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UFUSA RESOURCING CAMPAIGN UPDATE

More Smoke and Mirrors from the Marshall Government

UFUSA members overwhelmingly resolved to pursue negotiations for the resourcing of MFS appliances, equipment, training and support for firefighters to do our job of protecting our community as safely as possible.

That firm resolve of members has been reinforced by your responses to surveys conducted, the overwhelming endorsement of the EA log of claims by the UFUSA membership, the successive Shop Stewards and State Council meetings, Station meetings and now the 2020 Annual General Meeting.



Yesterday the UFUSA AGM unanimously resolved upon endorsement of the Resourcing Campaign and called upon the Marshall government to engage with the union on the important issue of resourcing of the MFS.

As previously reported, for over a year now at every negotiation meeting the employer has stated that they will *not* discuss the issue of resourcing. In this and in other matters the employer is in breach of the Enterprise Agreement (EA) provisions 76A of the *Fair Work Act*.

What they *are* clearly interested in is more cuts in the MFS. Cuts to travel allowances, cuts to meal allowances, cuts to staffing, and eliminating the single bargaining centre (SBC) because they don't like the outcomes we have achieved there (like the July 2019 2% pay increase).

All the while, the government is publicly announcing and re-announcing funding in areas such as the replacement of helmets and BA, gear which is at the end of

its natural life. Surely the renewal of such essential life-saving equipment is a part of running a professional fire and rescue service? *Smoke and mirrors*.

UFUSA members are seeking the implementation of a professional asset management plan for appliances, equipment and PPC so that we can get on with the job rather than watch anxiously each year as MFS management put in budget bids and hope for the best.

Firefighters are glad to see any additional funding to help protect the community, but even with the Chief Officer bringing forward funding four years ahead, the MFS is still not even close to meeting the current needs identified.

Which is why resourcing is still being red flagged in MFS reports. The downward spiral of the ageing fleet, inadequate staffing in the Engineering Department, a shortfall for training and equipment, will continue, with no mention of what happens 4 years hence, when the budget funding is already spent.

The MFS Chief Officer has told us that *only* appliances with burn overprotection systems (BOPS) will be deployed as strike teams but we don't have a response on what system is being put in place to ensure this actually occurs. Concerningly we hear today that multiple appliances, reportedly Appliance 201, 301, 359 and 369, which do not have BOPS, have been so deployed.

Meanwhile the lack of available appliances has a range of consequences such as delays in fitting BOPS, with a range of stations being told their appliance certainly won't have it this season, stations which were deployed last season to Cudlee Creek fires.

The wet weather gear which management said we didn't need, but which our union fought for and won a commitment to 3 years ago, has finally arrived! If the situation wasn't so serious, it would be funny.

It's hard to see much levity in smoke and mirrors though when it comes to resourcing an essential service, and certainly not in the fake news being put about at station meetings by senior managers who should know better.

The employer and indeed the Minister have been clearly advised that the UFUSA is in dispute in relation to the enterprise agreement. They know that and they know why.

Their smoke and mirrors reflect upon them poorly.

In solidarity

Max Adlam

Secretary