



## **THE FACTS ABOUT THE UNITED FIREFIGHTERS' UNION OF AUSTRALIA (QLD Branch) - YOUR NATIONAL UNION**

Dear [INSERT FIRST NAME]

I am writing to provide you with important information about your membership of the **United Firefighters Union of Australia (QLD Branch)** and the important role it plays for firefighters in Queensland and across Australia.

### **What is the United Firefighters Union of Australia (QLD Branch)?**

The United Firefighters Union of Australia (QLD Branch) is the organisation that represents firefighters, including those in Queensland, at a national level. From 1990 to 2018, the UFU Queensland Branch and the UFUQ operated as if they were one and the same. All United Firefighters Union members in each state and territory branch are automatically members of the national union. This structure, with members of state branches also being automatically members of the national organisation is a common model for many other unions in Australia.

This means that having joined the United Firefighters Union – Queensland (UFUQ) (“The State Union”), firefighters are also members of United Firefighters Union of Australia (Queensland Branch) (“The National Union”).

After a hard-fought battle by firefighters across Australia over many years, firefighters from state and territory union branches were eventually successful in forming the United Firefighters Union of Australia (UFUA) on August 1, 1990.

### **Why do we have a national organisation for firefighters at all?**

The United Firefighters Union of Australia provides a strong, unified voice for all firefighters across Australia.

This is particularly important when engaging with the Australian Government on issues of Federal significance like the identification and management of PFAS contamination, the protection of firefighter health, and the setting of national competencies for firefighting.

Individual state branches can also benefit from the additional expertise and resources that the national union can provide when needed.

For example, the United Firefighters Union of Australia provided invaluable assistance to Queensland firefighters during negotiations with the Queensland Government over Presumptive Legislation for firefighters, to provide them with better protection and compensation should they be diagnosed with cancer either during or after their careers.

The United Firefighters Union of Australia also keeps Australian firefighters connected with other professional firefighter organisations across the world.

The **UFUA Firefighter Global Alliance** connects us with an international network of more than 350,000 firefighters internationally.

Through this Global Alliance, we remain connected with firefighting trends and emerging issues impacting firefighters across the world. The relationship and support from our global firefighter partners has been critical in developing our legislative awareness, this helped us develop Presumptive Legislation in Australia which is critical in protecting firefighter health and safety.

It also provides us with a wealth of international material on fire station design, health screening and fitness programs. In return, the UFUA has directly influenced the development of international standards for firefighter protective clothing and has achieved the banning of PFOS and PFOA (harmful contents of firefighting foam) in over 170 countries.

### **Our focus for the future**

Our focus for the future remains on making the voices of firefighters heard at the highest levels in the public and with government: nationally and internationally.

Firefighters are constantly fighting to ensure that they receive enough new and properly serviced appliances, personal protective equipment and safety equipment to do their jobs properly.

In Queensland and across Australia, firefighter health and safety is constantly at risk due to exposure to toxins like diesel particulates and others we encounter through the course of daily work.

Right now, the United Firefighters Union of Australia is working to have a further seven cancers recognised under presumptive legislation, providing firefighters with improved access to assistance and compensation should they become ill.

We'll be in touch to keep you updated further but if you'd like more information on your national union, please contact [office@ufua.asn.au](mailto:office@ufua.asn.au) or visit [www.ufua.asn.au](http://www.ufua.asn.au)

Yours in unity,



Greg McConville  
National President  
United Firefighters Union of Australia