



WORD BACK

No. 17/2017
13 November 2017

A B C D Day Retained

ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT OFFER

As previously advised, a renewed offer for our new Enterprise Agreement (EA) was received from the government on 20 October 2017.

The joint meeting of UFU Shop Stewards and State Councillors held that day overwhelmingly resolved that:

This meeting of UFU Shop Stewards and State Councillors, having heard a report on the renewed EA offer, expresses our support for the offer, and endorses the union recommending this offer to the membership for acceptance.

We note the detailed nature of the offer and recommend that a series of meetings be conducted by the UFU to communicate effectively with the membership, prior to the Agreement going to ballot.

The offer was distributed throughout the SAMFS by email, followed by an extensive program of meetings of all shifts at as many stations as possible, commencing on 25 October to 20 November 2017, in order that the offer could be explained in detail and discussed by the membership.

Some components of the offer which have required further clarification with the SAMFS in relation to how they are planned to operate, or which appear to have created some confusion, are set out below.

Please note these are selected items and any queries about the many other aspects of the offer should be directed to the UFU office on 8352 7211.

Senior Firefighter Qualified

For example, the introduction of the new increment level of Senior Firefighter Qualified has attracted a high level of interest but has been subject to some misinformation.

To clarify the offer, it is proposed to introduce a new level II increment for the SFF classification, on the basis that a Senior Firefighter appointed to this level meets all Staff Development Framework requirements, maintains their skills to work at level II and is prepared to “act up” to Station Officer when required.

Where a SFFQ acts up to the position of Station Officer higher duties remain applicable for that period, or are applicable for the whole of the day or shift where the duties extend beyond 4 hours.

This new increment provides a progression for Senior Firefighters (across all areas of the Service) which has been the only rank without incremental progression under the current Enterprise Agreement.

Skills maintenance will be demonstrated by acting up and/or by demonstrating skills and being signed off by the Station Officer where “acting up” opportunities are not available.

The new *salary* (not an allowance) of \$1883.98 per week for the position of Senior Firefighter Qualified is the midpoint between the current SFF and SO weekly pay rates representing a 6.4% pay increase for those SFFs able and wishing to move to this level and this will be recognised as salary for superannuation purposes.

If the offer is accepted at ballot by the majority of those voting, the new salary will apply to those eligible, from the date of certification of the Enterprise Agreement in the SA Employment Tribunal. We hope to achieve certification before Christmas.

There will be no cap on the numbers of SFFQs in order to encourage and promote skills acquisition within the SAMFS.

The SAMFS has also proposed that training for SFFQ position will now be in paid time and where this cannot be organised due to operational requirements, time off in lieu will be provided which has equal status with PHL's.

The SAMFS has advised that they wish to discuss the number of “act ups” with particular reference to specialist appliances; the UFU will participate in such a discussion, ensuring the number of promotions to the Station Officer rank will be at the forefront of considerations.

Retained Firefighters

Improved Retained Firefighter provisions in the offer include:

- an increase in the annual retainer to \$2000 per annum (currently \$1200 per annum)
- realigning retained classifications with full-time firefighter classifications;
- increasing the minimum call out to 3 hours (from 2);
- increasing annual leave to 15 hours per annum;
- the introduction of cumulative sick leave; and
- increasing specialised training time.

The details of the increase to the minimum call out have been the subject of ongoing discussions with the SAMFS and the Office for the Public Service and the offer has now been further clarified as follows:

A minimum 3 hours call out payment at the universal hourly rate payable for attendance at an incident or incidents, will be applicable.

The offer now clarifies that if an employee has a subsequent call during the initial 3 hours paid period, no additional payment will be made until the time worked exceeds 3 hours and then employees will be paid in 15-minute blocks until the work is concluded.

The UFU sought a more generous approach to multiple incidents without success at this time, however the offer now includes a provision that the employee is not required to work the full minimum 3 hours if the work the employee was recalled to perform is completed within a shorter period.

In addition, an employee is now formally entitled to a minimum payment of 15 minutes for the purpose of cleaning up and putting away his/her uniform.

Some members employed as Retained Firefighters have expressed concern about the potential introduction of rosters in some regions.

It should be noted that rosters are already an employment condition of Retained Firefighters within the current Enterprise Agreement and are *not* proposed as a component of this offer.

Work Injuries

The interim scheme providing exemption from cut off provisions to income maintenance and medical costs, to firefighters injured at work has been introduced as indicated in previous Word Backs.

Progress has been made in developing provisions to be inserted into our Award for the longer term and members will be kept updated regarding an application by consent to vary the Award.

Ballot

It is anticipated that an electronic ballot on the EA offer, will commence on 22 November, closing on 29 November 2017. You will be able to vote by SMS, online and by telephone, supported by a 24-hour helpline. Details will be circulated soon.

Prior to this, a draft of the proposed EA will be made available for your perusal.

We are currently working on this with the SAMFS and the OPS in order that the SAMFS can distribute it at the earliest possible time.

The UFU State Council believes that as a total package, the offer contains initiatives to address many of the concerns of members working in the SAMFS in relation to work injuries, training, resourcing, and the safety, health and well-being of firefighters, providing the opportunity to build a better future together.

We urge you to have a look at the full terms of the offer, to give it your full and positive consideration, and to participate in the ballot.

In the meantime, if you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me or Industrial Officer Max Adlam at the UFU office on 8352 7211.

Greg Northcott
UFU Secretary