



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

P.O. Box 217
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NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 1

9 January 2009

2008 – A summary

At the beginning of 2008 the SOU established a number of goals, including improving our governance (rules), management and our administration, and also completing the Senior Officer's Review.

Achievements

Achievements in 2008 include the completion of the review of our rules and these being approved by the QIRC. These included our new name and the subsequent development of our logo. From a governance and management perspective, these new rules have opened up many opportunities to improve the SOU.

Another goal was to complete the election process for office positions, which is in the final stages of elections for those positions that were contested. The results of these elections will be received from the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) in the near future and members will be informed of the results. Through these processes our administration has been strengthened, including the issuing of more frequent Newsletters to keep members informed of issues and events.

Website

The most important advancement in the administration of the SOU in 2008 has been the development of a website. This is now "live" and is accessible through the following link: <http://www.qfr-sou.asn.au/>. Although all SOU Executive members contributed to the content and this process, the current Treasurer (and Secretary from 1 February 2009) Andrew Short has been the driver towards the development of this website for the SOU. Perusal of this site will demonstrate how well it has been developed and the SOU congratulates Andrew on this outcome.

State Conference Resolution

One of the resolutions passed at the State Conference (AGM) in May related to payment for positions that were upgraded as a result of the evaluations undertaken in the Senior Officer's Review. To meet the requirements of this resolution (once the evaluation outcomes were known) the SOU wrote to the QFRS seeking back pay for Senior Officers serving in the positions that were evaluated at a rank higher than the incumbents. Correspondence received in reply supported this request and those officers who have served in these positions will be paid back pay from the 4 August 2008. The payments will be made when the positions are re-classified and subsequent filling of these positions.

Senior Officer's Review

The Senior Officer's Review has been a long process that is still progressing. Understandably, some members have raised concerns about this as some members find certain aspects challenging. The

SOU is confident that these concerns will be alleviated as time progresses as certainty replaces uncertainty.

The key issues from an SOU perspective are that no Senior Officer will be disadvantaged as a result of this review. On the contrary, workload reductions will result as this review progresses that will improve work/life balance, opportunities will be available to all and many Senior Officers will benefit from these opportunities. Further Newsletters on this process are expected shortly.

ERV's

The issue of ERV's is continuing with the SOU being advised on suitable vehicles as a result of testing at Mt. Cotton. Further testing is likely in the coming weeks with the goal to have a final outcome as soon as possible.

2009 – The challenges

The coming year is likely to be as busy as ever for the SOU, with many challenges and opportunities. In addition to completing the Senior Officer's Review and developing more decision-making activities involving the newly-elected State Council, the major issue will be the development of the log of claims and subsequent negotiations for the 2009 enterprise bargaining process.

Like all Senior Officers, the SOU has been observing with interest the activities and outcomes of the negotiations and offers between the State Government and other industrial organisations, including those occurring within the DES. The SOU will be analysing these outcomes, the basis for the decisions that led to the outcomes and assess the implications and opportunities for members of the SOU.

The outcomes of these assessments will be taken into consideration when formulating out forthcoming log of claims. Also, the SOU has members from Urban, Rural and Scientific Operations and recognises that this log of claims must be holistic and consider the issues facing all members in these three separate groups. The SOU encourages all members to consider what claims are appropriate and realistic for the SOU to put forward in its next log of claims.

In this regard many activities will occur in the coming months to develop and progress this log of claims and members will be kept informed through regular Newsletters.



Ron James
State Secretary
Queensland Fire and Rescue -
Senior Officers Union of Employees