



## Consultancy Inquiry Submission

Following this week's announcement of the departure of Paul Baxter as FRNSW Commissioner, the agency has had extensive media coverage for all the wrong reasons.

As cited in [Sitrep #36](#), there are significant legacy issues left behind by the outgoing Commissioner which we must now begin to address. Step one in this process is to prioritise the needs of FBEU members and the things we need to get the job done safely. FBEU officials have continued this week to meet with FRNSW and the NSW State Government to ensure that our operational needs are front and centre of future decision-making.

News this week that serious allegations concerning corrupt behaviour at FRNSW were also referred to ICAC suggests too that we must understand how the agency got their priorities so wrong. As noted in [Sitrep #35](#), the FBEU have recently made a submission to the NSW Government's inquiry into the use and management of consulting services in the NSW public sector. The submission will be reviewed by the inquiry committee later this month prior to it being published [here](#) on the inquiry website.

The submission provides a case study of concerning decision-making related to probity and the use of public money under Paul Baxter's tenure. The submission has also been shared by the FBEU with other government bodies including the NSW Audit Office, ICAC, NSW Procurement Board, and the NSW Ombudsman.

It is yet to be determined whether the FBEU or FRNSW will be asked to contribute further to the inquiry hearings scheduled for August.

## Award Negotiation Update

This week we met with FRNSW Monday through to Wednesday to continue negotiations on the Awards. Executive Director of People and Culture Michael Baldi along with Acting Deputy Commissioner Trent Curtin continue to be in attendance to ensure relevant decision makers are involved as we discuss matters such as Health Checks, Promotions, Safe Staffing, Classifications and Training and Retained Payments.

I can report that we are continuing to make progress in negotiations for what will effectively be an interim Award until February 2024 (with negotiations for the next Award to commence as soon as this one is finalised) however we don't yet have a final agreed position with FRNSW.

We're back meeting with FRNSW for a full day on Wednesday next week at which point we hope to be close, if not at a final position that we can bring back to the State Committee who meets on Thursday, followed by all FBEU members.

Further updates to follow next week.

In Unity,

Leighton Drury  
State Secretary

