



IN BRIEF



Military bases dispute

Transfield is targeting firefighter jobs at three military bases in Victoria. Listen to Brett Baulman, Acting UFUA National Executive Officer, discuss the background to the dispute.

Firefighters on the web

The Firefighter Union websites are the place to find out the latest firefighter industrial news and information around Australia. Jump on the web and check in regularly.

www.ufua.asn.au



Your rights at work

The federal election is not far away. Visit the Your Rights at Work website to find out how you can help counter the Howard Government's damaging industrial relations policy.

www.rightsatwork.com.au

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THERE ARE MANY GAPS IN THE HOWARD GOVERNMENT'S DEFENCE SPEND STRATEGY

Vic bases dispute

Transfield digs in over firefighter redundancies at Victorian defence bases as the dispute goes to the Commission

A dispute over redundancies at three key military bases in Victoria will go to a full hearing of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, after negotiations with the company that contracts fire services to the Department of Defence stalled.

Earlier this year, Transfield secured its second contract for the Cerberus, East Sale and Puckapunyal bases, then told the union it wanted to cut twelve firefighter jobs.

The company says their new contract, called T2, forces them to target firefighters.

"Twelve positions means a twenty per cent cut in firefighter positions at these bases," says Brett Baulman, UFUA National Executive Officer. "Our concerns are not only the job security of our members, but also fireground safety and their ability to perform their job."

At first, Transfield offered voluntary redundancies and transfers, but then came the threat of sackings if their job cuts target could not be achieved.

"We're concerned that the Department of Defence is giving companies like Transfield the ability to set their own staffing levels without any

minimum requirements," says Brett Baulman.

For the moment all positions have been retained, but remain under threat, pending the outcome of the September 6 Commission hearing.

TENDERS MEANS CUTS

Cost cutting is the order of the day under the Defence Department's outsourcing and tendering regime.

"The tender process doesn't put in place minimum staffing levels," says Brett Baulman. "It allows the company work out what they believe is an appropriate staffing matrix - and put that in place."

The Howard Government's policy of contracting-out is to blame, says Brett. "We're concerned about the flow-on effect to not only Transfield contracts in SA and WA, but also other private sector operators in the industry."