



SitRep 47/2020

Award Update

This afternoon your Award Negotiating Group met with the employer.

Just prior to the meeting, they provided us with a list of items for discussion relating to the Retained Award which you can read [here](#). This does not constitute their log of claims for this award.

This document includes a number of items that we have seen before as well as some new ones. We'll be looking at these items closely to understand how they impact our entire workforce.

To be very clear, we will not accept any reduction in pay, conditions or job security.

We'll be providing a more in-depth update shortly as we will every step of the way. It's the members who endorsed our log of claims, we have members at the table in these meetings, and it's member who will collectively decide what happens moving forward.

Public Access Defibrillation (PAD)

The FBEU and FRNSW were in the IRC this week to determine whether the PAD program constitutes 'new work' under the Award. FRNSW were represented by DC Fewtrell, a barrister and members of their industrial relations team.

FRNSW argued that the work proposed under the PAD program was a reasonable direction based on an existing skillset, that being BLS, whilst acknowledging that levels of BLS competencies needed improvement. They argued that in essence the PAD program was no different to requesting firefighters 'put the bins out on bin night' at the station. According to DC Fewtrell and his team, this work is safe despite FRNSW failing to consult with any operational firefighters on the topic including Health and Safety Representatives.

There was general consensus in the room that PAD makes members medical first responders, being first on scene and expected to undertake medical work in some form, except from FRNSW. FRNSW continue to argue that members will only respond to 4 1A non-breathing incidents despite admitting that NSW Ambulance would certainly "get these things (call classification) wrong from time to time".

FRNSW have been unable to provide any statistics from NSW Ambulance that detail the degree to which these calls have historically been reclassified after clinical assessment. Firefighters in other states who undertake this work will tell you that non-breathing incidents prior to clinical assessment from paramedics can range from strokes to severe allergic reactions, suicide and drug overdose. FRNSW appear unwilling to acknowledge or mitigate these risks both for members and the general public.

While a determination will take some time to be handed down, it is clear that this program is less about community safety and more about selling the labour of firefighters for free.



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Issues with New Pumpers

Members have alerted us to faults on some of the new Class 3 Urban Pumpers, namely around their Manual Priming System. There are reports that the primers can go into low water alarm and shut down during pumping operations even when connected to hydrant supply.

Stations that have the pumpers have been emailed a document from fleet with a fix for this issue. If any of these stations experience issues relating to these pumpers during operations, members should report it to fleet, as well as your HSR or Union Official, in addition to submitting a NIIENMs form.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence

On Wednesday I attended the *We Won't Wait 16 Days of Action Launch* at Trades Hall. The event was held to launch a resource put together by the Australian Services Union and Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia to help workers identify when someone might be in a violent situation and how to help.

We heard excellent speeches, in particular from ASU Secretary Nat Lang. She spoke of how the lives of domestic violence survivors can change when they have access to 10 days domestic violence leave and how addressing this form of violence is very much a union issue. I'm proud that the FBEU managed to lock in 10 days paid domestic violence leave in our last award round.

It's important that everyone has a look through the [resource](#) and I encourage you to print out the [poster](#) included for your station. It helpfully charts how to respond to signs and disclosures of family and domestic violence in home-based workplaces.

Work Health and Safety Update

The first meeting of the Health and Safety Committee with combined representatives from HSRs and management will be held next week. It will be chaired by Luke Simpson, HSR and retained member, with an additional six HSRs attending from across the state and workgroups.

The FBEU is very proud to have supported the establishment of this committee and to continue supporting your HSRs as it kicks in to action. This is important work that is long overdue in FRNSW.

The dates for the upcoming HSRs meetings have changed so that we can report out of next week's meeting with management. All HSRs are welcome to dial in to one or both.

FRIDAY 4 DECEMBER 1230hrs

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89752365818>

WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER 1830hrs

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89752365818>



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These will be the last meetings of the year. We will resume the usual meetings next year and publish the dates shortly.

Again, I congratulate all members who are active in work health and safety. Work health and safety is union business.

In Unity,

Leighton Drury
State Secretary