



## **FRNSW FRONTS EXPENDITURE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

FRNSW has today fronted the NSW Government Expenditure Review Committee (ERC) to discuss ongoing overruns on the department budget. Concerningly, those within FRNSW tasked with managing the fiscal strategy of the department are blaming you and your Union.

Without a doubt, the consistent under-resourcing of NSW professional firefighters over the past decade has had a significant impact at all levels of FRNSW decision-making. Our fleet, infrastructure, and most key things we need to get the job done safely, are in a state of disrepair. Recently, the Minister acknowledged 'structural underfunding' during Budget Estimates, citing the lack of solid examination and funding of FRNSW establishment numbers as the most egregious example of the problem.

Our numbers have not kept up with the needs of the community, not for a long time. As it stands, FRNSW operations are 300 personnel short, and the department has no strategy to get 600 new positions—funded by the Minns Government in 2023—through the academy and into stations. FRNSW bureaucrats say that's the fault of the FBEU.

This week, FBEU Officials met with both the Premier and Treasurer to set the record straight—FBEU members are here to work constructively with all stakeholders in the interests of protecting the community, but we need those under the Commissioner to front up to the challenges before them or get out of the way.

## **PROPOSED REFORMS TO NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION**

Following [SitRep 14](#), the FBEU can report that Treasurer Daniel Mookhey has confirmed with Officials this week that exemptions—previously won by the Union during the 2012 O'Farrell—will remain in place, ensuring FBEU members are exempt from detrimental changes to Workers Compensation currently proposed by the NSW Government. Importantly, this includes the proposal to amend the threshold for whole person impairment from 15% to 31%.

As I have said, the FBEU will continue to approach the proposal with healthy scepticism, paying close attention to any foreseen and unforeseen challenges with the proposed legislation. A Government Inquiry into the proposal is currently being held, with a hearing occurring today, which is likely to provide greater detail on the proposal.

The FBEU will continue to work closely with the Government, our Workers Comp lawyers, and Unions NSW to mitigate any challenges with the proposed legislation. We will have more to say on the matter in the coming week.

In Unity,

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