

## **QIRC REFERS QFRS ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT**

### **TO ARBITRATION**

As previously advised, QFRS have been urging QIRC to cease conciliating and refer our enterprise bargaining negotiations to arbitration. UFUQ have argued against arbitration occurring, as we believe that QFRS should negotiate further, and even if agreement could not be reached then we should stay on our current agreement.

QIRC released a Statement on 28 November 2012 referring the matters to arbitration.

In essence, QIRC found that even though UFUQ and QFRS have historically always reached agreement, the industrial relations environment such as existed during 1996-2009 when previous agreements were made has now changed. QIRC in effect stated that the new environment is one where the employer is much more proactive in advancing its agenda in light of "fiscal imperatives pursued by the government".

QIRC rejected your union's arguments that it was not automatic for all failed agreement negotiations to be referred to arbitration. QIRC in effect stated that if the tribunal has reached a view that it is not likely further conciliation will result in the matter being settled within a reasonable time frame, then arbitration must automatically follow.

QIRC has directed the parties to finalise lists of matters to be arbitrated by 7 December 2012 and has reconvened a further conference for 11 December 2012 to finalise matters before referring the agreement to a Full Bench for arbitration.

QIRC also noted that the Senior Officers' Union (SOU) had reached 'in principle' agreement with QFRS back in 30 July 2012 and have in effect been waiting for negotiations with other unions to conclude. On that basis, QIRC ordered a 1.7% increase for senior officers.

Your union is currently examining the full implications of the QIRC statement.

In the meantime, as I have stated previously, if we are to be now denied the opportunity to make an agreement with our employer, and be forced into an arbitration against our will, especially in changed circumstances, then all members will be required to participate in an escalating campaign of defending our rights and future!

**John Oliver**  
**State Secretary**