



Tuesday 24 March 2020

Mr Mark Roche  
Deputy Commissioner  
Chief Fire Officer  
Fire and Rescue Service

*Delivered via email: Mark.Roche@qfes.qld.gov.au  
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Dear Deputy Commissioner

**Re: QFES Aurion payroll transition – Errors and inconsistencies**

I refer to QFES's recent transition from the lattice payroll system to Aurion, and to the ongoing dialog between the UFUQ and QFES.

The purpose of this correspondence is to formally notify you of a range of issues relating to employee pay and entitlements that have arisen over the last few weeks, with the introduction of Aurion.

Some of our concerns have already been raised with representatives from QFES, payroll and shared services, but we are not aware of any progress that has been made towards their resolution.

It has become clear to our members that the Aurion payroll system was designed for a workforce that predominately works Monday to Friday, and who spend most of their workday in front of a computer. Several of the issues we will raise with you relate to this apparent attempt to force QFES's operational, shift-working, emergency response workforce into a basic public service payroll system.

**1. Leave shown in 'days' on payslips**

The Aurion payroll system has affected the way that information is displayed on the payslips of all QFES staff.

The balances of sick leave, annual leave and long service leave are displayed in both "hours" and "days". The calculation of the number of leave "days" is based off a standard public servant workday of 8 hours.

The vast majority of firefighters, station officers and fire communications officers work according to a continuous shift roster, meaning that they will never work an '8-hour day'.

For firefighters and station officers, sick leave is deducted at a rate of 10 hours per shift. For firefighters and station officers on the rotating leave roster, annual leave is deducted in blocks of tours; it is never deducted per 'day'.

Fire communications officers have discretionary access to annual leave, but it is deducted per week, not per 'day'.

For all of these employees, the Aurion system publishes an incorrect record of their current leave entitlements.

We submit that the balances of annual leave, long service leave and sick leave, shown on the payslips of employees, should be set out in hours only. All reference to 'days' is incorrect and should be removed.

## **2. Leave shown in 'days' as default on self service**

QFES employees are able to view information relating to their pay, accrued entitlements and projected leave through an online self-service function.

The default display of the balance of annual leave, sick leave and long service leave is again shown in 'days', not 'hours'.

For the reasons outlined in section (1) above, we submit that all reference to 'days' needs to be removed from the self-service interface, as it is an incorrect and misleading representation of employee entitlements.

## **3. Year to date totals**

We also note that payslips issued to members so far, have 'year to date' totals for entitlements that only date back to the beginning of the Aurion system, instead of to 1 July 2019.

Although we acknowledge that this may be an unavoidable by-product of the transition to a new system, we maintain our concern that technically incorrect information about employee entitlements is being published to employees.

## **4. Premature debiting of leave**

It has come to our attention that the Aurion system manages employee leave in a manner consistent with day work public servants, and inconsistent with the normal processes for QFES operational staff.

Leave balances for annual, sick and long service leave are now debited at the point that the leave is approved, not at the point that the leave is used.

This means that an employee's leave, as it appears on their payslip and on their self-service page may be reduced many months before it ought to be. The 'leave balance' published on an employee's pay slip and self-service page is therefore incorrect.

Leave is an employee entitlement that accumulates in proportion to time worked. Such accrual is not depleted until the point in time when the employee is absent from work and receives their normal remuneration.

To debit an employee's leave balance prior to the employee accessing the leave is to reduce that entitlement, or to reduce the way the entitlement appears, prematurely.

This has already caused mass confusion in fire communications centres, where fire communications officers have noticed that the leave balance on their pay slip is a negative figure.

Once again, the pay slips that are being published by QFES contain false information relating to employee entitlements, in this case leave balances.

#### **5. Premature debiting of leave – self service**

The online self-service function also allows employees to see their “leave history” under a tab on the leave page.

Included in the “leave history” are not just periods of leave that have previously been taken, but also leave that is yet to be taken, but that has already been approved and debited.

The UFUQ objects to there being any upcoming leave listed under the tab entitled “leave history”. As set out above, leave is an employee entitlement that accrues in accordance with time worked. It should not be reduced, nor should it appear to be reduced, before it is accessed and paid accordingly.

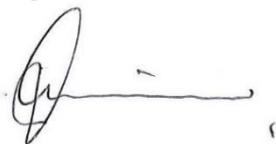
To list upcoming leave as “leave history” is a misrepresentation of employee entitlements relating to accrued leave.

We request that a working group, including decision makers from QFES, subject matter experts, and representatives of the UFUQ, is created and tasked with fixing the issues that have been raised in this correspondence. From our discussions with QSS, it appears that most, if not all, of the issues we have raised would be relatively simple to correct, but that clear direction from QFES is required.

We also request that the working group is tasked with managing the additional issues that we fully expect will arise as Aurion continues to be rolled out, that have not been raised explicitly by us in this correspondence.

The contact person for this matter is UFUQ industrial officer Ms Courtney Trevascus. She can be contacted by email at [courtneyt@ufuq.com.au](mailto:courtneyt@ufuq.com.au) or by phone on 07 3844 0366.

Regards



**John Oliver**  
**General Secretary**