

## 1. From the Secretary

Henry Lawrence

### Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery

Back on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016 we began publishing a regular item in our newsletter titled “Lessons Learned.” This section in our newsletters is popular with not only members of the Aviation Branch but is also popular with members of the UFUA across Australia via our national magazine, “The Australian Firefighter.” In this edition of “The Bumper Monitor” we will be publishing “Lessons Learned Number 6” with numbers 7 and 8 ready for publication in future editions and already submitted to the editor of “The Australian Firefighter” for future editions of that publication.

In the March edition of “The Monitor” in Chat with the Chief it is interesting to note that ARFF are intending to do the same thing via “Major incident reviews [lessons learnt]. They say that *“imitation is the sincerest form of flattery”* so thanks for the compliment Chief.

### Blood testing PFAs

On a recent visit to Sydney CEO Harfield told our members that testing was available to staff who wanted to be tested and that he would talk to the EGM about the best contact person in ARFF.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> February our WHS Coordinator followed up on this with ARFF but didn’t get any confirmation that testing was available. At a meeting in Canberra on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February the Branch President and Branch Secretary raised the matter with ARFF representatives who said this wasn’t correct and that the CEO was misinformed or didn’t understand ARFF policy on the matter. On the 24<sup>th</sup> February the Branch Secretary sent the following email to the CEO:

**From:** branchsecretary@ufuav.asn.au [mailto:branchsecretary@ufuav.asn.au]  
**Sent:** Friday, 24 February 2017 9:14 AM  
**To:** 'jason.harfield@airservicesaustralia.com' <jason.harfield@airservicesaustralia.com>  
**Subject:** Blood testing [PFAA levels]  
**Importance:** High



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Good morning Jason,

Our Sydney members have told me that when you visited them at their station recently you indicated that anyone who wanted testing of the PFAA levels in their blood system could ask and AS/ARFF would pay for the testing.

Can you please confirm if this is the case and who they should be contacting to request to be able to access the testing?

Sincerely

Henry Lawrence  
Branch Secretary UFUA Aviation Branch

As no response had been received by the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, the Branch Secretary made the following further enquiry:

**From:** branchsecretary@ufuav.asn.au [mailto:branchsecretary@ufuav.asn.au]  
**Sent:** Friday, 3 March 2017 1:23 PM  
**To:** 'jason.harfield@airservicesaustralia.com' <jason.harfield@airservicesaustralia.com>  
**Subject:** FW: Blood testing [PFAA levels]  
**Importance:** High

Good morning Jason

I am just following up on my email to you on 24<sup>th</sup> February in regard to testing of PFA levels in our members blood system. Please refer to below.

Can you please confirm if our members are able to have their levels tested on request as indicated by at Sydney recently.

sincerely

Henry Lawrence  
Branch Secretary UFUA Aviation Branch

The response to this was a telephone call scolding the Branch Secretary for sending correspondence directly to the CEO but not direct answer to the question, "is testing available?"

It is evident that our persistence has paid off to the extent of ARFF saying in The Monitor issued on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March that they are now "looking closely at a number of options which may involve offering blood testing in the future. This means they are now reconsidering their position on this matter.

Understand that what was published in The Monitor under the title 'THE FULL STORY ON PFAS' is far from the full story and we will continue to pursue this issue with every means at our disposal.

#### **EA negotiations getting under way**

As reported in our separate EA 2017 newsletters, negotiations for a new EA start next week on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> March in Brisbane. The following week on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March negotiations will be conducted in Melbourne.

The EGM said in the February edition of The Monitor that "the nature of the relationship with the Union will be key to a timely negotiation process that results in a successful outcome for you." Why then would a member of the ARFF management team say to members that the Union is a toothless tiger and don't bother them with any issues at the moment because they won't want to be upsetting management before starting EA negotiations. That sort of statement is insulting and hardly conducive to a good relationship with you, who are the Union. We are treating that comment with the contempt it deserves. Your Union is constantly working on improving relations with ARFF, but as they say, it takes two to tango.

If you hear these sort of ridiculous comments on what your Union might or might not be doing just ignore them because management doesn't have a clue about what your Union is doing. If you want the facts on what is going on, contact your Station Organiser, Branch Committee of Management Delegate or the Union office.