



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

**P.O. Box 217  
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## **NEWSLETTER**

Issue No. 7

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### **SOU 'Close of 2009' Update**

#### **Programmed Day Off (PDO)**

The SOU met with the Deputy Commissioner and IR on the 24th November 2009 with regards to clarifying the application and use of the Programmed Day Off now that the 2009 Certified Agreement has been ratified on the 16 November 2009. What follows is the background to these discussions and details around the application of the PDO from today onwards.

1. The SOU Executive met with the Deputy Commissioner and IR on the 13 August 2009 to discuss the PDO. The SOU were seeking permission for its members to begin accessing the PDO prior to the date of the ratification by the Industrial Commission, as the SOU recognised the organisation's opposition to accumulating more than one PDO. The minutes of the meeting recorded that QFRS had no opposition to seniors beginning to access PDOs and that formal notification would go out to Senior Officers through their respective Assistant Commissioners. This notification did not occur.
2. On the 16 November the Certified Agreement was ratified by the Industrial Commission. Further information was obtained by QFRS and IR in relation to backdating conditions in addition to pay and their advice was that they could not backdate conditions, only pay.
3. However, as a sign of good will and as a result of the minutes of the meeting on the 13th August, QFRS has agreed to recognise and apply the PDO for this calendar year as follows:
  - a. All senior officers who have worked the appropriate hours (minimum of 8 hrs per day) and have recorded same on their pay sheets from the 13 August to 31 December 2009 will have access to 4 PDO's. Note that an officer does not accrue the additional hours toward a PDO when they are on AL or long service, so any member who has or will be accessing leave during this time will have to recalculate their entitlement.
  - b. For the members who are entitled to 4 PDO's, **two must be taken prior to the end of November and two must be taken by the end of December 31**. For those who have to take two prior to the end of November then there is an expectation by the Deputy that may roll over to the first week in December if this is required. The two PDO's for December could be used for the period between Xmas and New Year when we are usually required to access AL during this period, but this will be the decision of the individual officer. For the periods of November and the December period, QFRS will allow two PDO's to be taken consecutively.

- c. All hours will be zeroed on the 1 January 2010, and officers will start accruing the hours for PDOs for the next calendar year as from this date. It will be up to the individual officer to continually record their own hours in the event of an audit. The SOU is still awaiting further advice as to the provision of an appropriate timesheet.

The SOU Executive believes that these negotiations securing potentially 4 PDOs for this calendar year is a good outcome. That said, the Executive also acknowledges that this undertaking is a sign of good will from QFRS and recognises the deserving nature of this condition for Senior Officers.

### **Pay Arrangements for 2009 Enterprise Agreement**

Advice has been received that the change to pay rates (in line with the first year 4.5% increase) should occur prior to the end of December 2009, with back pay forthcoming early in 2010.

### **Common Interest Agreement with Queensland Police Commissioner Officers Union (QPCOU)**

With the advent of the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and QFRS now being administered by the one Minister and the commonality of work practices and industrial issues confronting Senior QFRS and QPS Officers, the SOU Executive has been in discussion with the QPCOU in an effort to forge a "common interest agreement." This agreement would formalise cooperative arrangements between both unions so that they could share information around conditions and strategies for certified agreement negotiations. In addition, in the event of an industrial issue of a critical nature (as opposed to normal IR and certified agreement negotiations) then there is also provision for a united stance to be taken by both unions. On the basis that there is a great opportunity to improve the cooperation, profile and effectiveness of both unions, the Executive Committee of both unions have recently finalised the drafting of the agreement document, with the document scheduled to be formally signed by the respective Presidents on the 9 December 2009.

### **SOU - QPSU Matter Update**

As members will be aware the SOU are still defending our right to represent QFRS Senior Officers who work within Rural Operations. The matter is set down for 17, 18, 19 February 2010 in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC). A significant amount of preparation for the QIRC hearing continues to occur, and the SOU formally recognises the efforts of members Steve Crouch, Paul Adcock, Peter Hollier and Ron James in leading these preparation efforts. Their individual and group contribution is greatly appreciated. The SOU position remains the same as previously communicated, in that we believe Rural Seniors can legitimately receive and maintain membership of the SOU.

### **Resignation of Long Standing SOU Member**

In line with his recent transition into retirement, former QFRS Superintendent John van Klaveren AFSM recently tendered his SOU resignation, effective 15 November 2009. The famous football coach Vince Lombardi had a view about the role of commitment in achieving success. This view, expressed in his words, is as follows: ***"Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work"***. The SOU Executive formally recognises John's contribution (over many years) to our great union.

'Season's Greetings' to all SOU members. Have a great Xmas and see you in 2010.



Andrew Short AFSM  
**State Secretary**  
**Queensland Fire and Rescue -**  
**Senior Officers Union of Employees**