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Medical Work

As noted on FRNSW's latest 360 update on new medical work, the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) has issued a failed conciliation certificate and whether the PAD proposal is new work is to be arbitrated. Unsurprisingly, the department have skimmed over how we got here and why.

For months the FBEU have been asking for key statistical information from Ambulance NSW which would assist members in understanding the potential workload and risks of this proposal. This information has not been forthcoming. The Union requested the minutes from meetings between Ambulance and FRNSW and discovered our requests for statistical information were not making the minutes. The FBEU have had to make a formal request for the release of public information from Ambulance and from our own department. That is not consultation and that is not good faith.

FRNSW argue that members can be forced to undertake new medical work as the direction is 'reasonable', implying that it is also safe. FRNSW will make this claim without the following:

- Key statistical information from Ambulance including the existing numbers of misclassified 1A calls
- A business case including an understanding of how the proposal works within the retained workforce
- A risk assessment conducted with the HSR working group i.e. the firefighters who will perform this work and who are trained in health and safety
- Safe levels of BLS qualifications and a well-resourced BLS team
- Any understanding of what FRNSW would do if a member without appropriate training was involved in an incident that led to a public inquiry
- Assessment and costing on the impact of additional trauma on workers compensation and sick leave

Time and time again, FRNSW have been provided the opportunity to consult meaningfully on this proposal, and to engage our members. Instead they will use a legal team and tax-payers money to avoid any due diligence.

The FBEU having serious concerns that this speaks to a growing disconnect between management and our members. When there are more FRNSW industrial relations professionals arguing the case for decreasing BLS competency rates than there are actual BLS trainers, we have a serious issue.

The FBEU and a working group of delegates and HSRs will meet Deputy Commissioner Baldi this coming Monday to discuss the drastic need for improvement in this space.



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New Appliances - Major Aerial Pumpers

Members would now be aware of the Department's plan to introduce Major Aerial Pumpers into our fleet, a new appliance with CAFS capability and a reach in excess of 25 metres. As discussed in SitRep 28/2020, there has been a big push from members to ensure two things: that the new appliances are safe, and that we have all the necessary training delivered before the appliances hit the stations. Having engaged SafeWork NSW to mediate concerns around limited consultation with members and the fact that the Department have failed to meet their obligations under the NSW Workplace Health & Safety Act 2011, it's promising to see that the Department have now agreed to an in-person inspection of the new appliances by your Health & Safety Representatives.

The two stations set to receive the first Major Aerial Pumpers are 050 Hornsby and 092 St Andrews, with the third to be an SEV. Although the Department initially stated that they believed these appliances would be in use by now, it is our understanding that they are awaiting for specialists from France to fix a number of faults including an issue with stabilisers. In addition to this, we have heard that the instruction manuals are in French and that there is some work to be done to translate them which hasn't been factored in by the Department. Sacré Bleu!

While members are informing us that there is still work to be done before they are confident in receiving and operating these appliances, the Department agreeing to the HSR's request to inspect the appliances and to at minimum provide theoretical training for Station Officers at the impacted stations is a far cry from where we were in May when this was announced.

If there are any updates from members about this issue, please contact Organiser Max Murphy on 0408 617 217.

Armidale Driver Training Dispute

The Union has lodged a dispute in relation to the Armidale Driver Training Centre and the huge back log of people that haven't been able to complete the Advanced Driver Training Course.

Hundreds and hundreds of you have shown your support to the Trainers and shared your solidarity about the importance of the Driver Training Course.

In addition to concerns around the delivery of training, members have identified major WHS risks associated with both the Eastern Creek and St Ives site that the Department have been pushing for. These are all issues that stem from no consultation with the impacted members, and the Department's poor track record on prioritising safety. This means that firefighters cannot adequately and safely experience the limits of fire trucks under difficult driving conditions.



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The hearing is set for Monday the 27th of July 2020, and we will be providing an update on this issue in the following SitRep.

HSR Elections – Advice for members

Nominations for HSRs across all the Work Groups are currently open – they close on August 2. The department has distributed all the relevant information to all members.

We encourage members to make sure you have an HSR nominated in your Work Group. Should there be more than one nomination for each position, elections will be held.

We also encourage any members who are a current HSR, nominating to be one, or interested in WHS to register to be a part of the FBEU group organising in this space. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FBEUWHS>

We are holding meetings next week to update members on WHS matters and to discuss plans for future organising around WHS – These are on Tuesday 28 July and Thursday 30 July at 11am. All members who have registered their interest here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FBEUWHS> will be sent a Zoom link for the meetings.

For more information about being an HSR, or the organising we are doing around health and safety, get in touch with your Organiser or Emily Mayo- emayo@fbeu.net

Delegate Training – on hold again...

Unfortunately, we have decided to postpone our face-to-face delegate training again. We cannot risk firefighters coming together in the current circumstances. We are monitoring the situation and as soon as we are able to begin face-to-face training we will.

For more information about delegate training and support contact your organiser or Emily Mayo emayo@fbeu.net

COVID19 – Updates

A reminder to all members that the following advice and restrictions are to be observed.

The following continue to apply to all FRNSW Staff:

- Any FRNSW staff that have been directly exposed to a **confirmed** case of COVID-19 are not to attend any FRNSW workplace and are to self-isolate for 14 days, immediately get tested. Staff are to advise supervisors and Coronavirus.info@fire.nsw.gov.au.



