



SitRep 52/2020

2020 – The Year That Was

Needless to say, 2020 has been quite the year. I won't go into all that we've faced, we know what we have done. Not only this year but really the past 18 months. It would be easy to write 2020 off as a year we would rather forget but in doing so would not acknowledge the fights, wins and advancements our Union has had.

Most members would know we have been changing the way we participate in our Union. Rebuilding the delegate structures from next to nothing 18 months ago to having over 160 delegates at last count. This work will continue into next year with delegate training recommencing.

Members have joined officials and staff in meetings with the Department, in the Industrial Relations Commission giving evidence and providing feedback through surveys. It's been great to see Sub-Branch meetings have numbers rarely seen before and the option of holding meetings via Zoom has cut the tyranny of distance a statewide organisation like ours was always challenged with.

Unfortunately, even after our work last summer and through Covid the Government and the Department have continued to attack our wages and conditions. We have held our own but the start of the new year will be a challenge negotiating our Awards. It will come down to how we stick together to get the best outcomes.

From all of State Committee and the Union staff, we wish you a safe and happy festive season and we all look forward to facing the challenges of next year head on.

Zoom Meetings Update

Thanks to all members who have participated in Zoom meetings this year - we've held hundreds and hundreds of them!

Our regular Zoom meetings including delegate briefings and HSR meetings are now all finished for the year. We'll send a new schedule of meetings in January and hopefully a schedule for face-to-face delegate training (we're continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation in NSW).

We'll continue to use Zoom in an ongoing way as it's been a great way to get delegates and members together from across our job and state.

Christmas/New Year Consolidated Period

The additional Boxing Day public holiday will fall on Monday 28 December 2020. The following arrangements will apply to Permanent and Retained Firefighters:

Arrangements for Permanent Firefighters

Permanent Firefighters rostered to work on the additional public holiday are entitled to be credited with the same number of hours of consolidated leave as the hours actually worked on the day. This applies to hours worked between 0000 and 2400 hrs on 28 December 2020.



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Accessing Consolidated Leave:

1. Permanent Firefighters seeking to access consolidated leave over the Christmas and New Year period will be required in the first instance to source their replacement using the form in Standing Orders. The completed form is to be provided to the Duty Commander for the applicable shift.
2. If absences (after these arrangements have been used) still require staffing supplementation, then the e-recall lists will be used.

Arrangements for Retained (On-Call) Firefighters

Retained Firefighters who work on the additional public holiday will be paid at overtime rates for hours worked between 0000 hrs and 2400hrs on 28 December 2020. The additional public holiday will not include local public holidays.

COVID-19 Update

As reported in SitReps [50](#) and [51](#), the FBEU and FRNSW have been working closely together to monitor the evolving COVID-19 situation. Our goal is to make sure that members can continue to do their work in the safest manner possible.

Accordingly:

**Metropolitan East 2 are to adhere to Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 restrictions in the [attached document](#).
All other Metropolitan zones (except Metropolitan East 2) are to adhere to Levels 1, 2 and 3.
Regional zones are to adhere to Levels 1 and 2.**

Members should keep up to date on the latest case locations and follow NSW Health advice to get tested or isolate as required. Updates and locations can be accessed on the [NSW Government website](#).

If you have any COVID-19 related concerns, please contact the COVID-19 IMT at COVID19IMT@fire.nsw.gov.au.

We want to extend our sincere thanks to workers in the public health unions for their tireless efforts in keeping this outbreak under control.

Office Christmas and New Year Shutdown

The FBEU Office will close this afternoon, Wednesday **23 December 2020**, and reopen Wednesday **6 January 2021**. If members have any urgent matters, please contact your State Committee Official.

In Unity,

Leighton Drury
State Secretary