



Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) and the Fire Brigade Employees Union (FBEU) along with a number of Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) have been working together to establish a State Health and Safety Committee to deliver for both the organisation and the employees.

The Committee will include FRNSW management representatives, Health and Safety Reps and will be supported by staff of both FRNSW and the FBEU.

The Committee is designed to be proactive and positive and its scope includes broad consultation about significant safety issues facing firefighters and all staff.

The Committee will be chaired by a HSR representative and meet quarterly and as reasonably required when there are substantial matters requiring discussion.

FRNSW will encourage the representatives in the committee to communicate with HSRs across NSW and looks forward to this committee starting its important work.

The Committee is an additional initiative and all the participants will continue to exercise their rights and responsibilities under relevant legislation.

The FBEU welcomes the commitment from FRNSW to engage proactively with HSRs and all firefighters and employees and is committed to our role in supporting the Health and Safety Reps on the committee and across the state.

Election of HSRs for the next three years has been finalised and we look forward to the committee facilitating active participation of all of us in the critical work of safety.

If you have any questions about the committee or Work Health and Safety more broadly contact:

Emily Mayo Senior Organiser at the Fire Brigade Employees Union – [emayo@fbeu.net](mailto:emayo@fbeu.net) and 0491 281 795 or Superintendent Craig Wright, Manager Operational Safety on 0416 260 430 or speak with your Health and Safety Representative.

A blue ink signature of Paul Baxter.

Paul Baxter  
Commissioner

A blue ink signature of Leighton Drury.

Leighton Drury  
State Secretary

## Health and Safety Committee FRNSW

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### Why establish a consultation structure?

1. To provide a forum for proactive engagement and consultation between FRNSW and HSRs to address WHS issues
2. To refer issues and information to the appropriate Directorate/Area/Zone for review and consideration, in consultation with H&S.
3. Providing avenues for WHS issues of specific groups of workers around specific issues to be dealt with appropriately when normal Issue Resolution procedure is not able to reach an effective outcome.
4. To build a system that allows for genuine consultation around emerging issues.

### Structure

A state-wide HSR Consultation Steering Committee comprised of:

1. Operational HSR representatives (supported by the FBEU).
2. Administrative and Trades HSR representatives
3. Representatives of FRNSW including officer/s (or their delegates who are authorised to make decisions/represent FRNSW) of FRNSW that being at least one consistent member of the ELT.

### Committee make-up

7 HSR Representatives – chosen by HSRs, at least five from Operations with the support of the FBEU and up to 1 each from Admin and Trades.

Representatives should cover permanent and retained staff across Regional and Metropolitan Operations, Strategic Capability, and Admin & Trades.

A maximum of six FRNSW representatives including one from the Executive Leadership Team.

An additional eight HSRS will be available – making a total of 15 to ensure the HSRs are mostly able to actively participate and meet quorum. These positions will be from operations (FBEU) workgroups.

Seven HSR representatives being quorum and HSR representatives maintaining one more participant than management representatives at any meeting. HSR representative to chair the meetings.

From time to time, the chair of the HSR Consultation Steering Committee, HSRs and FRNSW may invite guests to the meeting to assist conversations about specific issues. These can include subject matter experts.

HSRs to organise the constitution of the HSRs representatives with the support of the FBEU.

### **Scope**

The state-wide Health and Safety Committee will consult on WHS matters including but not limited to:

1. The Work Health and Safety aspects of matters and issues identified by FRNSW or the HSRs that may have significant impact across FRNSW.
2. Analysis of hazards, risks and emerging issues, including near misses and incidents.
3. Forward planning about safety.

### **Frequency and method of discussions**

The State-wide HSR Consultation Steering Committee is to meet quarterly and Ad Hoc if requested by at least five (5) committee members.

The meetings are to take place by Zoom or similar. The meetings are to be minuted and tasks allocated and monitored.

The HSRs are to meet on paid time. Retained firefighters will be paid when they participate. Where permanent firefighters not rostered on they can choose to meet voluntarily otherwise alternates who are rostered on will attend. Overtime will not be paid for attendance at HSR Consultation Steering Committee meetings.

### **Who will be Chairperson/secretariat**

The Chairperson will be elected by and from the HSR members of the committee. FRNSW will supply the secretariat assistance. Minutes and notes will be agreed by the participants.

Members of FRNSW Safety teams and or IR teams to provide support to committee – as appropriate. Staff of the FBEU to provide support to HSRs as appropriate.

### **Communications**

HSRs will communicate with the other HSRs from across the state following the meetings.

FRNSW acknowledges that HSRs will work directly with other HSRs through any structures that are developed by HSR's including workgroups or other committees.

The circulation of agendas and the timelines for agenda items and committee processes will be coordinated by the Chairperson and minutes will be prepared by the secretariat so the committee is effective and productive.

The committee may from time to time release joint and agreed communications.

**Please Note:**

1. Nothing in this structure prevents workers in their Workgroups forming committees in-line with the Act – rather – it provides a system by which large scale consultation can take place
2. This system, common in many workplaces, seeks to complement the Act – and give function to it – it does not seek to change the roles of HSRs or responsibilities of FRNSW.
3. This system is a collaborative one – that said the capacity for FRNSW, HSRs and the FBEU to exercise rights under the act are not diminished by this collaborative approach.