



PLEBSCITE SOUGHT ON PROPOSED RULES CHANGES

We can confirm that a request for a plebiscite on the proposed rule changes has been received through the office.

The request is currently being reviewed by State Committee and the Returning Officer to ensure fair process and compliance.

Members will be updated shortly once further advice is received as to future process.

For further information on the proposed rule changes members can refer to previous member notice issued on 23 December 2023 which can be found [here](#) and Sitrep 3/2024 [here](#)

In Unity

Leighton Drury
State Secretary



Member Notice: Union Rules

FBEU proposed rule changes

As discussed at the last two Delegates' Conferences, the FBEU State Committee of Management has commenced a process to review, update and modernise our rules. This work has been undertaken by State Committee in conjunction with lawyers who specialise specifically in Union rules. Following advice from the lawyers and feedback from SCOM, the below proposed rule changes will now proceed in accordance with clause 47 of the FBEU Rules.

A [copy of our current rules can be found on our website](#) for those who require a copy.

The key substantive change provided for in these proposed rule changes is to increase the current term of your State Committee from 3 years to 4 years. This rule change has been proposed by State Committee to provide greater stability and opportunity to achieve through the term of SCOM as well as to align our elections with the term of the NSW State Election.

Further changes proposed include:

1. An additional clause to allow Annual General Meetings to be delayed past October if there is an important reason to do so, a pandemic for example.
2. Confirmation and clarification that Leading Station Officers shall remain in their geographical Sub-Branches rather than being in the Senior Officers' Sub-Branch.
3. Updating references to payment by cheque to now include payment by account electronic funds transfers/credit cards.

The formal proposal is as follows:

Motion 1

Delete rule 11(1) and insert in lieu:

Each year the Union shall hold an Annual General Meeting at which all financial members of the Union shall be entitled to attend provided that if, taking into account the happening, or likely happening, of a critical event, it is not possible to administratively, and cost effectively, program an Annual General Meeting then the State Committee of Management may determine to hold the Annual General Meeting at a later time.

Motion 2

Delete rule 11(1A) and insert in lieu:

(1A) Subject to sub-rule (1), the Annual General Meeting of the Union shall be held each October at a time, day and place to be decided by the State Committee of Management.

Motion 3

Insert in rule 12(3) the word 'Leading' immediately prior to the words 'Station Officer'.



Member Notice: Union Rules



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Motion 4

Insert in rule 12(4) the word 'Leading' immediately prior to the words 'Station Officer'.

Motion 5

Delete rule 19(9)(ii) and insert in lieu:

- '(ii) where the amount exceeds \$200 the State Secretary shall pay the same in accordance with Rule 30(4).'

Motion 6

In rule 23(1) the word 'three' be deleted and insert in lieu the word 'four'.

Motion 7

Delete rule 30(4) and insert in lieu:

- (4) All payments from the Union fund, including by way of cash, cheque and electronic funds transfer, must be authorised by any two of the persons occupying the offices of President, Senior Vice President, Junior Vice President or State Secretary provided that:
 - (a) where prior authorisation by resolution of the State Committee of Management for the payment of regular or scheduled working expenses exists; and
 - (b) where payment by credit card is the most practicable or sole means of making payment, then payment may be made by credit card provided that all credit card payments are presented to the next meeting of the State Committee of Management for review.

Motion 7

In rule 51(9) the word 'three' be deleted and insert in lieu the word 'four'.

Motion 8

That the Secretary is directed to promptly, and in accordance with the rules, make application for the amendment of the rules of the Union in respect of the motions approved.

In accordance with clause 47 of the rules, on 19 December 2023, the State Committee of Management directed the State Secretary to summons a meeting of the State Committee of Management to consider a proposed alteration, amendment, rescission or substitution of the Union Rules and to publish these proposed rule changes to the membership as required for a period of 28 days.

During this period members are welcome to provide feedback/ask any questions on these proposal via their sub-branch secretary.

State Committee of Management will meet to further consider this proposal. This meeting will be held at 1-7 Belmore Street Surry Hills, Sydney, NSW on 20th January 2024 commencing at 10 a.m.



Member Notice: Union Rules

Should State Committee resolve to endorse the motions, they will be published to the membership within 14 days of the resolution of SCOM. Members will then have a further 14 days in which to seek a plebiscite regarding the rules. The process to do so is contained in clause 47(5) of the rules. Should there be no request for a plebiscite in accordance with the requirements of clause 47(5) then the rule changes as resolved by State Committee will be made.

