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**National President**  
Greg Northcott



**National Secretary**  
Peter Marshall

## From the National Secretary

### ***“Character is doing the right thing when no one else is looking”***



A. MICHAEL MULLANE

National Secretary Peter Marshall

#### **It has already been a long hot and dangerous fire season and firefighters continue to battle the blazes for weeks on end without seeking recognition or fanfare.**

Predictions of a long, hot and deadly fire season have sadly come to fruition. Many states are experiencing hotter and more frequent heatwaves, earlier and longer fire seasons, and more high fire danger index days.

Fire services and firefighters have been stretched battling blazes in Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania in particular.

Four people perished in the catastrophic fires in Esperance, Western Australia, in November 2015. In the same month two people perished and about 90 others were treated for injuries and medical conditions resulting from fires north of Adelaide.

In January this year 121 homes were lost in Yarloop, south of Perth, while 116 houses were destroyed in Victoria's Wye River and Separation Creek bushfires.

There are the tens of thousands of hectares of burnt bush, farmland and forestry left in the wake of the bushfires with devastating implications for wildlife, farmers and local economies.

This summer Tasmanian firefighters were battling a series of out-of-control blazes, calling in assistance from other States while Geelong, Victoria, was cleaning up after an extreme weather event described as a 100-year flood causing millions of dollars of damage.

Firefighters have willingly been deployed to assist in neighbouring states after battling the blazes in their home states and in doing so forfeited a family Christmas or cherished family time.

There is now a series of investigations in place – and calls from the public and the UFU for independent and robust investigations.

It is important that any inquiry is independent and charged with understanding the origins and management of the devastating fires.

Families of the deceased and the many who have lost their homes and in some cases livelihoods, all deserve to know what happened.

It is vitally important for and community and firefighter safety that the true events are recorded and analysed in order to take the appropriate action to reduce the risk of repeated loss.

We are extremely proud of the Australian firefighting family and its efforts this fire season.

Australian firefighters always work hard and adapt to the ever-changing needs of our communities and the environment. Firefighters willingly put their quality, and in some cases quantity, of life at risk when protecting the community.

Major issues confronting firefighters and their families are the recent politicised claims of lack of diversity in firefighting, and the very real impact of Post Traumatic Stress and mental health issues for firefighters.

The diversity issue has ironically resulted in claims of discrimination being used to discriminate. Firefighters - including women firefighters - have publicly recorded their disgust for the singling out of women firefighters solely for political point-scoring.

Diversity is welcomed and supported - using the issue to lower selection and training standards is strongly opposed.

Diversity is broader than gender-politics. Everyone regardless of gender/race/social-economic status is encouraged to compete for selection onto the highly coveted places on professional firefighter recruit courses.

But there is no excuse for lowering of standards – and no excuse for using diversity arguments as a basis for doing so.

Don't sacrifice public safety for political correctness.

The misuse of diversity goals has arisen in recent times with ACT Fire and Rescue declaring 50% of the next recruit course would be women, the merit-order selection process system attacked in Queensland and the MFB in Victoria attempting to downgrade assessment pass marks from 50 to 45, removing the merit-order process, removing the mechanical testing assessment and ironically removing the three strikes rule which was initiated to assist with diversity.

Quota systems are also being introduced by various State Police forces.

The misuse of the diversity card is divisive and destructive. It relies on the wrong assumption that women cannot compete for selection on the current standards and is an attempt to cover up the lack of comprehensive recruiting practices that ensure women and men from all walks of life are encouraged to apply to be a firefighter.

This destructive misuse of diversity goals is another unnecessary pressure point for firefighters.

Firefighters are renowned for looking after one another but the pressures of the job and the horrors of the incidents can be too much.

Sadly we have recently lost a number of our courageous colleagues due to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and mental health issues. Some have had to take leave to seek treatment, others have resigned for medical reasons and tragically some have passed away.

continued on page 5

The logo for McCormack, featuring the word "mccORMACK" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "c" is lowercase, while "M", "O", "R", "M", "A", and "C" are uppercase.

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# EDITORIAL

## From the National President

**Welcome back to our national magazine to all our members, families and retirees.** Thank you to Mick Farrell and our National Secretary Peter Marshall for the work they did last year to ensure that our national magazine will deliver throughout 2016. There have been a range of significant events and recognitions since the last edition which should be reflected on both here and in later editions with dedicated articles.

Life membership of our national union was awarded to two of our members last year and I would like, on behalf of all our readers, to congratulate both Joe Stenhouse from the Aviation branch and Brett Baulmann from the ACT branch. Both National Executive and National Committee of Management recognised the lifetime

commitment that had been given by both of you to the Union. Congratulations and thank you for the leadership that you have both given throughout your careers.

Last year also saw branch elections take place with some branches transitioning to new leadership and committees with the retirement of again long serving committed leaders who have also

National President Greg Northcott

*continued on page 5*



Joe Stenhouse, Aviation Branch



Brett Baulman and Joe Stenhouse



*continued from page 3*

The effects in and on the job are significant and cannot be understated. Post Traumatic Stress and other similar disorders are increasingly more common for firefighters and will be one of the most significant issues we now have to battle.

We all would know colleagues that have suffered with depression or suffering with a mental health illness or disorder.

In Canada it has been included in presumptive legislation and other provinces are fighting for similar legislative recognition.

This will be a global battle – this issue knows no borders.

The global alliance of firefighters unions has been of great benefit and support to the UFUA and through this allegiance we have found treasured friends and comrades.

In January the global firefighting community lost one of its most staunch, compassionate and committed stalwarts with the passing of A. Michael Mullane of the IAFF Boston Local.

A Boston firefighter for more than 40 years, Mr Mullane was a former Boston Fire Fighters Local 718 President and also represented the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) as the 3rd District Vice President and Executive Board for more than 30 years. He was the founding member of the

Massachusetts Fallen Firefighters Memorial Committee and a former member of the Boston Public Health Commission.

For Australian firefighters it is a significant loss as the North American Labor leader and passionate advocate of firefighters' rights was a great friend of the United Firefighters Union of Australia and instrumental in the global alliance.

I travelled to Boston for his funeral to pay my respects and on behalf of the United Firefighters Union of Australia.

The love and respect held for Michael was immediately evident with more than 5000 firefighters standing in wintry conditions as they waited to pay their respects by filing past his casket at the Florian Hall in Boston.

I was greatly honoured to be asked by Michael's family to undertake the duties of the Helmet Bearer for the funeral service and procession through the streets of Boston.

Please see the article on the life and work of Michael in this edition of the *Australian Firefighter*. It is difficult to do justice to the work and spirit of this great union leader as his presence and counsel is not easily reduced to words.

Michael Mullane is greatly missed.

PETER MARSHALL ■

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Brett Baulmann and Joe Stenhouse presentation



UFUA National Secretary  
Peter Marshall



UFU National President  
Greg Northcott



Former UFUA national  
president Mick Farrell



From left Brett Baulman, Joe Stenhouse, Tamara Stenhouse  
and Chris Farrell



Brett Baulmann, Peter Marshall, Joe Stenhouse and Greg Northcott

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ensured that our branches remain strong. All of our branches have these people and it is not until they move to retirement that we tend to appreciate the work and commitment they gave. On behalf of all branch Secretaries, thank you to all outgoing branch committee of management members for your service to our members.

Industrially all branches have encountered significant challenges and changes throughout 2015, in particular Queensland, Victoria, and of late Tasmania and Western Australia. I look forward to reading more about this in their branch reports where we can learn how and what was required to address the issues they were confronted with.

