



ROUND THE GROUNDS UPDATE

The FBEU's call for reform to the broader NSW emergency services sector continues to remain topically in the media over the past month with yet another tragic fire fatality within rural fire district for the NSW Coroners Court to review. The incident, occurring in Medowie on Australia Day, is indicative of the urgent need to review fire boundaries across the State. Members can read official FBEU media comment on the incident [here](#).

I am pleased to report that FBEU recommendations to reform the sector and address these circumstances have been included in a recent Public Accounts Committee publications concerning the NSW Government inquiry titled '*A framework for performance reporting and driving wellbeing outcomes in NSW*'. Pages 54-55 of the document ([found here](#)) detail a summary of the FBEU position. The Minns Government are due to respond formally to the review in June. Members can find more detail about FBEU involvement here in [Sitrep 40/2024](#).

Following the recent and unprecedented bushfires in LA, the FBEU have also spoken to the Sydney Morning Herald about the hard realities facing the emergency services sector ahead of more intense and erratic disasters across Australia. RFS Commissioner Rogers also contributed to the story ([found here](#)), predictably rejecting FBEU calls for reform - notably, however, quoting a figure of 40,000 active RFS volunteers – distinct from the usual figure of 70,000 and yet no doubt still dangerously overstated.

As members know, the extent to which FBEU members continue - with little acknowledgement – to prop-up the broader sector is a key feature of our **Award Arbitration case**. The case kicks off Tuesday, 11 February and runs until Friday, 21 February at the Industrial Court of NSW (Level 4, 47 Bridge Street, Sydney). The State Committee continues to call on all available members to attend the Court in support of our claim. Seats are still available on select hearing days, but **you must RSVP in advance**. Please register [here](#) as soon as possible, and we will call to confirm the details.

In Unity,

Leighton Drury
State Secretary