In Unity,

Leighton Drury
State Secretary



RULE CHANGE UPDATE – SCOM ENDORSES MOTIONS

State Committee of Management met on the weekend and, in accordance with rule 47, and resolved to endorse the motions previously published to members in December 2023.

As advised, these proposed rule changes have been endorsed to provide some much-needed clarification and modernisation to our FBEU based on legal advice. The advice received by the FBEU is that further rule changes will likely be needed at a later date however, it was key that these changes proceeded now, prior to the FBEU upcoming State Committee Elections.

The reason for this is that the key substantive change is to increase the current term of your State Committee from 3 years to 4 years, a change which was absolutely necessary for members to be aware of prior to voting in this election.

This change from 3 to 4-year terms has been endorsed because State Committee believe that this is in the best interests of the membership. This change will not only provide greater stability and opportunity to achieve through the term of SCOM; it aligns our FBEU internal elections with the term of the NSW State Election providing whoever is elected for State Committee the best timing and opportunity to achieve results for the membership.

As proven through the hard work and dedication of members in the 2023 State Election, firefighters have real political capital, and when we flex our muscle voters, and therefore politicians and Governments, listen. Your work in that campaign delivered much-needed reforms and gains in the 2023 Awards and will, with further solidarity and work by the membership, hopefully deliver more in 2024. This change didn't and couldn't have happened immediately though. As shown from the experience of the 2023 elections, Governments need time after an election to get up and running and your elected officials, whoever they are, also need that time to push and lobby in the interests of members and to achieve our goals.

The next NSW State Election is due in March 2027. We have ensured through our log of claims that we seek an expiry date for our Awards in line with that but based on the current FBEU rules, we would also be holding internal FBEU elections at that time. This is obviously not only less than ideal but would be extremely disruptive to any Award negotiations and campaigns and would not be in yours, the members, best interests.

This rule change will ensure that whoever is on State Committee has a further 12-month period, following the State Election, to continue to pursue the industrial interests and agenda of the members, with whoever is in Government. This cycle will then continue for future elections.

We note, that in ensuring these changes were put to the members in full transparency prior to our upcoming internal elections there are some issues and typographical mistakes which members have raised where there are still references to triennial terms in other rules. Thank you to the members who have communicated to the office regarding this. We can confirm we have sought further advice, and



we understand there is no issue with these minor errors at this time and that the rule changes can proceed with those issues to be resolved at a future time.

The less substantive changes at this time also include:

1. An additional clause to allow Annual General Meeting's to be delayed past October if there is an important reason to do so, a pandemic for example.
2. Confirmation and clarification that Leading Station Officers shall remain in their geographical sub-branches rather than being in the Senior Officers sub-branch.
3. Updating references to payment by cheque to now include payment by account electronic funds transfers/credit cards.

As a reminder, the formal proposal which was endorsed by State Committee was as follows:

Motion 1

Delete rule 11(1) and insert in lieu:

Each year the Union shall hold an Annual General Meeting at which all financial members of the Union shall be entitled to attend provided that if, taking into account the happening, or likely happening, of a critical event, it is not possible to administratively, and cost effectively, program an Annual General Meeting then the State Committee of Management may determine to hold the Annual General Meeting at a later time.

Motion 2

Delete rule 11(1A) and insert in lieu:

(1A) Subject to sub-rule (1), the Annual General Meeting of the Union shall be held each October at a time, day and place to be decided by the State Committee of Management.

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Motion 4

Insert in rule 12(4) the word 'Leading' immediately prior to the words 'Station Officer'.



Motion 5

Delete rule 19(9)(ii) and insert in lieu:

'(ii) where the amount exceeds \$200 the State Secretary shall pay the same in accordance with Rule 30(4).'

Motion 6

In rule 23(1) the word 'three' be deleted and insert in lieu the word 'four'.

Motion 7

Delete rule 30(4) and insert in lieu:

(4) All payments from the Union fund, including by way of cash, cheque and electronic funds transfer, must be authorised by any two of the persons occupying the offices of President, Senior Vice President, Junior Vice President or State Secretary provided that:

(a) where prior authorisation by resolution of the State Committee of Management for the payment of regular or scheduled working expenses exists; and

(b) where payment by credit card is the most practicable or sole means of making payment, then payment may be made by credit card provided that all credit card payments are presented to the next meeting of the State Committee of Management for review.

Motion 7

In rule 51(9) the word 'three' be deleted and insert in lieu the word 'four'.

And therefore, the State Secretary is directed to promptly, and in accordance with the rules, make application for the amendment of the rules of the Union.

We will continue to update members on this ongoing project regarding the FBEU as we progress.

In Unity

Leighton Drury
State Secretary