

Rural Fire Service November update

Your union and delegates continue working on a number of issues on behalf of members. Below is a brief update on the main issues currently affecting members.

Departmental Committee AGM

On Tuesday, 29 October 2019, the Departmental Committee (DC) met for the 2019 Annual General Meeting. The following positions were filled by your elected delegates:

- **DC Chairperson** Jim Killen
- **Deputy Chairperson** Kam Baker
- **DC Secretary** Ivan Perkins
- **Deputy Secretary** Bradley Stewart
- **DC Women's Contact Officer** Jillian Butler

A range of issues were discussed that are continuing to impact members:

- Award negotiations;
- Central Dispatch Dispute;
- Regional Services Restructure;
- Camping Allowance;
- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS);
- Operational Mitigation Support;
- Work Health & Safety; and
- Bullying & Harassment

Your elected delegates are:

Electorate	Delegate(s)
Metropolitan	Jim Killen Lindsey Flynn Benjamin Plummer Bruce Hansen
Hunter	Kam Baker
North Coast	Ivan Perkins Daniel Ainsworth
North West	Jillian Butler
Central West	Lee Cook
South West	Bradley Stewart
South East	Martin Webster Fiona Campbell

Major Incident Conditions

Members have been actively contributing towards the ongoing fires across northern NSW and Queensland since mid-August 2019. Some members have now contributed towards multiple commitments so far this season.

As such, it is an important time to remind all members of their entitlements under Major Incident Conditions of the RFS Award. On deployment, members are advised:

- To confirm what the working conditions are (e.g. Major Incident or normal conditions).
- To confirm shift pattern (e.g. 3-1 or 5-1).
- To confirm travel arrangements and when the 24-hour stand down period is expected to commence.



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- To gain managers permission and if time allows submit a Travel Request via SAP Concur (This facilitates payment of Incidentals Allowance. If time does not permit, a request for travel approval can be submitted on return).
- To record all work hours, including your travel to and from the incident.
- Shift times should be kept as closest to 12 hours as possible and include a reasonable time for handover. If you anticipate that you will exceed this, then you need to discuss with the IC and document the outcome.
- If the deployment is to your normal place of work (i.e. staff in their own district) your start and finish times are on arrival and departure of the workplace. For out of area staff, your start time is from departure of accommodation and finish is on arrival at accommodation.
- You must have a 10-hour break between shifts.
- The RFS will compensate staff members for additional dependent care expenses relating to time worked during the incident. This must be discussed and documented with the IC for approval as soon as practical.
- Additional hours worked under Major Incident Conditions are not to be compensated by Local Arrangements.

RFS Base Camp Industrial Dispute

The PSA believe in fighting strongly for all employees' entitlements, and as such the PSA and RFS met last week to discuss issues relating to RFS Base Camps. The PSA's concerns are two-fold:

- RFS Employees are being accommodated in Base Camps, while motel accommodation is available. The PSA believes that all paid staff are entitled to be accommodated in motels while undertaking official duties away from their principle place of work, provided motel accommodation is available and practical.
- RFS Employees when accommodated in Base Camps are not being paid the camping allowance provided under the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award and Crown Employees (Rural Fire Service) Award. There are two camping allowance rates, non-established camp rate and established camp rate, neither of which are currently being paid. The PSA believes the higher non-established camp rate (\$44.15 per day) is payable to RFS employees staying in RFS Base Camps.

Unfortunately, the PSA and RFS were unable to resolve these concerns, and the matter was referred to the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) as an Industrial Dispute.



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Yesterday the PSA and RFS attended a conciliation in the IRC, but again the issues in dispute were not resolved. As a result, the dispute is currently proceeding to a final hearing.

The PSA and the RFS will continue to meet to discuss the dispute and hopefully resolve the matter.

The PSA is acting upon the interests of its members and accordingly we encourage members to contact their delegate or PSA industrial staff to share their views of the dispute.

The PSA encourages all members to keep records of every instance they are accommodated in an RFS Base Camp.

Your PSA Delegates

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