



# SitRep 26/2022

## **FBEU meet with Emergency Services and Resilience Minister**

Yesterday the Union met with the Minister to progress discussions and advocacy on behalf of Members.

The FBEU has made clear that the escalating neglect of Professional Firefighters in NSW is now reaching fever point, impacting safe firefighting and community outcomes.

The Union will continue to meet in good faith with the Minister on a regular basis to progress these discussions and work through resolutions. The Minister is, however, aware that we are prepared for a significant and large-scale public campaign if Members' concerns continue to fall on deaf ears.

As outlined in [SitRep 22/2022](#), the Minister wrote to Commissioner Baxter seeking a position on vaccine mandates post the 20 April [announcement](#) from the Premier and Minister for Health concerning the scaling back of mandates across sections of the public sector. The Minister and her office are yet to receive a response from FRNSW.

Members will note the correspondence from COVID IMT 22 April noting FRNSW's Policy is unimpacted by the announcement. The FBEU has sought a formal meeting with FRNSW to ensure a fair review of relevant risk assessments.

The Minister has also confirmed that the State Government are giving consideration to boosting public sector wages come the June Budget.

## **Award and Campaign Update**

The FBEU met with FRNSW representatives today regarding Award negotiations.

As Members would be aware the parties are currently awaiting conciliation before the IRC which is listed for 30 May. Given this was the earliest date the IRC was able to list the matter, the FBEU requested that FRNSW meet with us in the meantime to continue discussions between the parties.

The parties today had a productive discussion regarding key items for both sides including concerns surrounding the proposal of medical work. Importantly, FRNSW today committed to a one-year term for the Award.

The FBEU has been seeking a one-year term in this round of negotiations to allow us to establish effective consultation and dispute processes. This will give us the ability to work through outstanding matters and new initiatives between the parties with direct firefighter input prior to moving into a new round of negotiations in 2023 where we intend to seek major and much-needed changes to the Award.

A one-year term on this Award will mean that our Award expires on 25 February 2023, one month out from the 2023 State Election. The FBEU is in the process of developing a public-facing campaign based on your participation in the Fix our Fire Service audits, and as platform to demand change at a time where we can have the most impact.

We will be seeking Delegate and Member feedback on this campaign and on the next round of negotiations. Should the Award be resolved with a one-year term, we will be back at the bargaining table for our next negotiation before the end of this year.

A proposal for an FBEU Delegates Conference later this year is currently being workshopped to ensure this campaign has maximum impact. We will keep Members informed of progress on these matters.



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## Station Closures

The FBEU met with FRNSW today regarding the IRC decision relating to Commissioners Order 19/20. As previously advised to Members, under this order FRNSW sought to extend the list of stations that could be “taken offline” or, in actual terms, closed.

The FBEU fought strongly against this order taking that matter to the IRC where we clearly outlined the risk posed to Firefighters and the community. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful in the IRC matter and as a result, FRNSW is permitted to implement Order 19/20.

Today we met with FRNSW to again communicate our strong objection to implementing this decision. As we advised them, despite the IRC allowing them to move forward, it does not require them to and therefore we again sought on the basis of the extreme risk this decision poses to Firefighters and community safety, that they decide not to move forward with implementation at this stage.

Unsurprisingly once again FRNSW rejected our arguments and has advised that they intend to publish this order on 25 May.

The FBEU will continue to campaign strongly against this measure. We will be seeking Delegate and Member input into this campaign to seek to overturn this dangerous decision and to achieve standardised and measurable response time targets. Members will be advised further regarding this matter shortly.

## Flood Deployment Overpayments

Further to our previous [SitRep](#) on this matter the FBEU can report to Members that we met with FRNSW regarding the alleged overpayments relating to the Flood Deployments.

The FBEU has, without accepting the legitimacy or otherwise of the alleged overpayments, advised FRNSW that it is our view that they should withdraw any request for repayment of an alleged overpayment on the basis that any error resulting in an overpayment was in fact their error and on this basis, they should not seek to recover alleged monies owing from employees.

FRNSW is considering this position and we will update Members as soon as we have a response.

## 2022 Sub-Branch Election – CSB Result

Results are in for the FBEU Country Sub-Branch Elections for the coming three-year term 2022-2025, the results of which were as follows:

Sam Carlon (Coffs Harbour)

Nat LaMacchia (Coffs Harbour)

Mark Robertson (Bathurst)

Congratulations to those elected. We look forward to working with you.

In Unity

**Leighton Drury**  
**State Secretary**