

Issues Forum – Senior Officers Union - MINUTES

**Deputy Commissioners Office - Kedron Park Building - Corner Kedron Park and Park Roads Kedron
24 February 2010 - 10:00am – 12: noon**

Attendees		
Iain MacKenzie - Deputy Commissioner QFRS	John Cawcutt - State President SOU	
Phil Horn – Deputy Commissioner’s Staff Officer QFRS	Andrew Short - State Secretary SOU	
Christiane Strong – Employment Relations Officer	John Martin – Principal Advisor Industrial Relations	
Stewart Rinkevich - Senior Employment Relations Advisor		
Item No.	Topic	Action Item/s
Action Items from previous meetings:-		
1.1 - SO04-09-05	<p>Demarcation Between Industrial Bodies:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SOU attended the QPSU vs SOU Industrial Commission Hearing 17-19 February 2010, defending the right to represent QFRS Senior Officers who work within Rural Operations. The full bench will now consider both sides of arguments presented and provide a decision within the next two months. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to be provided at next SOU Issues Forum.
1.2 - SO-04-09-06	<p>PDO’s:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous action item was that QFRS was to provide written notification on how to correctly fill out the timesheet together with an example of a correctly filled out timesheet; Discussion around “actual” hours being deployable hours with roster hours being actual hours. Staff have been filling out timesheets in a variety of ways. If a PDO is taken, perhaps list it as “0” hours and place it in the “Remarks” column, not in the TOIL column as it is not considered TOIL. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phil Horn to liaise with Judy Henderson to provide administrative clarity on how to fill out timesheets for PDO’s for purposes of consistency across the board.
1.3 - SO-04-09-09	<p>New Communications Manager Rank:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion around Rural –vs- Urban considerations and Firecom staff coming onto a Fireground (ie. 501 Tango I deployment situations) where you cannot tell the difference in rank as an identifier. The questions was also raised that if three impellers were worn, does this make them “at level” because they are wearing this. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of letter to the UFU regarding Communicatons Markings to be forwarded to the SOU. No further action required.

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1.4 - SO-12-09-01	<p>Changes to HR Delegations for Inspector Ranked Senior Officers:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new HR delegations (February 2010) have QFRS Inspectors at level 6 and Superintendent & C/Superintendent at level 5. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10.2 Approve a change in hours for an employee, from full-time to part-time, or a variation to existing part-time arrangements. (done on a daily basis) – delegations to Level 5 in February 2010 HR Delegations Manual; ○ 11.3 Approve roster variations (employer or employee initiated). (done on a daily basis) -) – delegations to Level 5 in February 2010 HR Delegations Manual; ○ 12.4 Cancel, defer or recall an employee from annual leave - now 12.6 in new HR Delegations Manual – to Level 5; ○ 12.7 Approve special leave without pay up to a maximum of three months - now 12.9 – to Level 5; ○ 13.1 Approve overtime for employees - now 13.2 – to Level 6; ○ 17.3 Approve travelling and relieving expenses of fire-fighters. (done on a daily basis) – now 16.3 – to Level 6; ○ 25.1 Approve the conclusion of a probation period and confirm appointment - now 24.1 – to Level 6. • Copy of new HR Delegations Manual (February 2010) together with DCS HR Delegations Amendment Form given to SOU should they wish to apply for HR Delegation level changes in the future. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further action required.
1.5 - SO-12-09-02	<p>Senior Officer Position (Inspector Level)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SOU had raised that a senior officers position (Inspector level) sitting in Ops/Business management was to be re-classified as a public servant position. As this position was accounted for as part of the review, did this mean that there is a reduction in the total number of Senior Officers. • DC-QFRS advised that there was no loss of position, that this particular position had been and always would be a dual-classified position and can be filled by uniformed and non-uniformed staff. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further action required.
1.6 - SO-12-09-03	<p>Rural and Remote Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Horn has commenced research into rural and remote policy to be reviewed as regards history and also to look into any relativities, especially in relation to Roma. • SOU to be involved in consultation process and Standing Order to be done. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to be provided at next SOU Issues Forum

