



SIGNAL SEVEN

29 June 2023

Fire and Rescue: The Future of ComCen

The ComCen Workplace Consultative Committee (WCC) held on 27 June 2023 unanimously passed a motion that the WCC note the post transition review is finalised on the basis the matters set out in clause S7.12 of the enterprise agreement have not been satisfied. In consequence of that decision:

- Minimum crewing for ComCen will be a Station Officer + 3 Firefighters as mandated by Schedule 1 of the Agreement, with ECOs being supernumerary, commencing 3 July 2023
- Minimum numbers described in S7.5 will be maintained by implementing a minimum of 32 available ComCen operators;

("Available" excluded long term leave (>6 Months) workers comp, absence, and secondments)

The second point above is quite important to the sustainability of ACTF&R Command. The focus on "available ComCen operators" will increase the size of the pool of members sharing the load in ComCen, and once achieved it will enable members to rotate in and out of the role as intended. In turn, this should help to make ComCen a more attractive qualification and help prevent "burnout".

The WCC meeting then moved on to commence discussion on the future of ComCen. The Terms of reference of the WCC will be redrafted to put the post transition review behind us and focus on the future application of the enterprise agreement. This will be a broad ranging discussion.

A [Staff Minute](#) on the subject was issued yesterday. The ESA Commissioner also distributed an [all-staff email](#). An important acknowledgement missing from those pieces of correspondence is the role of the many UFU members who fought hard to get this important strategic outcome. Among those were many of those who shared a retirement function on Friday last, and the acknowledgement of those members at the function was well received.

The BCOM discussed this matter at its meeting yesterday, and identified the need to commence an open dialogue within the membership focussing on the future.

In the short term, we strongly encourage members to express interest in upcoming ComCen training courses.

Members are asked to share their thoughts and ideas around the following issues:

- What should be the future crewing of ComCen: the next enterprise agreement isn't far away and we need to determine our approach. One or two Station Officers? How many firefighters? What role should Commanders play?
- How many trained operators and supervisors do we need to make crewing sustainable?

- What should be the role of Command in staffing and HR issues, noting the difficulties with Chris-HR21 and Kronos pay systems?
- What is required to maintain Command operations during IT systemic failures?
- Should there be, at all ranks, a skills component based on at least some familiarity with ComCen? This could be a pathway for members to try ComCen without having to commit to the full ComCen Operator course, while also helping them to understand how ComCen can help them in their role at incidents. (Somewhat like a stage 1 and stage 2 approach.)
- What physical needs are there for the room? Workstations, recline facilities, amenities etc? How are these best achieved, noting that the lease term on ESA HQ is due to expire in mid-June 2025?

These are important considerations for the future of ACTF&R Command, and UFU members need to drive this conversation. In the short term: please talk among your colleagues, and feel free to discuss with our WCC reps Bill McTernan, Jake Cannon and Jeff Dau (Sandy Fisk is soon retiring and we will need a replacement for him).

If you have the time to commit your ideas to paper, please email us at admin@ufuact.asn.au with the subject line "ACTF&R Command future".

 To Update your details, please email admin@ufuact.asn.au
 National Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/UFUAnational>
 National Website: <https://www.ufua.asn.au/>
 ACT Branch Website: <http://ufuact.asn.au/>
 ACT Branch Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/UFUACT/>

Strength in Unity

Authorised by Greg McConville, Secretary, UFU, A.C.T. Branch.