2015 also saw Transfield (now Broadspectrum) take control of the remaining Military Fire Services in Australia. This has also presented challenges to the Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria branches.

A replacement for the ageing Skyjet Appliance took place in South Australia in 2015 with the delivery of a Combined Aerial Pumping Appliance (CAPA). This is a four crew 22 metre aerial pump that was completely designed by South Australian Firefighters and built by Rossenbauer in Germany. It was the centre piece at AFAC in Adelaide last year and also at the Interschutz international fire and rescue trade fair in Germany. This is another article I am looking forward to this year.

With a full year ahead of us and more editions guaranteed, we now need to ensure that we keep Mick Farrell busy with articles of what is happening in your State with your membership so we can all share the experience.

**GREG NORTHCOTT ■**

# ACT BRANCH

**It's been a busy time in the ACT Branch since Greg McConville (former Industrial Officer in the Vic Branch and former Senior Industrial Officer at the Finance Sector Union) was appointed Acting Secretary in October.**

Greg's appointment followed a period of several months where the Branch had no full time staff, following the departure of the previous Secretary. In that period the BCOM and the National Office were able to keep an eye on critical issues, including the "Strategic Reform Agenda" (SRA), and the appointment of former Buckinghamshire fire chief Mark Jones to oversee the SRA. The National Office's involvement and support during that time were invaluable.

Greg McConville has since become Secretary of the ACT Branch.

The key challenges facing the Branch are:

- A hostile review of the Communications Centre, aimed at implementing a civilian call taker/dispatch type model. This came from a consultant's report which had 33 recommendations, many of them not supported by evidence. The Branch has managed to force a retreat on 28 of those recommendations; the main issues remaining are civilianisation and removal of recline.
- The SRA itself - which was funded by \$15.6 million over four years to

"strengthen operational response" - has seen only an increase in the number of senior bureaucrats by four, on packages reportedly in excess of \$200,000. There is now an attempt to strip functions from under the Chief Officer of Fire and Rescue and place those functions under civilian managers. There has been no increase in operational capacity.

- A dispute concerning promotion to Commander ranks.
- A dispute over the continued unreliability of the Bronto - the only aerial appliance in the ACT.
- An attempt to remove privately plated cars from Superintendents, on the basis that they are supposedly no longer required for operational response.
- The removal of a dedicated Deputy Chief Officer position, and the removal of the Superintendent position which oversees training.
- Moves to allow RFS volunteers to respond to incidents in the built up area, including rumoured training of volunteers in BA.
- An ACT Government election on 15 October, where we are seeking commitments from all parties to expand fire and rescue to deal with increased population and increased risks related to climate change.
- Development of a social media strategy.

- By-elections for Branch president, Branch Secretary and Branch Junior Vice President.
- Moving premises in February.
- Negotiations to secure establishment numbers.
- Significant issues around PPC, such as mixing and matching two types of structural firefighting ensemble: (one with moisture barrier, one without), and faulty lightweight PPC.

Given the breadth of challenges facing the Branch, the Annual General Meeting overwhelmingly supported an increase in membership subscription fees of over 50%. At the time of approving the increase, the AGM noted that in the event that the Branch becomes involved in protracted litigation, the BCOM has power under the rules to impose a levy on the membership. The fee increase resolution was unopposed, with only one abstention.

The BCOM and members of the ACT Branch certainly have their work cut out.

## UFU ACT BRANCH

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# Brett Baulman: life membership

**The election for Branch President followed the resignation of Brett Baulman from that position.**

On September 23 2015, at a special dinner of the UFUA National Executive, Brett (along with Joe Stenhouse from the Aviation Branch) was bestowed the honour of life membership of the UFU. This was a fitting recognition of Brett's efforts on behalf of UFU members in the ACT and nationally.

In addition, Brett's achievements and contribution to the union movement in the ACT were also recognised at the Annual General Meeting of UnionsACT in December 2015.

It is fitting therefore that we reflect upon and acknowledge Brett's outstanding contribution. Recently, the ACT Branch's Signal 7 caught up with Brett to discuss his reflections on his time with the UFU, and his message to members of the Union.

**Signal 7:** When did you start with the fire service in the ACT, and what was it called at the time?

**Brett:** I joined the ACT Fire Brigade in May 1987.

**Signal 7:** How did you first become involved with the UFU?

**Brett:** I first became involved with the UFU in the early 1990s as a trustee. I then progressed through BCOM and was elected Branch Secretary in 2003. In 2008 I undertook the role of National Executive Officer based in Melbourne. I then continued my involvement with the UFU as Branch President until mid 2015 following a hiatus to undertake studies.

**Signal 7:** Were there any people who you looked to for guidance when you were first involved in the union? What was important about them and how do you think they helped you?

**Brett:** I was fortunate to always have good people to advise and guide me. Most notably, Eric Williams and Dave Livingstone locally. Peter Marshall has been a significant mentor and friend for many years at a National level. The most important aspect of each of these people was their commitment to the union and firefighters globally.

**Signal 7:** What are your recollections of your early days as a firefighter? What kinds of



Brett Baulman

## The best piece of advice I received and now pass on to members is simply to be as brave in protecting your union and your working conditions as you are in doing your job as a firefighter.

issues were important to the union then?

**Brett:** My early recollections are a job run by firefighters for firefighters and to serve the community. The union played an important role in ensuring better PPC and equipment for firefighters as well as the normal industrial issues.

**Signal 7:** Was there any particular advice that you were given early in your career, that still stays with you?

**Brett:** The best piece of advice I received and now pass on to members is simply to be as brave in protecting your union and your working conditions as you are in doing your job as a firefighter.

**Signal 7:** What was the biggest challenge you faced while involved in the union leadership? why?

**Brett:** The role of leadership in our union is both challenging and rewarding.

The most significant issues during my tenure included the workchoices threat to our working conditions and job security. The UFU led the way in convincing both unions and the ACT Government to enter into a common law deed to quarantine our employment conditions.

The UFU was the applicant in a successful work value case that saw a modernisation of the award on many of our terms and increased renumeration and enhanced careers paths for firefighters.

Challenges will always exist in relationships with Government and in and around industrial laws including bargaining terms and conditions.

**Signal 7:** How do you see the future of firefighting?

**Brett:** The future of firefighting is in a precarious position with

the increasing demands on the public purse for resources across the community. The increasing involvement of civilians in decisions that affect firefighters is disturbing and lessons learnt from the past quickly forgotten.

Major issues going forward include preparing the community and firefighting resources for the affects of climate change and the threat it presents. Further expanding on the successful campaign in relation to presumptive cancer legislation to encompass PTSD recognition.

Global terrorism and the challenges it represents to frontline responders domestically in terms of resources, training and response.

## Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting Services Regulatory Policy Review

**Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development issued its Public Consultation Paper related to the Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting Services Regulatory Policy Review.** The primary objective of the review is to examine regulatory policy settings for determining when Aviation and Rescue Fire Fighting Services are required at Australian civil airports and to consider whether there are opportunities to improve services by adopting a modern, risk assessment approach and more effective allocation of resources.

The Policy Review comes in response to the *Aviation Safety Regulation Review* and the federal government asking the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development to provide advice on a range of possible improvements to the efficiency of ARFFS requirements including the use of risk assessments.

The Department says the role of ARFFS is to optimise the chances of

survival of passengers and crew in the event of an aircraft incident. This grossly understates the role and functions of Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting operations in Australia today. ARFF operations include response to aviation rescue and fire incidents, hazmat, emergency medical response, mutual aid to urban brigades, alarm and other responses at airport terminals.