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<p>1.7 - General Business – 15 December 2009 Minutes</p>	<p>Draft 2009 Award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns were raised over old workload descriptors for Senior Officers still being within the Award. The concern was that staff would see old information in the Award and become confused; Award was supposed to occur at the same stage as the Agreement but that did not eventuate, thus John Martin (ESU) has advised Michelle Swindells to file the application for the new Award; Discussion around taking the FPO3/4 rank out with a statement pointing towards Role Descriptions and including rank and rates of pay only. Any wording to do with the Mercer Review should also be taken out. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was agreed between the SOU and QFRS to meet outside this Forum with the inclusion of Michelle Swindells to discuss. No further action required in this Forum.
<p>1.8 - General Business – 15 December 2009 Minutes</p>	<p>Adoption of PS Directives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Martin has forwarded a list of provisions of the Public Service Act 2008 and Directives for application to employees of the QFRS as per attached tabled document. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further action required.
<p>New Agenda Items:-</p>		
<p>SO-2010-02-01</p>	<p>(a) - Senior Officers Annual Leave Audits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Leave Audit conducted by SSA and IR February 2009, it was found that one Officer was still accruing leave at the rate of 40 hours per week, instead of 38 hours a week, even though the February 2009 Audit was completed to correct this very issue. There was concern that other Senior Officers may be accruing incorrectly as well – Leigh-Anne Sorensen requested a report be generated in order to search for any anomalies and this has now been forwarded to Stewart Rinkevich to follow up on a couple of anomalies. <p>(b) - Senior Officers Annual Leave Audit – [REDACTED]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This has now been resolved by Leigh-Anne Sorensen, Senior Employee Relations Advisor – QFRS who went through the audit process with SSA. A review of the HR/Payroll process has endeavoured to ensure that this does not occur again with a series of recommendations having been put forward. 	<p>Action:</p> <p>(a) Greg Coughlan – Executive Director of HR to be approached to ask if SOU has been briefed on the parameters of the Leave Audit;</p> <p>(b) No further action required.</p>

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SO-2010-02-02	<p>Senior Officer Review Update by Stewart Rinkevich – Senior Employee Relations Adviser -</p> <p>Chief Superintendent Appointment Letters: Final successful / unsuccessful (notification of appointment) correspondence, relating to the last two Chief Superintendent appointments, (Northern Region – Steven Barber & South-Western Region – Lindsay Hackett) are being prepared – should be ready for distribution by Friday.</p> <p>Stage One Review – Stage Two: The Commissioner and Director-General have signed off on the review of Stage One, (Chief Superintendents) and have given permission for Stage Two of the Senior Officer’s Review to commence.</p> <p>Senior Officer’s Review Website: Website is now fully operational. Can be accessed through the drop-down list on the left hand side of DCS Portal: Our Organisation – QFRS – Senior Officers Review</p> <p>Newsletters: Latest newsletter (Number 23) was released two weeks ago.</p> <p>Chief Superintendent Back Payments: Mercer Work Value Review Report (4 August 2008) recommended six positions be re-classified to a higher level, (Chief Superintendent):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Manager – Operations Directorate • Executive Manager – Community Safety • Director – School of Fire and Rescue Service Training (SFRST) • Manager – Strategic Development, South-East Region • Manager – Strategic Development, Brisbane Region • Manager – Operational Support, Brisbane Region 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back payments to be progressed as soon as possible; • No further action required.

