



## Parliamentary meetings

This week, I was back in parliament meeting with several MPs including Treasurer Daniel Mookhey, Emergency Services Minister Jihad Dib, Minister for Women Jodie Harrison and several MPs from across both metro and regional areas.

One of our objectives in meeting with MPs, particularly independents and new MPs, is to ensure that all sitting members are fully aware of the challenges facing firefighters, and the impacts the last twelve years of poor management has had on our resources and morale. The reaction from MPs is unanimously one of disbelief at the sustained and systemic vandalism of FRNSW by the current leadership, and I will continue communicating to them the needs of firefighters across the state as they arise.

We have presented a strong case for real wage growth to both the Treasurer and Emergency Services Minister and we are continuing to negotiate on your behalf. As I have stated in a previous Sitrep, I will update you as soon as the government makes a firm commitment on wages policy.

## Up up and... away?

Despite the Deputy Commissioner telling us that our claims of broken and missing appliances was a myth, this week members have sent us more evidence of appliances that are either missing, or not fit for purpose.

Albury Central had their aerial returned to them on Wednesday after repairs, but unfortunately it was back at the mechanics the next day after gushing diesel onto the road at an incident. Two restows in two days – another indictment of the disrepair FRNSW management have allowed our equipment to fall into.

At the time of publication, Coffs Harbour's long-awaited aerial appliance was still missing despite assurances that it would be delivered this week. Our understanding is that of the 21 permanent firefighters stationed at Coffs Harbour, 9 have had no aerial training, and the remaining members require refresher training due to their aerial being AWOL for almost 2 years. These members have been told that the earliest they can receive training is at the end of June, so even if the appliance turns up, there's nobody to operate it until at least then.

Three other missing aerials also turned up this week to stations in Sydney and the Central Coast after sustained pressure from the FBEU, but again, several members at these stations have not received the training necessary to operate these appliances.

And despite the Deputy Commissioner's assurances to the contrary, we have had several members contact us this week about their appliances that are well past their 15/20 year recommended lifespans. It's a good thing there are plenty of firefighters at Greenacre, because the Deputy Commissioner's pants might be on fire.

This gap between appearances and reality is another symptom of the poor decisions by senior leadership in the last decade. Our trainers do an exemplary job, and as we stated in our [Facebook post](#) yesterday, their skills are world-class. But a decade of the slash-and-burn approach is taking its toll on all of us, and depriving our communities of the fire protection they deserve.



## CAPS training

Along with missing aerials, we have also this week raised concerns regarding potential significant safety issues with the new CAP appliances currently being rolled out across FRNSW fleet. These concerns are significant including insufficient staffing with the appropriate training and necessary high risk work licence, catch points, crush points, trip hazards along with various other concerns. We have this afternoon written to Deputy Commissioner Stiffler seeking a commitment that the appliance will only operate as an aerial with three fully qualified operators and that an urgent meeting be arranged between the parties to discuss further. A copy of our letter can be found [here](#).

We will keep you all updated when we hear back, but in the meantime we want to thank those members who have continued to work to raise and push these issues to ensure that we maintain the health and safety of us all.

## SASS Reporting Error

We have been made aware of SASS members receiving tax bills from the ATO relating to excess concessional contributions dating back to 2018.

It appears this issue has been caused by an administration error by SASS. SASS have advised the following:

### ATO reporting error

State Super has identified that an error has been made by the Fund's administrator, Mercer, with the reporting of member contributions to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) in early May 2023.

This may have impacted the reporting of your contributions to the ATO resulting in excess contribution debts being created in error. If you have received a letter from the ATO advising of a debt in recent days the information contained is likely to be incorrect. We are working closely with the ATO to rectify this as soon as possible.

If you are impacted any correction will be made to your myGov account and the ATO will generate a new letter to you.

There is no need to contact the ATO as they are aware of this issue or take any further action at this time.

We encourage any members of SASS who may have questions following further notification from the ATO in the coming weeks to contact SASS directly on 1300 130 095.



## **SIMS checks at Special Roster mixed stations**

A reminder to Retained Firefighters based at Special Roster mixed stations that you are expected to perform SIMS checks on the primary appliance. The Retained Award at 6.6.3.3 allows authorised hours of "2 hours per week, per vehicle of Station Inventory Management System (SIMS) duties". You are entitled to perform these checks even though Permanent staff conduct them each of their weekday shifts.

If your zone management directs you not to do SIMS checks, show them this SitRep, and if they continue to refuse, contact the Union Office for advice.

In Unity,

Leighton Drury  
State Secretary