The Department's paper provides advice to the government on:

- the appropriateness of current passenger levels and data on the establishment and disestablishment criteria for ARFFS at major airports;
- the appropriateness of requiring ARFFS at international airports where passenger numbers are below establishment criteria levels;
- the future use of the establishment criteria as triggers for a risk assessment of the proposed need for or discontinuation of ARFFS rather than being a trigger for automatic establishment of ARFFS and the risk factors that should be included as part of any risk assessment;

- regulatory improvements that could provide potential cost savings to industry while maintaining appropriate safety standards; and
- the roles and legal responsibilities of an ARFFS provider and the state and territory fire authorities on and off airports.

All of these advice areas have the potential to significantly affect the provision of ARFFS

**All of these advice areas have the potential to significantly affect the provision of ARFFS in the country and in turn the employment of the numbers of Aviation Rescue Fire Fighters.**

in the country and in turn the employment of the numbers of Aviation Rescue Fire Fighters. The Aviation Branch with the backing of the National Office of the UOU of A has prepared a submission in response to the consultation paper.

The Regulatory Policy Review Paper is available on the Department's website at [www.infrastruture.gov.au/aviatino/arffs/index.aspx](http://www.infrastruture.gov.au/aviatino/arffs/index.aspx)

# ARFF PPE Procurement

**For the ARFF it appears that advice from AFAC takes precedence –but not for the UFU.**

**The PPE Procurement process is underway with heat test trials scheduled for 18-22 April 2016 in Cairns.**

The technical specification was submitted for open tender prior to undertaking risk assessment work and end user input.

Below is an outline of the key events to date:

*22 April 2015 – ARFF request representative from the UFU to participate in PPE procurement project.*

*5 June 2015 - UFUA Aviation Branch nominates WHS Coordinator to participate in project team.*

*No Further correspondence received.*

*13 September 2015 - WHS Coordinator requests all completed risk assessment work.*

*15 September 2015 – UFUA queried when the project was scheduled to begin at Divisional Consultative Council meeting. All completed work including risk assessment material requested. Management agreed to provide requested information.*

*17 September 2015 – A copy of the Technical Specification document provided for UFUA comment with the assurance “feedback provided will be taken into account prior to a final decision being made about the proposed requirements”. After receiving the Technical Specification, it became clear the project was already well underway.*

*17 September 2015 – 7 December 2015 – Despite strong resistance the UFUA was able to organise a presentation by UFUA SME's Mark Gribble and Neil Mangelsdorf to ARFF management.*

*16 October 2015 – UFUA Provides comments on Technical Specification document.*

*7 December 2015 - ARFF confirm guidance for procurement project has been provided by AFAC SME Russell Shephard.*

**14 December 2015 – UFUA Aviation Branch Executive, UFUA National Coordinator Neil Mangelsdorf and UFUA SME Mark Gribble present to ARFF PPE project team. ARFF respond to UFUA comments on Technical Specification document and confirm that it has already been issued for open tender.** Risk assessment work requested once more, UFUA takes issue with lack of end user input.

*17 December 2015 – ARFF management acknowledge “as a result of discussions during the meeting, especially in relation to the completion of some safety and risk work, I have reviewed the activities undertaken to date and identified areas that need to be revisited. To that end, I will arrange a further risk workshop in January that will involve a broader range of participants including an invitation for Wes Garrett as the UFU representative”.*

*19 January 2016 - PPE Hazard ID/Risk Assessment Workshop conducted in Canberra. 4 end users included. Risk assessment work completed to the satisfaction of UFUA participant. Point of difference emerges over inclusion of ISO 13506 “Additional Garment Testing” (manikin test) as a control for extreme heat transfer, post burn strength and flexibility of ensemble.*

As this timeline demonstrates, left to their own devices ARFF management would have completed its procurement without any genuine consultation with its workers. Although ARFF have not yet conceded that they are committed to the **AFAC Collaborative Purchasing Initiative** it certainly smells as if there is some sort of prearranged outcome at play in this instance. The AFAC Collaborative Purchasing Initiative advocates for closer collaboration between member agencies and suppliers;

- If an agency elects to participate in a collaborative purchase, **they must commit themselves to the process and agree to abide with the outcome.**

- **Uses pre-endorsed panels of suppliers** for specific product categories with due diligence being conducted prior to a supplier being accepted onto a panel. Due diligence and panel review will be conducted on a regular basis;
- Encourages the use of **AFAC standard specifications to underpin the procurement process**. Value adding to baseline products, eg. painting of a cab chassis, will be listed in the specification as an option.

- **Encourages suppliers to work with AFAC agencies** with the intent of tailoring their products to meet the specific needs of the emergency service agencies;

- AFAC member agency chief executives have stated their commitment to making the CPI project a success.

AFAC also encourages agencies to adopt its standards, or in this case only adopt the ISO and AS/NZ standards that AFAC have “approved” in order to suit the requirements of their “accepted suppliers”. Rather than the requirements identified by the end users who will ultimately be protected by the ensemble and who will be responsible for its ongoing maintenance and care. It must also be noted that the end user unlike AFAC, is not conflicted by external motivators. All we seek is to identify PPE that affords the user the very best protection available.

AFAC does not open itself to UFUA membership and therefore genuine end user collaboration. ISO and AS/NZ Standards committees do! As a result, questions must be asked of AFAC's status and authority in relation to PPE standards and procurement. Their involvement must not be allowed to overpower the voice of those who actually use the equipment.

## UFU AVIATION BRANCH

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## 2015 in review

**2015 was marked with a number of wins for fires across Queensland.** After three years of unrelenting attacks, we gained some important ground in terms of workers compensation, award conditions and workplace health and safety.

### Election and new Minister

The State election in January 2015 saw a change of state government. In a 15% statewide swing, Queensland voters sent a clear message that they were unhappy with the cuts to essential services, including QFES, and that they wanted to keep our public assets in public hands.

In the lead up to the January election, the Labor party promised to increase the capacity of frontline services, restore fairness to the award modernisation process, to introduce presumptive legislation for fires battling work-related cancers and to review the workers' compensation and OH&S provisions.

We have been working with the government throughout the year to ensure these promises are delivered fully and as quickly as possible.

For most of this year, Jo-Ann Miller filled the role of Minister for the Fire Service. Your union maintained regular contact with her office, and we worked productively on a number of different issues. Minister Miller stood down as Minister for Fire and Rescue Service and was replaced by Bill Byrne on 7 December 2015. UFUQ had a very positive working relationship with Minister Byrne when he was the shadow minister and we are eager to continue this cooperation in the future.

So far this year, the Queensland Government has employed some new firefighter recruits, and a number of legislative changes have been passed to improve the working conditions of Queensland fires.

### Presumptive Legislation

Going into the January election, your union secured commitments from both major parties to introduce presumptive legislation for current and former firefighters who contract work related cancers.

As we know, fires are vulnerable to a number of latent onset diseases as a by-

product of the work, and the last thing we should have to do is battle the courts for compensation.

Your union has been fighting for many years to have the onus of proof reversed on these claims, so that the 12 most common types of cancer will be presumed to be work-related.

It was with delight and great relief that our members could watch as parliament passed this legislation unanimously in September 2015. This legislation applies to all professional and auxiliary firefighters, and also to rural bush fire volunteers.

A recommendation was made which requires the rural bush fire volunteers to attend a review panel for consideration, in determining whether they meet the exposure criteria.

**Your union has been fighting for many years to have the onus of proof reversed on these claims, so that the 12 most common types of cancer will be presumed to be work-related.**

### Minimum Impairment Threshold

The new Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation amendments abolished the 5% whole person impairment threshold for injured workers to gain access to common law damages. Common law damages should be a basic entitlement for any employee who has had their rights infringed through the fault of their employer.

