



# SIGNAL SEVEN

August 5 2019

## First Aid Training setback

We appeared in the Fair Work Commission on two occasions earlier this year. On the first occasion, nobody from the ACT Government showed up until they were chased down by the Associate to the Deputy President of the FWC.

On the second occasion it was agreed that we would have input to the request for quote for delivery of training being proposed by the ACT Government. We expected to receive a draft, and when it wasn't received, we had our lawyers follow the matter up. The response we received was that the Government was expecting us to put forward some wording, and when we didn't they proceeded to advertise, using wording that we had not seen.

What we had been seeking was an improvement to the training so that it would:

- Be delivered over 4 days face to face;
- Include the units in HLTAID006 Advanced First Aid, HLTAID007 Provide Advanced Resuscitation and a further unit on "dealing with patients and bystanders in an emergency setting".

What the ESA has received back from a market process that didn't involve us was that the training would include an additional unit like the one we sought, but the training would be jammed into 2 days. We will pursue our concerns through the enterprise bargaining process.

## COMCEN Human Resources Consultants engaged

Without any prior notice to the UFU, and despite the extensive work undertaken by UFU members through the Workplace Consultative Committee and working group, the ESA has engaged consultants to observe work in Comcen commencing from tomorrow August 6. This information was provided to us by UFU members today.

The UFU has today written to the Acting ESA Commissioner, setting out our concerns about this development. That correspondence includes the following statement:

*"The engagement of consultants in this capacity is not a matter we take lightly and given an opportunity to be informed and to express an opinion, it might well be that we agree with and welcome the initiative. We request a full briefing on what is proposed, and how it relates to the Comcen project: at first glance it appears to be the kind of matter that should have been progressed through the Workplace Consultative Committee."*

**Members are advised that until such time as the disputes procedure is followed, they are under no obligation to cooperate with external consultants in this matter.**

## **MOU with AFP Signed**

In April 2018, the UFU raised our concerns about the Memorandum of Understanding between the ESA and Australian Federal Police concerning rescue responsibilities. Among our concerns were the apparent conflict between the MOU and the legislated responsibilities under the Emergencies Act. We were told at the time:

“It is correct that we have been working with ACT Policing to update the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in relation to rescue services in the ACT. The current MOU dated 12 August 2010 is now quite old now and well past its intended review date. These discussions are ongoing and no changes to the current arrangements have been discussed to date.”

We now understand that the MOU has been renewed with some changes, none of which seem to have any bearing on the issues we identified in 2018.

## **Room for Improvement**

The 3 examples above suggest that we have a long way to go in improving how the ESA addresses the legitimate concerns of firefighters. Unless we are constantly asking direct questions, reading advertisements in papers and liaising with our colleagues in the AFPA, it seems that we cannot expect to keep up with developments in the ESA that directly affect our members and in turn community safety.

The appointment of the Acting ESA Commissioner represented an opportunity to improve how the ESA deals with us, and the UFU went as far as granting an exemption to the bans in place to allow the Acting ESA Commissioner the opportunity to meet our members and discuss their concerns face to face. Unfortunately, the Acting Commissioner suffered an injury that meant that she couldn't conduct the station visits as planned. While we wish her a speedy recovery, significant issues remain between our organisations.

## **UFU General Meeting**

A full report on Enterprise Bargaining progress will be provided at a UFU General Meeting to be held as follows:

**Date:** Thursday 8 August (C Platoon nightshift)  
**Venue:** Malvern Star and Speedwell Rooms  
Dickson Tradies  
Ground Floor, 2 Badham Street, Dickson  
**Time:** 18.30 hrs SHARP

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss enterprise bargaining, industrial action and related activities.

**Authorised by Greg McConville, Secretary, UFU, A.C.T. Branch.**  
**This is an official Union document to be shared between members only**  
**Read out at muster and pin on notice boards.**