



**UNITED FIREFIGHTERS UNION OF AUSTRALIA
WEST AUSTRALIAN BRANCH
CIRCULAR**

President: Frank Martinelli

Secretary: Kevin Jolly

9th August 2013

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Cancer Protection for WA Firefighters 2013

Attention All Members:

This week the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, Joe Francis introduced the Presumptive Legislation Amendments to the WA Worker's Compensation Act to extend protection for WA Firefighters who develop any of the 12 listed occupational cancers.

It was a historic moment and the Parliamentary process has begun in Western Australia, we expect no opposition to the Bill because all the political parties and State Politicians have expressed their strong support for these Workers Compensation protections for Firefighters.

The Union is indebted to the Premier Colin Barnett for his strong leadership and support on this issue, together with Minister Joe Francis and the previous Minister Troy Buswell. Without their support the necessary changes to Workers' Compensation law in WA would not have been introduced.

The Union also pays tribute to Margaret Quirk, the Opposition Spokesperson for Fire and Emergency Services for her work for our members to achieve these protections and for her stewardship of the issues through the State Labor Party. The Union also acknowledges Marty Aldridge the newly elected National Party member for the Agricultural region for his work to assist us to lobby the National Party effectively and for securing the support of the National Party. The Union also thanks Giz Watson and the Greens members of Parliament for their assistance and support.

The support and commitment from Commissioner Gregson and Deputy Commissioner Bailey cannot be overlooked - both the senior officers understood the issues and the need to address the problems to further protect Firefighters in their time of need.

Finally, the work performed on this campaign by the Officials, Branch Committee and previous Branch Committee, and in particular our past Secretary - Graeme Geer, could not have been achieved without the advice and evidence from our International Firefighter colleagues - Alex Forrest IAFF Vice President and Chief Ken Block from Edmonton. Together with our members who testified about their experiences with Cancer and the treatments, and the pressure of additional costs on them and their families - the science and arguments developed a real and "human face".

We cannot underestimate the generosity of our members who have struggled with cancer and various medical treatments, and in particular we note the statements made through the media and to politicians by our late member's widows and family members. This campaigning took an enormous toll on those families and was completely unselfish - it was for the benefit of Firefighters in the future. We remain forever in their debt and dedicate this legislative protection to them and the Firefighters who have died as a result of occupational cancer.

Strength in Unity,

Kevin Jolly
Secretary

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