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28 September 2017

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ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT UPDATE

The UFU State Council and Shop Stewards met again today to hear a report on the progress of negotiations for our next Enterprise Agreement (EA).

The UFU is pleased to report that following our meeting with the Premier on 7 September 2017, appropriate arrangements have been put in place to ensure that injured firefighters will continue to receive income maintenance past the two-year anniversary of their injury and medical costs past the three-year anniversary of their injury, without interruption.

This exemption will ultimately be formalised in an agreement between the union and the government however in the meantime the arrangements just approved by Cabinet, to be administered by SAFECOM, provide those members affected and their families, great peace of mind.

Progress on the remaining EA issues has not been as positive, in part due to the Cabinet reshuffle which saw our then Minister Peter Malinauskas moved to the Health portfolio, and a new Minister Chris Picton gaining the portfolio of Police and Emergency Services.

Subsequently the Office for the Public Sector developed a proposal which set back the negotiations considerably and it seemed likely we would need to be commencing our industrial campaign this week.

The intervention last night however, by the new Minister and the Premier, has brought an undertaking that a renewed offer will shortly be made to the Union by the Government which hopefully has the potential to resolve our differences.

The meeting today of UFU State Councillors and Shop Stewards having heard a detailed report of those discussions resolved the following:

“This meeting expresses our deep concern at the failure of the Government to make a satisfactory offer to date however having heard a report from the Secretary, we agree to an extension of time to allow for a renewed offer and any negotiations to continue until Monday, 9 October 2017.”

While this represents a further short delay, the meeting noted that at no point in the negotiations have we taken a step back, rather we have made real gains at every stage.

I thank you all for your ongoing patience and solidarity and I assure you that your union is committed to fighting for the best outcome for firefighters; in the absence of achieving a reasonable offer through the negotiations, we will not hesitate to call on our campaign.

Greg Northcott
UFU Secretary