



## **AWARD UPDATE**

As most members would know, earlier this year the FBEU put forward an extensive legal case in support of our Award log of claims. This included evidence from 39 witnesses across our ranks supporting our claims. While both parties made closing submissions in April, the arbitration process continues as the full bench of the IRC deliberates on a decision.

As noted in previous Sitreps, arbitration is a lengthy process—far from ideal. Neither FRNSW nor the FBEU knows when a decision will be made. Our Award is the first to be arbitrated by the new Justices and under the new Industrial framework. This is new territory for all public sector unions and agencies. For now, we're in the hands of the Commission.

Some members may be aware that the IRC has also been occupied with State Wage and State Super cases. These are important reviews but are entirely separate from our Award arbitration process.

Details will be shared with members as soon as further information becomes available.

## **FBEU HOSTS INTERSTATE FIREFIGHTING UNIONS**

Last week, the FBEU welcomed interstate unions to Sydney for discussions on key issues affecting professional firefighters. With representation from the vast majority of Australia's rank-and-file firefighters, the initiative was a great success, fostering opportunities for future collaboration and connection. Strong links between the FBEU and other unions, including our state counterparts, can be crucial, and we look forward to strengthening these relationships.

## **NSW IR LAWS STRENGTHENED**

This week has seen history made with significant changes made to NSW industrial relations. Due to prolonged campaigning by the NSW union movement, we have secured landmark changes for workers' rights with the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment (Workplace Protections) Bill 2025.

Some of these changes in the bill include:

- Allowing unions and employers to have unresolved WHS disputes heard independently by the IRC;
- Enshrining gender equality and the elimination of workplace bullying and sexual harassment as explicit objectives of the IR Act;
- Strengthening WHS compliance by allowing unions to bring forward prosecutions with moiety for WHS breaches following consultation with SafeWork NSW;
- Creating new powers to hold SafeWork NSW to account by allowing unions to seek reviews of its decisions; and
- Making it mandatory for employers to comply with the WHS codes of practice or a higher standard.



Although this current Government is not without issue, advancements such as these are what a good Labor government should be striving towards. Legislative changes like this are key to empowering workers and our unions to protect our rights in the workplace.

## **NEW COMMISSIONER APPOINTED TO NSW RFS**

The FBEU congratulates Trent Curtin, who was yesterday appointed by Minister Dib as the new NSW RFS Commissioner. Trent has 30+ years of experience in the firefighting industry, including three years as FRNSW Assistant Commissioner Community Safety. The Union worked with Trent during his tenure at FRNSW, particularly during recent disputes concerning Sydney Metro rail infrastructure. Since late 2023, Trent had been employed as the Acting Dep Sec and Head of Safe Work NSW. His appointment to the NSW RFS is a positive change and we congratulate him on his new position.

In Unity,

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