



Award update/Bans Committee

In [Sitrep 59](#), members were advised of the introduction of much needed reform to the NSW Industrial Relations (IR) Act and System, enabling real wage growth for public sector workers through a model of “mutual gains” bargaining.

As the IR bill was introduced in November, IR Minister Sophie Cotsis thanked firefighters and other public sector workers and reassured public sector Unions that " the Government can once again negotiate effectively with public sector workers to promote potential increases in real wages while returning benefit to the people of New South Wales".

And yet, less than a month out from the expiry of our Awards, bargaining has been unable to commence. The Minns Government has failed to provide FRNSW with bargaining parameters or any capacity for decision making.

That is not good enough, and members have every right to be cautious about this new system being little more than lip-service from the Minns Government rather than a fundamental change in direction.

FBEU members felt the full impact of the previous Governments wages cap and with the current cost-of-living pressures, a lack of real wage growth is having serious implications. In these circumstances, FBEU members can no longer afford to sit idle, as much as been communicated to both FRNSW and Minister Dib this week.

It goes without saying that we're going to need more than sharp letters and that's why the FBEU Bans Committee met last night to begin planning for scalable actions in support of our Award claim. The Committee will continue to meet on a regular basis until the current circumstances are resolved. For those interested in joining the Committee please contact FBEU Senior Industrial Officer Rini Krouskos via rkrouskos@fbeu.net.

Lastly, the parties met today with representatives from government for training on the new Industrial Relations laws, with a second session tomorrow. It remains to be seen how the new laws will benefit Award negotiations and ultimately our members.

In Unity

Leighton Drury
State Secretary