



June 15, 2012

EB NEWSLETTER

5/2012

In This Issue

**Fire Calls Only to
commence in 47
days.**

Outcome of first EB meeting

The United Firefighters Union has met today, Friday 15 June 2012 with the QFRS to discuss your log of claims. At this meeting the QFRS outlined key elements of their bargaining claim. We are requesting that the QFRS provide the UFU with a clearer outline and improved detail of their claim.

Much of QFRS claim is instructed by the state government who have imposed a new bargaining policy which involves, amongst other things, the removal of some existing employee rights, a cost cutting agenda and a constrained wage growth offer.

The initial offer is disappointing as it shows that negotiations are likely to be difficult and currently members are better off staying with the current agreement.

Key points of the QFRS initial offer are:

Introduction of an aggregate wage

We have requested urgent further details of the proposal, but so far we understand the aggregation to be mostly about simplifying payroll and less about improved remuneration.

Introduction of technical rescue classifications.

Introduce a casual segment of the workforce.

Abolition of so called "restrictive provisions"

For example, abolition of consultation arrangements and obligations to consult with you and other members and abolition of "employment security" protections.

Adoption of "management prerogative" principle

Consolidation of the principle that management has an absolute right to make decisions without employee input or influence and redrafting of a new agreement to support that view.

Modification of the grievance procedure

Implementation of a new grievance and dispute resolution procedure which restricts the type of matters you can dispute about.





Contact us:

John Oliver
State Secretary

Ground Floor
286 Montague Road
West End QLD 4101

07 3844 0366

eb@ufuq.com.au

<http://www.ufuq.com.au>



Award amendments to reflect QFRS claims

In addition pursuing changes to the existing certified agreement, QFRS is demanding your consent to vary the underpinning award as well

Removal of "policy" matters from the agreement

Editing out any provisions of the agreement which QFRS believe should form part of the employer's policy as opposed to an enforceable employee entitlement.

A maximum of 2.7% overall increase to wages per annum conditional on your concession to QFRS claims

UFUQ Log of Claims

QFRS state that they have looked at UFUQ members' claims and believe they will be too expensive to consider. They also doubt that they will be able to agree to what the Union has put forward. We have asked for an urgent meeting to step through our claims in detail.

Auxiliaries

State Government representatives advised us at the meeting that government has not given any authority for QFRS to negotiate an agreement for Auxiliaries. UFUQ have written to QFRS asking that some improvements be made to the existing Standing Order as from 1 July 2012 (eg wage rates, pager allowance) and for agreement to commence negotiations no later than 1 September 2012.

Summary:

I believe that negotiations will be difficult as the state government is imposing a broad agenda of 'austerity measures, job cuts, and 'roll back' of employee rights provided under previous enterprise agreements. However, the negotiations have only just commenced and we need to persist in trying to win a fair package. It is unfortunate that an innovative proposal from QFRS such as an 'aggregate wage' has been infected with a low wage offer and a range of other ideological demands inflicted by the new government. I will closely examine the aggregate wage proposal when we get further detail, but given the current offer, I doubt that it will be good enough.

I am of the view that we are in a better position retaining our current agreement than we would be under the government offer. On that basis, I envisage a lot of hard bargaining to come, including you as members standing up for your existing rights as well as involving yourself to support improved conditions.

I counsel all members not to accept any proposal from QFRS unless it has been endorsed by the union. In these negotiations the devil will be most surely in the detail!

47 Days to go!

John Oliver
State Secretary

Authorised by John Oliver State Secretary United Firefighters Union of Australia Union of Employees Queensland