They provide an opportunity for the injured person to claim back all their medical and rehabilitation costs, as well as any losses caused by a reduction in future earning potential.

The purpose of this standard legal remedy is not only to return the injured worker to the financial position they would be in if the employer had not been negligent, but also to deter employers from acting improperly and cutting safety standards.

The previous government increased the threshold for common law damages to 5% whole of person impairment, meaning for

example, that if an injury only debilitated a worker 4.5% of their body's functionality they would be denied this basic right.

Thanks to the insistence of your union, in conjunction with a number of other Queensland Unions, the government has now removed this threshold.

### WorkCover claims history

The new laws also abolished the entitlement of prospective employers to access the work claims history of job applicants without their permission.

This disgraceful provision served no purpose other than to encourage employers to discriminate against prospective employees on the basis of their previous compensation claims. UFUQ welcomed the abolition of this bosses' entitlement.

### Firefighters

#### Remembrance Day

On Saturday October 10, State Secretary John Oliver, former State President Mark Dearlove and Senior Vice President Peter Draper, firefighters, fire communication officers, families and friends stopped to pay tribute to firefighters who have lost their lives in

the line of duty. Seven services were held across Queensland to honour those who have made the ultimate sacrifice through the course of their service to the community.

We can only hope that the strengthened workplace safety and rehabilitation laws will help to protect firefighters in their dangerous work

### “Restoring fairness” amendments

Earlier this year, the Queensland government introduced new Industrial Relations laws to restore some of the balance to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and the award-making process.

Your union made a formal submission and spoke on your behalf at the parliamentary committee dealing with these new laws.

These amendments return a degree of independence to the QIRC. Commissioners are no longer required to account for the State Government's fiscal strategy and financial situation when making wage decisions, and the playing field has been

levelled somewhat by the new restrictions on legal representation during arbitrations.

The rights of union officials to enter the workplace have also been restored.

The amendments also undid some of the harm caused by the previous government's award modernisation process. Previously restricted content is now back on the negotiating table, including employment security provisions, union encouragement provisions and consultation and training arrangements.

UFUQ has welcomed these amendments, and we now have a bit more room to move in relation to the Award Modernisation process.

### New WHS laws

In June 2015, your union spoke in favour of the government's Workplace Health and Safety laws, which sought to restore protections.

We expressed support for the rights of safety reps to direct unsafe work to cease and to call in immediate external assistance from accredited persons.

We also pushed to allow UFUQ officials to immediately investigate safety problems, without having to give notice 24 hours in advance.

UFUQ submitted that these restored provisions would likely reduce the number of situations that evolve into emergencies, and would decrease the risks faced by UFUQ members who are required to attend emergency situations. All of these provisions were passed by the parliament and entered into force in October.

### Award modernisation

Following the election, the Award Modernisation process was suspended by the new Minister Curtis Pitt, but it recommenced in July following the revisions to the IR Act. We are currently in discussions about two awards:

- Queensland Fire and Rescue Service Award – State 2012
- Queensland Fire and Rescue Service Communications Centres Award – State 2012.

The Restoring Fairness amendments restored flexibility to the modernisation process by removing the requirements for mandatory provisions and the compulsory stripping out of non-allowable content.

It also removed the deadline for the modernisation of awards.

Your union has been in discussions with the Fire Service for the second half of this year, and there is up to date information on our website. The process will be finalised in 2016.

### Auxiliary Award

On November 20, your union won a long fought battle for award coverage for auxiliary firefighters, to guarantee a minimum safety net of employment conditions.

UFUQ first began this long fight in September 2012. We collected a substantial amount of data to demonstrate the unfairness of Auxiliary working conditions and put together a strong case for the granting of an award.

**In addition to improving the safety for individual firefighters and remunerating auxiliaries in a fairer way, these new award conditions will likely also improve the efficiency and reliability of the fire service.**

Despite opposition from the fire service, the QIRC ruled in our favour, and an Interim Award was enacted in October 2013. The Newman government then responded to this decision by fast tracking a controversial piece of legislation to render the interim award to be of "no effect".

In response to the new laws, we lodged a similar application for the making of a Modern Award, and last year we commenced a case for compensation regarding the as due to this unrelenting assure that UFUQ secured commitments from both Labor and the LNP to agree to Auxiliary award if elected at the January 2015 state election.

The Palaszczuk Government has delivered this promise, and the new award was presented to your union to the QIRC with the consent of the fire service. In addition to improving the safety for individual firefighters and remunerating auxiliaries in a fairer

way, these new award conditions will likely also improve the efficiency and reliability of the fire service.

### Review of PSBA and QFES

In late April, the government announced a review of the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA), the overarching management body established by the Newman government. After consulting with our members, the UFUQ prepared a submission recommending that the PSBA be discontinued, or at least that all substantive management be transitioned back to the fire service.

The PSBA was an attempt by the government to centralise the management of the emergency services departments for the purpose of marketing them to the private sector.

This restructure had a significant impact on the efficiency of the organisation, and the ability of fires at station level to get on with the job. UFUQ also noted the concern of members that the recruitment and training processes had been over-standardised and were falling short of the high standards fires are used to.

UFUQ contended that the PSBA is the cause of unnecessary and remote layers of bureaucracy for no net benefit.

### Welcome to Our New Transfield Members

In 2015, UFUQ followed branches in other states and territories by accepting membership of our union from firefighters employed by Transfield services at the Oakey Airbase.

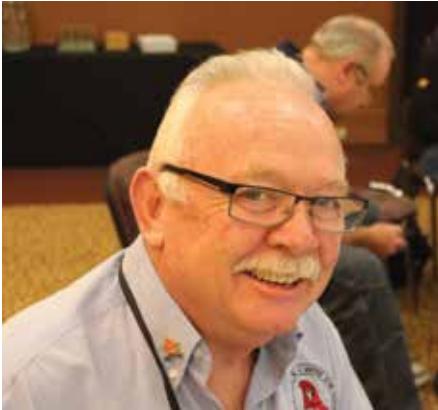
This is an exciting time for your union in Queensland and we take this opportunity to welcome our new members at Oakey Airbase.

### UFUA QUEENSLAND BRANCH

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# SA BRANCH

## SA UFU President Barry Luke retires



Barry Luke

### The SA Branch sadly farewelled our State President Barry Luke in 2015.

Barry subsequently retired after 40 years' service with the SAMFS.

Barry is enjoying his retirement, indulging in travel with his wife Heather with whom he eagerly awaits the imminent birth of their next grandchild.

The Branch thanks Barry for his long term loyalty and commitment to the UFUSA which has helped to protect and advance the position of his fellow members and we wish him, Heather and their family the very best in the future.

Senior Firefighter Michael Van der Jeugd has subsequently been elected to the role of President in SA.

## Composite wage

**It's heartening to finally be progressing the composite total wage in conjunction with the SAMFS in accordance with the enterprise agreement (EA) finalised back in 2011.**

Penalty rates form a significant portion of the wages of firefighters, compensating us for the unsociable/family unfriendly hours worked. Members are firmly resolved to defend and maintain our total rates hence the proposal to move to a 'total composite wage'.

The UFUSA made a commitment in the EA that such a move would be on a cost neutral basis and this commitment, as always, will be kept. Reports are provided ongoing to each meeting of State Council, Shop Stewards and the AGM.

