notify of any relevant changes of address.

Members who have moved since they first applied for residential priority status have until 28 March (6 weeks) to notify the Department of any change(s) of address by without penalty. The backpayments will be made on 25 April using the addresses held by the Department on 28 March, so every member who is claiming residential priority and who performed a recall since November 2014 should ensure that the Department has an accurate record of your correct address (or addresses) over the entire backpay period between then and now to avoid overpayment or worse still, disciplinary action for fraud. Note that this only affects members claiming residential priority status. Members not claiming residential priority do not need to do anything.

State Election in thirty-six days

The NSW state election is on Saturday March 23 - We are seeking commitments from the major parties about the things that are the most important to FBEU members. Put simply - we want to do more with more and cannot do more with less.

The Labor Party, currently in opposition, have already committed to and announced 200 extra permanent firefighters for the electorates of Ballina, Port Stephens and elsewhere throughout the state. We'll be seeking commitments from the Liberal/National Coalition too - as far as we are aware they have made no announcements about our work.

We know that FBEU members, at the frontline of emergency services, want to see policy, which respects and values the work that we do. We know our communities respect and value us; we expect that our governments and politicians will too.

We'll report more - and put the call out for election campaign volunteers - over the next two weeks.

Leighton Drury
State Secretary