



BULLETIN

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TO ALL UFUA MEMBERS

UFUA ELECTION RESULTS

The UFUA National Committee of Management on June 17 accepted the election report from the Returning Officer of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) which makes official the election of Greg McConville as National Secretary and Leigh Hills as National President.

In accepting the office, incoming UFUA National President Greg McConville paid tribute to outgoing National Secretary Peter Marshall who chose to focus on his branch responsibilities in Victoria.

“Peter has made a remarkable contribution to the welfare and safety of both firefighters and the community for over 20 years as National Secretary.

“He has been a powerful and effective advocate for protecting the health of firefighters against cancer and toxic substances such as PFAS.

“During his time, Australia was the very first country in the world to have presumptive legislation for firefighter cancer introduced in every state and territory.

“His advocacy has seen massive improvements and advances in personal protective and safety equipment for firefighters and Peter has been a powerful proponent for the banning of PFAS in Australia and internationally, including appropriate management of the environmental and health impacts of its contamination.

“While Peter will remain Secretary of the UFU Victorian Branch I thank him for his incredible service to our National Union and wish him all the very best for the future.”

Mr McConville said it would be a great honour to lead this proud union.

“The United Firefighters Union of Australia has an incredibly strong record and proud history of standing up for the best interests of its members and the broader community.

“It is a great honour to take the reins of this organisation and to continue serving members who make such an incredible contribution to their communities - Australia’s firefighters.

Mr McConville said that his focus would be the three key areas of **communication**, **governance** and **advocacy**, which were of critical importance to both firefighters and the community more broadly.

“From day one our focus will be on collegiate and direct contact with firefighters right across Australia on the issues that matter most to them.

“We’ll also be focused on further consolidation of our union’s governance.

“In the short term this will include ongoing direct engagement with UFU members in Queensland as the administrator oversees new elections for its Branch Committee of Management pursuant to the Federal Court order of 24 February 2022.

“Critically, we’ll also continue advocating for greater protections for firefighters from cancer, urging strong action on climate change and contributing to the national debate on disaster preparedness.

“While so much has already been achieved in relation to firefighter cancer thanks to the efforts of outgoing National Secretary Peter Marshall and the UFUA, the sobering fact remains that the incidence of cancer amongst firefighters continues to rise.

“I thank all UFUA members for their support and faith in me and look forward for serving them into the future.”

Incoming UFUA President Leigh Hills said it was a great honour to be elected to the position.

“I’m incredibly honoured to have been elected to serve the firefighters within our industry at a national level.

“I look forward to working hand in hand with incoming National Secretary Greg McConville to ensure that political, health and social outcomes are achieved for our members.

“I will also be strongly focused on ensuring that community safety remains at the very forefront of mind for the nation’s fire chiefs and political leadership.

“The UFU’s state and territory branches are a key aspect of our national union and I look forward to working closely with them to provide any support they require to achieve their local outcomes for members and their communities.”

Representing the ACT and Tasmania respectively, McConville and Hills said that it was symbolic that the smallest states were combining to lead the national union for the very first time.

“The election of Greg and myself to the leadership of the UFUA sends the message that our union represents all career firefighters across Australia, from the largest cities to the smallest towns and regions” Leigh Hills concluded.

About UFUA National Secretary – Greg McConville

Greg McConville has been Secretary of the United Firefighters Union – ACT Branch since 2015 and has served as National President of the UFUA since 2019. He also has extensive experience in industrial relations and community organisations.

Greg and the UFU ACT team were successful in conducting campaigns and bargaining which secured additional firefighters and firefighting appliances for the ACT. Among the achievements were a 29% increase in firefighters over 4 years: the largest expansion in the ACT fire brigade since its inception. New fire stations, additional appliances, and a comprehensive health and well-being initiative were also agreed.

About UFUA National President – Leigh Hills

Leigh Hills has been the Secretary of the United Firefighters Union – Tasmanian Branch since January 2018. Under his leadership the branch has secured several impressive achievements, including delivering the first presumptive state legislation for firefighter cancer and PTSD.

Prior to his time with the UFU, Leigh worked across a range of industries as an organiser with the union now known as the United Workers Union and was previously also President of the Textiles Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia – Tasmanian Branch.

Authorised by National Secretary Greg McConville