The Award and the EA are currently being fully reviewed in order to draft the necessary changes for the implementation of the total composite wage, following which it is anticipated a joint application will be made by the UFUSA and SAMFS to the SA Industrial Relations Commission for ratification.

## Workers Compensation and presumptive legislation



Neil Mangelsdorf

**Success in implementing the presumptive legislation for firefighters in SA was hard won but the absolute solidarity of UFUSA members ensured that those members and their families who have been unfortunate in suffering from one or more of the 12 occupational cancers, have had access to the support and resources available under the legislation.**

UFU Shop Stewards have had this legislation incorporated into union training which has been delivered over the last two years and they now know what and how they can assist a member when they are confronted with any of these distressing conditions.

Sadly a number of members and retired members have made the ultimate sacrifice however they'll not be forgotten for we dedicate our ongoing OHS efforts to ensure firefighters are as safe as possible when exposed to carcinogens, to them and their loved ones.

Members are urged to participate in the new processes for the dirty/clean transition as it is rolled out. No doubt there are/will be teething problems but it is designed to protect YOU so please do take the time and make the effort to decontaminate as soon as possible after every exposure.

Members with any concerns or queries should contact the UFUSA Office or National OHS Coordinator Neil Mangelsdorf.

## AFSM awarded to two UFU members



Adrienne Clarke

### The UFUSA congratulates the 2016 Australia Day recipients of the Australian Fire Service Medal, UFUSA Members Adrienne Clarke and Scott Rogers.

It's exciting to note that as the first Australian woman firefighter 30 years ago, Adrienne has taken blazing trails in her stride and in another first, is the first woman recipient from the MFS to have earned this honour.

Awarded by the Governor-General and announced on Australia Day 2016, the AFSM provides national and formal recognition across the nation for distinguished service by firefighters who have made a significant difference to their communities.

Congratulations to both our deserving recipients.

## New SAMS leadership appointments

**The 2015 appointments of the new SAMFS Chief Officer Greg Crossman and Deputy Chief Officer Michael Morgan demonstrates that the skillset and personal attributes necessary to lead the fire service can be found within the ranks of operational fire fighters in SA.**

The UFUSA is working positively with the new leadership on a wide range of issues including WHS initiatives, training, and the composite total wage which we anticipate will enhance not just the safety and wellbeing of firefighters but the safety and wellbeing of our community.



UFUSA women members with CO Crossman and pix of WIMDOI Group

## Women firefighters

**Women members of the UFUSA have organised over the last 18 months, forming the UFU Women's Consultative Committee meeting on a regular basis to share information and discuss issues of concern, developing proposals and strategies which assist not just the Union but the entire MFS in ensuring that firefighting is the best service it can be.**

For example the Committee worked collectively in 2015 to assist in the development of a meaningful SAMFS policy on pregnancy, to address WHS issues of particular concern to women firefighters and for the first time, to take up leadership roles in the UFUSA.

The UFU in both SA and Victoria

also sent delegates to the national WIMDOI (Women in Male Dominated Occupations and Industries) Conference in 2015 which brings women together to exchange information and develop strategies to recruit and retain women into non-traditional occupations and industries. The report produced by SA participant Senior Firefighter Sally Smith will be used to assist the union.

Former UFU of Australia Secretaries Paul Caica MP and Mick Doyle both noted the first time presence of women Shop Stewards, applauding the development when they attended and addressed the UFU Shop Stewards' Training in November 2015.

There's a long way to go but we're making history and we have a lot of fun along the way!

## Emergency Services sector reform dumped

**The SA Government demonstrated its lack of appetite for reform in 2015 as it backed away from the much-needed comprehensive review of fire and emergency services in our state.**

The UFUSA supported the initiative as an appropriate reform when it was announced by the government in early 2014, because

of the benefit it potentially would have delivered to the South Australian community.

Those who truly understand the current strengths and challenges of the emergency services sector in SA and who put community safety above their own personal and political interests, know that it was a noble undertaking.

Nevertheless it is clear that the government now lacks the appetite for *continued on page 16*

# SA BRANCH

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reform and it is deeply disappointing that this important opportunity has been lost.

This backflip represents not just a huge setback for the safety of our community but for our members and the CFS and SES employees who have now lost access to greater career opportunities under this reform process.

The much vaunted opportunity for efficiencies and savings in the sector has now also been lost and any future piecemeal penny-pinching initiatives must surely fall on deaf ears.

The UFUSA's support for sector reform was based on the commitments provided by the then Minister for Emergency Services that members' wages and conditions would not be undermined, that our professional standards would be maintained and enhanced, and that operations in both professional and the volunteer system would be unaffected.

The question now is, what will now fill the vacuum?

The recommendation which we understand was being considered by Cabinet prior to the current sector review being initiated by the Minister in 2014, for the SA fire and emergency services to be brought under the command of the Police Commissioner, demonstrated a dismal lack of understanding of the sector and was fraught with peril.

There should be no misapprehension that any such ill-conceived initiative can be now foisted onto the fire and emergency services sector in South Australia.

## Transfield Services (now known as Broad Spectrum)

**At the Edinburgh base the work of Shop Stewards Steve 'Mitch' Mitchell and Chris 'Johno' Johnson, aided by Dave Pollitt and the collective membership, has been vital to driving the agenda for the new EA which has the potential to deliver not only wage increases but improved rosters at Edinburgh.**

Members at Woomera who have elected new Shop Stewards Matt Gulin and Travis Hirschausen have started to organise for a fairer deal with the broadening of the EA to cover UFUSA members at Woomera. While there are many issues yet to be addressed, significant wage increases and improved manning levels are firmly on the agenda for 2016 not to mention the commitment from management to immediately upgrade the air-conditioning in the accommodation members rent at Woomera.

Broad Spectrum recently agreed to an operative date for increases of 16 February 2016 should bargaining extend beyond the current EA expiry date however while this welcomed, the UFUSA is keenly pursuing final resolution of the EA regardless.

A dispute over new level 2 firefighting PPC being distributed by the company which was inferior to the standard previously achieved in SA, was successfully addressed in 2015 with the assistance of UFU National OHS Co-ordinator Neil Mangelsdorf.

The resolution negotiated by Neil and the Shop Stewards with the company means

that quality PPE fit for purpose will now be rolled out nationally by Broad Spectrum.

Additionally, a national "PPE and Equipment Committee" was formed within Broad Spectrum. Each State having UFU representation and input. In 2015 the committee had two face to face meetings to look primarily at the level 2 PPC issue. This committee is now looking into the future with regular meetings, the next agenda item being a day wear trial, with a commitment to uniformity across the organisation.

## 2016 Union diaries and new phone app

**The 2016 union diary has been distributed to all SA members so if you don't yet have yours please either raise it with your Shop Steward or contact the UFU Office direct on 8352 7211 to have one sent out..**

Don't forget the new phone app with SAMFS calendar and many other useful features is due to be launched at the Shop Stewards' meeting scheduled for 17 March 2016 at the UFU Office so make sure you've provided your mobile number to your union in order to ensure you get your free app.

### UFUA SA BRANCH

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# TAS BRANCH

## Welcome to 2016

**On behalf of the Tasmania Branch welcome to 2016 and for the opportunity to provide this update to the National Magazine.** The year 2015 provided many challenges, but as always UFUA members continue to prove resilient and supportive. The union finished the year in a positive financial position and with 355 union members, representing the largest number of members ever involved in the branch. UFUA members should be very proud of the union they have developed and the strong bond of support for each other that is part of being a member of the UFUA.

I express my thanks and gratitude to all members who take up the challenge to assist the UFUA in continuing to strive for improvements in member conditions. Something that is possibly not fully appreciated by the membership on occasion is how much BCOM members UWPRs and HSRs contribute to the union. Thanks again to all the members for their support and assistance throughout the year.

