



WORDBACK

No.03/2019
31 January 2019

A B C D Day Retained

SHOP STEWARDS' MEETING COMING UP

Just a reminder that the next UFU WHS/Shop Stewards meeting is scheduled for 10:00 hours on Friday, 22 February 2019 at the UFU office, 148 South Road Torrensville. UFU State Councillors are also invited to attend this meeting.

It will be a busy meeting as the agenda is quite extensive with issues such as the PFAS update, reports on Firefighter Health and Well-Being (including on a fire ground), Senior Firefighter training and development, acting up as a Station Officer, acting up on specialist appliances, report from the working party on a fair and consistent system of recalls and overtime, the next mid-term pay increase, wet weather gear, OTR and relievers, marine review, new Noarlunga Station, etc.

Please speak to your Shop Steward if you have other issues you would like placed on the agenda or if you have questions or views on any of the above. You can also direct these matters to the union office by emailing info@ufusa.com.au.

If you are unsure who your WHS/Shop Steward is, please do give us a call on 8352 7211.

SENIOR FIREFIGHTER LEVEL 2 QUALIFIED

State Council met on 29 January 2019 to have an off-line discussion about the progress of the SF level II working party, and the range of issues of concern being raised by members. A full report of the considerations and concerns being addressed will be produced and distributed by Word Back shortly.

HEATWAVE CONDITIONS

It's been a really hot summer with record temperatures and of course it isn't over yet by a long stretch.

The attention of members is directed to SAP 18 and work health and safety regulations in relation to working in extreme weather conditions.



I am concerned to be receiving reports that members are being required to train and drill on days when the forecast maximum is well in excess of 32°C. This is of great concern as, while the new PPC is a superior product for the protection of firefighters, it is much hotter to wear, so a heightened awareness of weather conditions and the exercise of common sense is absolutely essential.

Members generally appear to be well aware of the need for maintaining hydration during periods of duty and especially so during hot weather. The SAP states that in hot weather "...at least 500 ml of water per hour is required to ensure a hydrated condition prior to commencing any strenuous activity. An additional 1 litre per hour is necessary during and immediately after any strenuous activity."

And yet the UFU has received reports that firefighters are not necessarily provided with cold drinking water at this level, even in a heat wave. Thank you to those officers who are diligent about this matter and we hope that the MFS will take steps to reinforce the importance of hydration and freely provide bottled water for everyone out on the road.

Crews tell me they are also lucky if they have an appliance with a fridge or even an esky. Some are even asked on occasion to accept an appliance without operative air-conditioning...

If you should find yourself in circumstances where you are having any difficulty in relation to the above issues, please do not hesitate to let us know – you can contact your Shop Steward, your State Councillor or the UFU office on 8352 7211.

MEAL ALLOWANCES FOR ABSENCE OF MESS ROOM

Members at St Marys and O'Halloran Hill Stations must be weary indeed of the waiting for meal allowances promised last July for the periods in which they were deprived of a mess room back then. Most recently, yet another management commitment for payment to some members of the allowances was not delivered. The union office spoke to management on 30 January 2019 and we were advised that the pay run was missed but the payments will definitely be in the next pay. We appreciate advice from members about the fulfilment or otherwise of this undertaking.

PFAS REPORT

The UFU State Council is united in our concern about the PFAS issue and the absence of effective consultation and decision-making in recent times by the MFS. This has been communicated to the Chief Officer together with a request for further and more timely information and consultation.

Information in relation to the details of the testing of stations and appliances has been sought together with a more robust system of feedback to members about test results.

We have also sought that no action to move staff from the police training academy occurs until the union is satisfied in the responses to the questions raised about the testing regime at Largs North and the site is declared to be both decontaminated and safe from re contamination.

We continue to urge all UFU members and retired members to participate in the PFAS Testing Programme even if you do not believe you have had exposure to the firefighting foam in the past. Some members who have returned high results have never used the PFAS firefighting foam.

You can get the referral documents for the blood test from the MFS through Clara Cipriani 0436 406 905 or by email Clara.Cipriani@sa.gov.au or Steve Pavlich on 0419 806 295 or by email steve.pavlich@sa.gov.au

If you have any difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact the UFU office on 8352 7211 for assistance.

Members in country areas are advised that you *are* able to have blood taken for testing at a number of regional locations, rather than have to come to Adelaide – please email steve.pavlich@sa.gov.au to make the necessary arrangements and obtain the written referral.

Once you have your test results it would be appreciated if you would complete the UFU survey so that we can continue to look for any other clusters of high results and take appropriate action. All information will be kept confidential.

In solidarity

**Max Adlam
UFU Secretary**