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SO-2010-02-03	<p>ERV's for Scientific Inspectors/Inspectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matter was to progress outside the EB; • Lack of availability of ERV's for on-call Scientific Unit Inspectors; • In March 2009, a number of Scientific Unit Inspectors put their concerns in writing to the Chief Superintendent (memo dated 17 March 2009) and called for ERVs to be allocated to Scientific Unit Inspectors who were expected to be available to respond to incidents. • At the Scientific Unit meeting held 25 May 2009, the Chief Superintendent advised that he had put a business case to the Deputy Commissioner for a dedicated vehicle for the second on-call Scientific Unit Inspector, which had been 'noted' by the Deputy Commissioner but not approved at this stage. • At the Scientific Unit meeting held 21 September 2009, the Chief Superintendent reiterated that Scientific Unit Inspectors' incident response kits are still to be left at the Special Operations Complex and that secondary response Inspectors are to proceed via taxi to Cannon Hill to collect their kits prior to attending incidents. • As outlined in the memo dated 17 March 2009, taxis are notoriously unreliable and this approach introduces significant complication, delay and stress. It creates an additional impost on work/life balance, due to greater time away from home, and impacts on the ability to manage fatigue. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that a range of issues pertinent to this agenda item should be discussed in a separate meeting outside of the SOU Issues Forum; • This meeting should involve Iain MacKenzie, Phil Horn, Andrew Short, John Cawcutt, Dr. Michael Logan and Ray Bott.
SO-2010-02-04	<p>SOU Member ██████████ – NCR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ██████████ had asked for an independent review to be undertaken of the data/information relating to his sick leave balance, the initial date of completion being 08 January, 2010 with a review extension having been granted; • Andrew Short stated that Leigh-Anne Sorensen had undertaken a comprehensive audit on ██████████ and had provided him with detail to take away to peruse and indicate back whether he agreed or disagreed. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further action required.

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SO-2010-02-05	<p>Mandatory Retirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990</i> Division 2 28 (1) dictates that QFRS Officers must retire from the service on reaching the age of 65. It has been raised by a Senior Officer that in consideration of the Federal Government direction on the retirement age being extended to 67 years, they have a valid case to seek intervention and representation by the SOU to challenge the current mandatory retirement age of 65 for Fire Officers. It is of the belief that if Officers are fit and healthy and able to continue to serve in a meaningful way, they should be allowed to continue service past 65 years of age. DC-QFRS stated that nothing could be done under the Act in the short term, however he was happy to commence discussions around reviewing this. DC-QFRS also pointed out that there would be a need to find a way of being certain an Officer is fit to continue undertaking duties as an operational firefighter. <p>There are a range of issues to consider associated with changing the age of retirement from 65 to 67:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The UFU's view on doing this; What the appropriate medical standards would be to prove an officer could continue to work post the age of 65; Can changes be made to the Act so that any mention of retirement is not mentioned or should changes be made to the Act to reflect the retirement age of 67 to become consistent with staff obtaining the pension; Would Q-Super need to be engaged in any discussions involving this issue; <p>Fit for Duty Draft Paper:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Bartholomew WPH&S has distributed a copy of the draft "Fit for Duty" Paper to the SOU for feedback. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERU to investigate what the police service currently do as regards mandatory retirement and liaise with the anti-discrimination commissioner.

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SO-2010-02-06	<p>Allowing for Increased Energy Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enquiry about the electricity portion of salary sacrificing which is currently \$1333 per FBT year – given the increase in costs between 15%-30%, was there any intention to increase the allowable SS limit to keep pace with the rise in electricity costs? New figure suggested is around \$1725 with a commitment to review annually; DC-QFRS stated that from the taxation perspective, the “employer” here is deemed to be the whole of Queensland government and that the figure set for electricity for salary sacrificing as such is across the whole of Queensland government. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOU to pass on to Michael Thomas from the QPSU to liaise with the Queensland Council of Unions in order to ascertain a way forward.
General Business		
SO-2010-02-07	<p>VER's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A SOU member had heard that the government did not obtain sufficient numbers to take up SES VER's and would now open this up to AO6'-AO8's; DC-QFRS stated that any VER's would exclude operational agencies. 	<p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further action required.
	<p>Next Meeting Tuesday 20 April, 2010 10:00am - 12:00 noon DC-QFRS Office</p>	