## BCOM

**Matters considered by BCOM throughout the year have included but are not limited to the following;**

- Fire Crisis 2 Campaign (Protect your Firefighter)
- Parliamentary Inquiry
- DPEM Corporate Services Review
- SES Funding – the transfer from DPEM
- State Fire Commission activities
- Superannuation
- Work Value
- Clothing agreement
- Professional Firefighter curriculum and training and development
- Career path advancement SSO development of SOD's
- SO promotion
- FireComm staffing and overtime
- PPC/Turnout Gear
- Diesel Particulates
- CFBT procedure and guidelines
- Heavy Pumper replacement programme
- Replacement of Bridgewater 3.1PR with a 1.1 unit
- AVL's installation and policy
- Station Layout and Design
- Light RCR cache on 2.1 unit in BFB
- Hearing Conservation Policy



Tasmania Branch President John Holloway addressing the rally

- CISM
- Marine Response
- Fuel Reduction Unit
- Fire Service Act Review
- Redmond's Symposium – USA – August 2015
- UFUA TAS web-site redevelopment
- International Deployment
- Social media

## The UFUA Restore the Fire Service Budget Campaign 2015

**The Tasmania Branch in conjunction with the National Office held a rally on the 15th of July 2015 at Parliament House on the lawns to launch our campaign to oppose the fiscal strategy of the State Government that resulted in backdoor budget cuts to the Tasmania Fire Service.** The purpose of the rally was to highlight the negative impacts for firefighters and the Tasmanian community of the Government's policy and to restore funding to the State Fire Commission Budgets.

The rally was well supported by UFUA members, their families, UFUA supporters, Tasmanian Unions and ALP Politicians. Speakers included UFUA National Secretary, Peter Marshall, Tim Jacobson on behalf of Unions Tasmania, John Holloway and Greg Cooper representing the UFUA Tasmania Branch.

Key points in the UFUA address were to note that the Tasmania Fire Service provides a very efficient service for Tasmania. The TFS receives very little direct funding from the State Government. It is unacceptable for any government to try and reduce fire service funding. Funding cuts to Fire Services will not be supported by firefighters, their families or the broader Tasmanian community. Days before the rally the Minister for the Department of Police and Emergency Management wrote to the UFUA and advised that a reconsideration of the Government's fiscal strategy had resulted in a restoration of \$1.5 million to the Fire Service budget.

## Parliamentary Inquiry

**The State Government budgets of 2014/15 and 2015/16 have impacted on the State Fire Commission budgets and subsequently the TFS.** This is a significant matter for the UFUA and has resulted in the branch securing a report from the University of Newcastle on the impact of the Government budgets on the Tasmania Fire Service.

This report has assisted the branch in developing a campaign to support the TFS in maintaining independence from Government as a corporate entity. We have also achieved a \$1.5 million refund from Government for the SFC to restore in part the SFC original capital budget. The branch has challenged continued on page 18



Some of the crowd at the rally

continued from page 17

the Government over the budget changes and the corporate services integration project. This challenge continues.

The Branch also played a pivotal role in calling for a Parliamentary inquiry to understand the impact of the current government policy on the SFC/TFS. The UFUA campaign to protect firefighters has resulted in Government agreeing to the parliamentary inquiry into a range of issues concerning the Tasmania Fire Service. The terms of reference for the inquiry are included below.

## House of Assembly Standing Committee on Community Development

The House of Assembly has referred an inquiry to the Standing Committee on

### Community Development with the following Terms of Reference:

- (1) *The House refers the following matters to the Standing Committee on Community Development to inquire into and report upon:*
- (a) the 2014-15 and 2015-16 budget for the State Fire Commission - SFC - and its implications for the Tasmania Fire Service - TFS - including:*
    - (i) the transfer of the State Emergency Service - SES - reporting responsibility to the SFC/TFS;*
    - (ii) the funding of the SES;*
    - (iii) the structures of the Department of Police and Emergency Management - DPEM;*
    - (iv) the DPEM corporate services review, including the scope and conduct of the review and its implications;*
    - (v) the funding of the Fuel Reduction Burn Program;*
    - (vi) community safety programs;*

*(vii) fire service resources including firefighter numbers;*

*(viii) the protection of the community.*

*(b) the budget history of the State Fire Commission from 2008-09 to present;*

*(c) the future funding arrangements for TFS and SES;*

*(d) the need for appropriate and modern governance practices in the State Fire Commission; and*

*(e) other matters incidental thereto.*

*(2) The committee report by 15 April next.*

The most important matters raised by the United Firefighters Union of Australia Tasmania Branch (UFUA) in a comprehensive submission with a series of attachments areas follows;

- Maintaining the independence of the State Fire Commission (SFC) and the Tasmania Fire Service
- Maintaining the independence of the role of the Chief Officer (TFS)
- Restoring the SFC budgets for 2014/15 and 2015/16 by the reinstatement of monies directed by Government away from the SFC/TFS for non-fire related activities
- Restoring of expenditure of SFC monies in a situation where the expense was directed by Government and the expense was not recoverable

Let's hope the Tasmanian Parliament takes note of the matters raised by the UFUA.

Special thanks to Peter Marshall and Wattie Watson for all their help and support given to the Tasmania Branch with the preparation of the submission.

## Station Layout and Design

**With the passing of workers compensation cover in Tasmania on September 26 2013 for firefighters who contract a prescribed cancer came an increased awareness amongst firefighters of the risks of cancer as part of a firefighting career.**

The UFUA has campaigned specifically on raising firefighter awareness of the risks of exposure during attendance at structure fires specifically when undertaking a rapid internal attack. Part of the educative process is to ensure firefighters decontaminate as soon as practicable after a rapid internal attack at a structure fire. This means



From left: Senior Firefighters Ian Painting, David Young, Greg Atkins, and SSO Robert Featherstone

isolating any contaminated gear and not introducing contaminants into the vehicle or back at the fire station. The campaign is ongoing.

A significant component of the process necessary to reduce the incidence of firefighters contracting occupational cancers is to isolate and properly ventilate engine bays and turn out rooms from offices, work areas, mess rooms and sleeping quarters. This in itself is a massive task. TFS will either rebuild or retro fit all of its stations to ensure the risk of exposures for firefighters is reduced. With over 230 fire stations in the state the task is daunting.

The UFUA has argued for nearly three years with the TFS to include Station Layout and Design as a separate item in the Occupational Health and Safety Plan. The TFS has recently started to do this and moved away from the more obscure heading of personal hygiene.

The budget for such an undertaking should not have to be found from normal operating expenses. The UFUA submits that draft budgets and timelines for the station layout and design project should be developed and submitted to Government for a one off Capital Funding Project to be undertaken during the next five to ten years.

Budget impacts such as the 2014/15/16 state government imposed on the TFS resulted in delays retro-fitting of Southern stations. These delays meant firefighters continued to respond in older style out of standard protective clothing. New age turn out gear for firefighters in Southern regions was purchased earlier in 2015 but sat in boxes in storage for over nine months whilst budgets and work schedules for station retro fits were organised. The State Government refunded 1.5 million dollars to the TFS that it, earlier in the preceding year, had removed from the capital build budget.

## 150 years of collective experience - firefighters still working well together

**This picture was taken by a Launceston B shift crew on duty at Rocherlea.**

Collectively they have more than 150 years of experience. This crew covering together enabled a younger crew to attend to a training exercise at Youngtown.

