



## IN BRIEF



### Three up

MFB management have a 'back to the future' approach for EB 2009. They want Commanders / District Officers in one agreement, firefighters up to Senior Station Officers in another, and a third for the 11 ACFOs. "Management wants to step back to the early '90s with this proposal," says Peter Marshall. "It shows how unprepared they are for the 21st century industrial environment."



### Why three?

The UFU believes MFB management's three separate agreements strategy is designed to break down bargaining power, remove transparent career paths and reduce conditions of employment. "It's about divide and rule by isolating Members," says Peter Marshall.



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For MFB firefighters, the message is as clear as ever pic: rob psaila

## Time warp

MFB management want to wind the clock back to the last century for EB 2009

With EB 2009 talks underway, MFB management has told the Union it wants multiple firefighter agreements and productivity trade-offs. "They want to go back to what we had in 1993," says UFU Victorian Branch Secretary Peter Marshall. "But we say one agreement should cover all ranks — and any new work or additional duties must be rewarded with an allowance or productivity payment."

When the Brumby Government cut its base increase for public sector workers from 3.25% to 2.25%, MFB management refused to sign a 'heads-of-agreement' that could have

locked-in the higher minimum in a new agreement. "Because of this intransigence, we're now facing tougher negotiating parameters," says Peter. "But regardless of obstacles the Premier and MFB put in our way, we will campaign vigorously and bargain in good faith for an agreement that protects Members' current conditions and wins improvements in entitlements and wages."

The UFU has put a separate productivity claim to the MFB. "We are doing this to ensure all Members are appropriately rewarded for increased productivity in the workplace," says Peter Marshall.

### DIVISION CALLED

MFB management has upped the ante in this round of EBA negotiations by turning its back on the 'agreement harmonisation' joint initiative with the UFU. "It makes sense, would cut admin costs and definitely streamline bureaucracy to have all our firefighter classifications – from Recruit Firefighter up to ACFO – included in a single document," says Peter Marshall. "However, MFB management

torpedoed this when they reneged on the ACFO agreement last year. We had reached agreement, but then management scuttled it while the state government just stood by and watched." Despite the UFU submitting one document covering all ranks for the current EB 2009 negotiations, MFB management says it wants to negotiate three separate agreements.