



## IN BRIEF



### No backing off

“State governments may want to play tough over wages and conditions but firefighters will not give up,” says UFWA National Secretary Peter Marshall. “It’s high time the real value of firefighters’ work was recognised.”



### Wage offer’s cruel conditions

In January, the NSW Union Branch was told that a pay offer above the State Government imposed 2.5 per cent p.a. limit would require: taking stations off line, changes to water tanker staffing and entitlements for stand-by retained members, consolidated leave / annual leave, and reductions to relieving allowances and training program durations.

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FIREFIGHTERS FACE A TOUGH BATTLE FOR A FAIR OUTCOME

## EB battle zone

Firefighters in three states are furious as state governments and fire authorities demand unfair trade-offs to settle wage claims

**B**argaining rounds in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania have taken a serious turn, as state governments hold out on settling outstanding wage and entitlements claims. “It’s a sad day when Labor governments in three states oppose the reasonable and just outcomes for firefighters,” says UFWA National Secretary Peter Marshall. “Our members have been very patient through longwinded negotiations - but that patience is now wearing very thin.” Last week, 500 NSW Union members stopped work to voice their objection to

conditions demanded by the Department in return for four per cent by three year pay deal. They were supported by 500 on-duty colleagues who faxed the NSW Branch office with their opposition to the employer’s hardline. The depth of feeling among members generated a fax stream that crashed the Union’s fax system. The NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) has now imposed a six month interim Award with a 2.5 per cent wage increase. The NSW Branch will now pursue a full claim in the IRC.

## TROUBLE IN TAS AND QLD

The Tasmanian Government is refusing to talk to the Union about the long standing superannuation dispute and a new bargaining agreement. Last week, members turned the heat up by imposing six new bans on top of earlier work limitations imposed in January. In Queensland, firefighters are angry that, despite a detailed job evaluation showing firefighters and station officers to be well under paid, the Government still won’t agree to an increase in the firefighter base pay rate. The Union has placed a full page newspaper advertisement outlining the case for firefighters. “It’s disgraceful that it’s come to this,” says Peter Marshall. “Our members are looking for a reasonable outcome and would prefer to negotiation to settle these outstanding claims.”