Not sure what they spoke about in the crib room, maybe the suggestion that they work until they're 70 ... about 10 years to go.

**GREG COOPER**

Branch Secretary, UFU Tasmanian Branch

### UFUA TASMANIA BRANCH

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## 'Respect – Honour – Value Your Firefighters' campaign

*'I value the work that you do. I respect the sacrifices you make. I honour the risks you take every hour of every shift to keep every Victorian safe.'*

– Daniel Andrews, November 2014, 11 before being elected Premier of Victoria

On 8 December 2015, 1000 United Firefighters Union members marched upon Parliament House to remind Premier Daniel Andrews to uphold his pre-electoral commitment to respect, honour and value the work of Victoria's professional firefighters.

Victorian parliamentary members Adam Bandt (Greens), Colleen Hartland (Greens) and Fiona Patten (Sex Party) delivered political messages of endorsement and support, joined by UFU President Dave Hamilton and Branch Secretary Peter Marshall. Santa and his elves brought seasonal greetings, as well as lavishly wrapped gifts from the MFB and CFA. And yet when Dave Hamilton opened them they were revealed to be as empty as a political promise.

The public and media responded with warmth and encouragement to the marchers' placards and flyers urging Premier (or rather Grinch) Andrews not to steal firefighters' families' Christmas.

The rally was the culmination of 977 (and still counting) days that firefighters had been negotiating with the successive Napthine and Andrews governments over expired CFA and MFB enterprise agreements.

In the lead-up to the 2014 State Election, firefighters ran an unprecedented grassroots campaign to ensure that the Napthine



Rally at Parliament steps



Santa was a former UFUA national president



UFU Vic president Dave Hamilton



UFU Vic secretary Peter Marshall speaks



UFU Vic president Dave Hamilton listens to MP Adam Bandt

Government did not get a second term in office. Firefighters gave up their days off to doorknock marginal electorates and protest outside Liberal Party events; for two weeks prior to the election they campaigned at early voting centres across eight marginal seats; and, on Election Day, UFU members were present at every polling booth across eight target seats, as well as five key booths in Emergency Services Minister Jane Garrett's seat of Brunswick. Each of these target seats saw an ALP victory and, for

the first time in over 50 years, a first-term government was defeated in Victoria.

Before the election, the Andrews Government gave an undertaking to bargain with firefighters towards the timely resolution of their enterprise agreement, which the UFU entered into in good faith. However, the Government was to precipitate ten months of negotiations at five separate levels, with each forum resulting in previously agreed matters being defaulted, or an additional period of delay.



Heaps of signed Grinch postcards from an event at Hoppers Crossing



Campaign postcard



Campaign at an electoral office



Rally elves

Despite this, after painstaking negotiations, by 22 October 2015 only a few matters remained outstanding within the new CFA agreement. That day, within the first 15 minutes of a bargaining meeting, government representatives informed the UFU that Minister Garrett was unhappy with the progress, and would be holding a press conference in 40 minutes. The representatives then refused to reaffirm that any previously agreed clauses remained agreed. Without further negotiation, Minister

Garrett referred the matter to the Fair Work Commission.

Despite a protracted and capricious series of negotiations, UFU members remain undaunted in their resolve to secure their enterprise agreement. Firefighters' tireless and committed pre-Christmas campaigning efforts in key electorates have been vindicated by a sterling public and media response.

You can keep up to date with the campaign and show your support for

Victorian firefighters by sending an automated online letter to your local MP at the 'Respect – Honour – Value Your Firefighters' campaign website: [www.respectyourfirefighters.com](http://www.respectyourfirefighters.com).

#### UFU VIC BRANCH

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# WA BRANCH

## A Happy New Year to all of our members.

2016 is our Branch's Centennial Year and as we celebrate our history and pay tribute to the men and women who have gone before us and have worked for our members by being active in the Union, and who have served our communities, we need to reflect on our recent disastrous fires – the worst in our State's history. These fires have been impacted by climate change and the State's response needs to be measured in additional resources where they are most needed for the sake of our members and the communities they continue to serve across WA.

This fire season is panning out to be one of the most catastrophic fire seasons in our recorded history. On behalf of all of our members we extend our sympathy to the families and friends of those who have died, and to all who have lost their homes, farms, stock, pets and livelihoods in the recent fires.

Following these fires which started on crown land, near Esperance in the isolated south-eastern region of our State and on crown land near Dwellingup in the south – west near Perth and which decimated the town of Yarloop and which threatened a number of communities, it is already clear that the agencies that dominate AFAC are "circling the wagons" and influencing the analysis and enquiries into these fires.

The WA Branch cannot believe that the enquiry into the Waroona Yarloop fires will be headed by a retired Chief from the Country Fire Services in SA and Victoria and who has had extensive forestry experience. Apart from the loss of two lives, over 160 structures were lost, including homes, farms, historical properties and businesses.

Common sense would dictate that someone who is independent of the multiple agencies in WA responding to such "campaign fires" with structural Fire and

Rescue Service expertise is required to review these fires. The WA Branch has been calling for a single agency with a single chain of command under the leadership of the Fire and Rescue Service to be responsible for all fires – including response, mitigation and prevention. This is not disrespectful of volunteers and in fact it would stop the blame game and finger pointing and put up a single line of Fire management that could deliver resources logically with a strong operational focus. The Association of Bush Fire Volunteers together with the SES and Farmer's Federation (both agencies without a Fire industry background) have been calling for a separate Country Fire Authority in WA. What a waste of money – that model would deliver another raft of bureaucrats and civilians and take away scarce resources from where they are most needed.

The WA Branch has repeatedly called for a significant increase in Fire and Rescue Services in regional WA and within the growing metropolitan area. A series of State Governments have failed to resource the concurrent growth of our State's population and risk with the growth of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Without fear of favour the Union rejects the nasty attacks on our members from some of the Bushfire Volunteer so called representatives – make no mistake, our members are bush fire and campaign fire experienced, they also have the edge over other personnel when it comes to risk assessment for situations where there is a threat to life and property – including the safe passage through fires and on roads impacted by fire. Our members do care about communities and they value local knowledge, they are disciplined and organised and well trained – ready to respond in all circumstances. Any suggestions to the contrary are scurrilous.

In 2016 it beggars belief that we bring

over professional Firefighters, volunteers, forestry workers and equipment from the Eastern States to relieve our personnel and our members who are available and off shift are not called back. It is not good enough to abandon our communities and to leave our citizens without adequate protection and equipment in places like Esperance, Vasse, Karratha, Port Hedland, and Broome.

You can add to that list of potential Fire Station locations – Stoneville, Kalamunda and Roleystone as well as several more stations in our metropolitan area to address poor response times and unmanageably large fire districts.

We have no reliable stand by fleet – and apparently 8 of the 9 appliances used for Recruit and Officer training at our run down third world training centre are unroadworthy. Our workshops are being run into the ground by civilian administrators who cannot deliver fire resistant and protective systems for our appliances including water shields and safe brake and PTO systems. Our communications and mapping equipment are not of the same standard as the Department of Parks and Wildlife or our major electrical utility, Western Power.

Our Branch is preparing a hard hitting submission to yet another enquiry that is dominated by the AFAC "club". It is time for our industry and AFAC to accept and include our Union voice on behalf of the professional Firefighters and Officers around Australia, and for the decisions about how best we resource a State as big as WA to be driven by logical and operational imperatives.

