



OSV (Payment and Crewing)

I wish to inform all members that Deputy President Adrian Bloomfield from the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC), Henry Lawrence and I from the UFU and representatives from the QFRS, will be travelling to Gladstone on Thursday to meet with the on-shift Firefighters regarding the Operational Support Vehicle.

Background

The UFU has been in discussion with the QFRS regarding the OSV for some time and the parties were not able to reach agreement over crewing and payments. The QFRS then determined to seek the assistance of the QIRC to settle the matter.

On Wednesday the 22nd of February the Gladstone crew were directed to place the OSV on the frontline for immediate response (ghost manned). The UFU for safety and other reasons instructed Members not to respond in this appliance.

The QFRS then notified the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission of a dispute and the Senior Industrial Officer and I appeared in the Commission on Monday 27th February.

The Union argued that this appliance was not merely a 'replacement vehicle' but a significant upgrade to the current Hazmat appliance. We also argued that the Union has a real concern for our members across the state 'cross crewing' a number of vehicles. The Deputy President has now determined to meet with the Gladstone crew to discuss the detail of our submissions and has set down tomorrow as the first of the hearings.

I will update you further via "Code 2" after tomorrows meeting.

Swift Water Rescue (PFD)

The United Firefighters Union appeared in the Industrial Commission (QIRC) again yesterday after lodging a dispute regarding the Level 1 "Personal Floatation Device".

The Cairns Branch raised their concerns after a number of tests were done by members showing that the device is not suitable.

The tests conducted by the Firefighters concluded that:

- Apparently, all Firefighters are the same size across the state as the vests supplied were all the XXL size. This is also the largest size that the supplier makes.
- The XXL device was too small for Firefighters that wore an XL Firefighter Tee shirt. (unable to fasten the front zip)
- The size was too big for other Firefighters and was able to be slipped over their head when arms were stretched out.
- The device may not have sufficient buoyancy if a Firefighter entered the water in an unconscious state.

The QFRS and the UFU will be travelling to Cairns to discuss this issue further in the coming weeks. The Division of Workplace Health and Safety has also been informed and are now participating in the discussions.

Given the Cairns experience detailed above, I ask that all members check your current PFD's to ensure proper size and fit. If you have any issues in this regard please contact the Union office or email ufu@ufuq.com.au with your name, location and concern.

I will follow up with a further "Code 2" regarding this issue after further negotiations with the QFRS, WHSQ and the UFU are complete.

John Oliver
State Secretary