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- Any member who has 'flu-like' symptoms are not to attend the workplace and are required to self-isolate. Call your GP or Health Direct on 1800 022 222 and ask for advice regarding COVID-19 testing and safe return to work.
- If any FRNSW staff member develops 'flu-like' symptoms whilst at work, should immediately inform their supervisor and isolate themselves from other personnel. The staff member should immediately return home to seek medical advice through their GP or Health Direct on 1800 022 222 regarding the need for screening and further isolation.
- All COVID-19 related policies are to continue and to be strictly enforced.
- Any FRNSW staff member who are the subject of a NSW Public Health Alert such as the existing Alerts related to attendance at the Crossroads Hotel at Casula between Friday 3 July – Friday 10 July are to immediately self-isolate for 14 days, get tested, monitor symptoms, and get retested if symptoms change. Under no circumstances are they to attend FRNSW premises. Please ensure your supervisor is immediately notified and details forwarded to Coronavirus.info@fire.nsw.gov.au.

Work restrictions:

- All external engagements that are non-emergency related are to be suspended for a period of 14 days from Tuesday 14 July.
- Duty Commanders and Senior Officers should reconsider the need to visit Stations in the short term but are able to do so if it is critical to operational needs and safety matters. Strict compliance with FRNSW related [entry procedures](#) are to be maintained.
- All stations/work locations should not receive visitors to the station and only on duty and On Call personnel are permitted entry to these locations. Strict adherence to all FRNSW related entry [control procedures](#) are to be maintained.
- Renovations and station maintenance can continue as long as contractors and staff are complying with COVID-19 Policies and safety guidelines provided by FRNSW which are available on the [Coronavirus Toolkit](#).
- Deliveries should be left outside FRNSW premises and staff should avoid signing for deliveries. After taking and storing deliveries, staff should wash hands and disinfect as required. Details are to be entered with EOB detailing delivery time and the delivery details including companies.
- The need for face-to-face training is suspended except for Permanent and Retained recruit training where reasonable steps are to be taken to ensure compliance with FRNSW infection control procedures. Urgent training to ensure operational capability and safety (BLS, Rescue Certification not Recertification, Aerial, Bystander Engagement) can be undertaken. Retained drills in compliance with the [On Call Retained Firefighters COVID-19 Operational Exposure Management](#) policy can be continued. Stations are to maintain all Station Training programs.
- Where possible all forums and meetings should not take place face to face, except for urgent operational requirements which should be arranged to minimise social contact. Where relevant for urgent operational requirements, the IMT will inform the FBEU.
- All fire safety inspections related to FRNSW obligations regarding Quarantine Hotels or immediate safety concerns or regulatory compliance can be undertaken ensuring compliance with social distancing rules and regulations.



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- All FRNSW premises are to ensure adequate supplies of hand sanitising and infection control logistics (wipes etc) readily available to all personnel.
- When more than one station/appliance is attending an incident and it is not readily apparent that the second and subsequent arriving crews are going to get to work, the second and subsequent arriving crews are to remain in the appliance, contact the IC by fireground radio and only alight the appliance if required.
- Stations/appliances are not to attend other stations and/or other FRNSW locations unless it is in the course of responding to an emergency or other operational requirement such as a standby or move up.
- Communication Centre (ComCen) staff are essential to FRNSW operations therefore all ComCen relievers are instructed to remain in the ComCen. For the next 14 days staff are not to be utilised to undertake relief duties outside the Communication Centres.
- Retained stations are to comply with the [On Call Retained Firefighters COVID-19 Operational Exposure Management](#) policy and refer to the [On call Retained Firefighters COVID-19 Operational Exposure Management FAQs](#).
- Retained drills should be adapted to comply with Government social distancing requirements. Maximum number of 6 attendees at each drill.

For any member who has visited a deemed Hotspot:

The NSW Government has created a list of locations where known cases have visited. There are two lists: a list of locations and dates where anyone who has attended must immediately self-isolate and get tested, which we call the 'Self Isolate and Get Tested Immediately' list; and a list of locations where anyone has attended must monitor for symptoms, which we refer to as the 'Monitor for Symptoms' list. You need to familiarise yourself with both of these lists and check them daily. This information is available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates#latest-covid-19-case-locations-in-nsw>

If you attended a "Hotspot" location on the "Self-Isolate and Get Tested Immediately" List on the dates listed, you MUST:

- Immediately self-isolate until 14 days after you were last there.
- Get tested even if you have no symptoms.
- Watch for COVID-19 symptoms and get retested should any symptoms recur .
- Even if you get a negative test, you must stay in isolation for 14 days (this is because it can take 14 days before you may show symptoms or test positive).
- Only return to work once the applicable isolation period is over, you've received a negative test, and you are symptom free.
- Note that if you have contact with someone who attended the listed venues on the prescribed dates, you do not need to self-isolate just for that reason. You only need to self-isolate if the contact was with a confirmed case.
- All test results must be communicated to coronavirus.info@fire.nsw.gov.au
- Every member who find themselves in the above circumstances need to contact their supervisor ASAP.



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If you attended a 'Hotspot' location on the 'Monitor for Symptoms' List on the dates listed, you **MUST:**

- Monitor yourself for [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- If symptoms occur, [self-isolate](#) and [get tested](#) for COVID-19 immediately.
- Only return to work once the applicable isolation period is over, you've received a negative test result, and you are symptom free.
- Note that if you have contact with someone who attended the listed venues on the prescribed dates, you do not need to self-isolate just for that reason. You only need to self-isolate if the contact was with a confirmed case.

In Unity,

Leighton Drury
State Secretary