## UFUA WA BRANCH

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Victorian Branch's

# CHRISTMAS RALLY

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# CHRISTMAS RALLY





*"I follow three rules,  
do the right thing,  
do the best you can and  
show people that you care."*

A. MICHAEL MULLANE



Secretary of State John Kerry and Mike Mullane

# FIREFIGHTERS' **HERO** FAREWELLED

It was with great sadness that the passing of IAFF stalwart and firefighters' hero A. Michael Mullane was announced in January. He passed away, aged 68, in Boston on January 1 2016, surrounded by family and friends.

For Australian firefighters it is a significant loss as the North American Labor leader and passionate advocate of firefighters' rights was a great friend of the United Firefighters Union of Australia and instrumental in the global alliance.

As Australian firefighters will be aware, the campaign to have occupational cancer recognised through presumptive legislation has been achieved for Federal firefighters (ACT and Aviation) and five other states and territories with the assistance of the global alliance and in particular the IAFF. Mr Mullane unfailingly continued to pursue firefighter health and safety campaigns and was of great support to the UFUA throughout the presumptive campaign.



Mr Mullane was also an avid supporter of the global alliance of firefighter unions (the IFFUA) and was instrumental in its establishment since 2005.

A Boston firefighter for more than 40 years, Mr Mullane was a former Boston Fire Fighters Local 718 President and also represented the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) as the 3rd District Vice President and Executive Board for more than 30 years. He was the founding member of the Massachusetts Fallen Firefighters Memorial Committee

and a former member of the Boston Public Health Commission.

Firefighters from throughout North America and across the firefighting global community turned out in their thousands to show their respect for a firefighter and union leader who devoted his life to improving the working conditions for firefighters.

The significance and reach of his work was demonstrated through more than 5000 firefighters attending his wake with the line stretching for blocks down the road from Florian Hall in Boston.



USA Secretary of State John Kerry, IAFF General President Harold Schaitberger and other IAFF leaders, Boston Senators, Mayor and Governor were some of the distinguished guests at the funeral.

United Firefighters Union of Australia National Secretary Peter Marshall was also in attendance representing the UFUA and Australia firefighters.

Mr Mullane's family asked Peter to undertake the honor of Helmet Bearer for the service and cortege through the streets of Boston to the cemetery.

This request was in recognition of the personal and professional friendship between Mr Mullane and Peter Marshall and the UFUA.



Mr Mullane came from a family of firefighters by following in the footsteps of two of his uncles with his brother, the late Neal Mullane. A nephew Captain Neal Mullane has continued that tradition in the Boston Fire Department.

Mr Mullane is survived by his longtime partner and “love of his life” Elaine Malone, a brother and two sisters, his many nieces and nephews and their families, and Elaine’s family. He was cherished by his family and firefighters alike.

Mike was a renowned advocate and negotiator. He was known as the “ferocious protector of firefighters and their families”. He was a heroic firefighter and

staunch supporter of all firefighters. His counsel was sought by many and his approval was highly prized by politicians seeking firefighters’ support. Colloquially known as “the Pope of Florian Hall” he was always approachable by all – from the newest recruit firefighter to the leaders of state and unions.

At the wake and funeral there were many stories of the battles he fought and won.

He personally assisted firefighter families in need and no issue was too small or too big to pursue. He reportedly used his street-smarts, sound political instincts and compassion in all he did, professionally and personally.



*“He was one of the greatest champions of our members and workers everywhere that this union and our labor movement will ever know”*

IAFF General-President Harold Schaitberger said in a statement.

Boston Fire Fighters Local 718 President Rich Parish said Mr Mullane fought every day to better the working conditions, wages and benefits of firefighters.

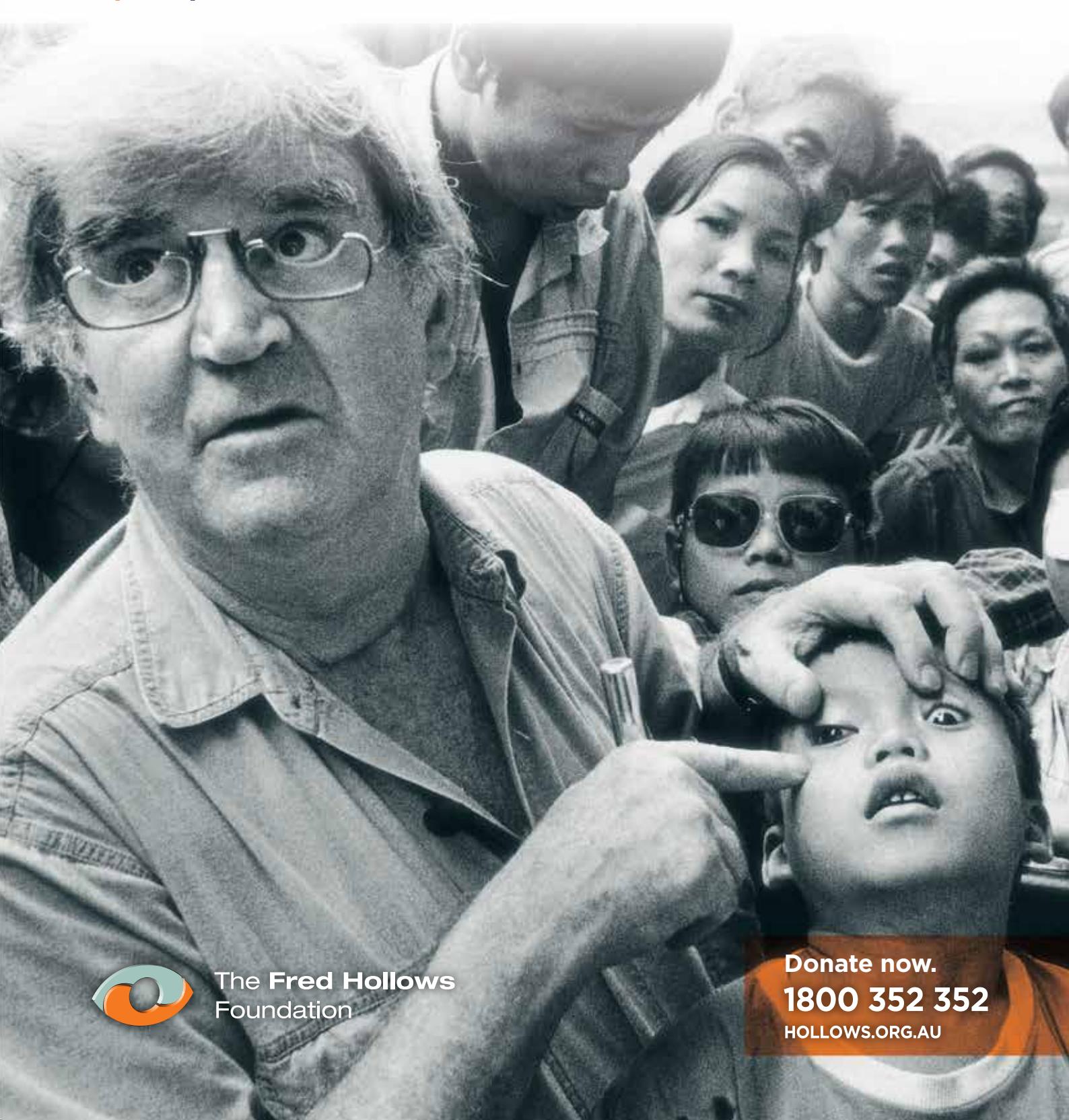
*“He put his entire life on hold for his Local and our members for over 40 years. This is a debt we can never truly repay, but Mike wouldn’t want us to. He is a humble Jake, who would simply say, pay it forward, and leave this place a little better than you found it.”*

For his Local and Australian firefighters he certainly achieved that.

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