

**QUEENSLAND FIRE AND RESCUE -**  
**SENIOR OFFICERS UNION OF EMPLOYEES**

**P.O. Box 217**  
**LUTWYCHE QLD 4030**

## **NEWSLETTER**

*Issue No.16*

*23 October 2008*

### **UFU website article: “They get the goldmine – we get the shaft”**

#### **CA 2006 - Initiatives by industrial organisations**

Industrial organisations that are signatories to the CA Agreement 2006 have a number of initiatives still being progressed. For example, the SOU is engaged in a Senior Officer’s review to implement a three-rank structure and the UFU is engaged in initiatives related to work value.

Regardless of the industrial organisations involved, the SOU views these (and any other initiatives) as equally important and recognises that these should proceed independently of each other by the relevant industrial organisations.

On 14 August SOU representatives met a senior representative of the UFU to discuss the EB initiatives and how they were mutually exclusive, yet equally important. It was agreed they were distinct and separate initiatives and neither industrial organisation would place at risk or jeopardise either of these initiatives or “leverage” off the other’s initiatives or strategies.

#### **Article on UFU website**

On the 14 October the UFU placed an article on its website under the heading “Ballot Commences” and sub-titled “They get the goldmine – we get the shaft”. I consider the UFU article is emotive and provides factually incorrect reference to the Senior Officer’s review.

This article further states (incorrectly) that the Senior Officer’s review will progress at the expense of the work value claim that is being pursued by the UFU. If this factually incorrect article is taken on face value, it could place at risk the Senior Officer’s review, which is a key strategy to our 2006 Certified Agreement.

At no time has the SOU provided opinions for or against the offer for the work value case and has complied with the agreed position of keeping these initiatives as separate issues. Also, as all members would be aware, the Senior Officer’s review is still being progressed with the final outcome yet to be determined.

#### **Right of reply**

The SOU was extremely disappointed with this article and I contacted the UFU and asked they retract the article with an offer to discuss the issue and provide the UFU with a right of reply to our questions prior to taking any further actions. This contact was by email and telephone (twice) to seek feedback as to why this article appeared and that it contradicted the agreed position between the two industrial organisations.

Unfortunately, the reply received by email late on Thursday stated that it could not be withdrawn. The SOU can only conclude that the UFU is not prepared to change the article to meet the previously agreed position to keep industrial initiatives separate.

#### **Representation for Senior Officers**

As some Senior Officers are members of the UFU, the UFU has representative input into the review process. It appears that as well as a desire to “leverage” the initiative of one industrial organisation against the initiative of

another industrial organisation, their actions do not always appear to be in the best interests of a minority group of its members, being those Senior Officers who are members of the UFU. This raises the question of ethical conduct as an industrial representative.

The SOU is still interested in the reasons why the UFU has taken this approach. Any formal communications that puts the Senior Officer's review at any risk is unacceptable to the SOU and, in the interests of industrial accord, I would welcome further dialogue with the UFU regarding the position they have taken.

If any member has any queries, please contact the State President.

*Bruce Byatt*

**Bruce BYATT**

**STATE PRESIDENT**

**Queensland Fire and Rescue -**

**Senior Officers Union of Employees**