

BULLETIN

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TO ALL UFU MEMBERS

MFB MANAGEMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NO SHAME! THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN!

To add insult to injury, after Mr Tony Murphy gave incorrect evidence before the Royal Commission regarding implied sick leave abuse by firefighters and subsequently having had to correct the record, the Branch Secretary has today been contacted by the Sunday Herald Sun, which, after speaking with the MFB, has stated that it will be running an article in tomorrow's paper that will basically attempt to again denigrate MFB firefighters and portray them as habitual sick leave abusers.

As employees of the MFB, you should be absolutely disgusted at the ongoing and continuing attempt by senior MFB management at portraying you as sick leave abusers.

This latest attempt by the MFB puts into context how genuine and sincere the Chief Fire Officer's retraction really was.

I will let you make up your own mind about that, however, it is your employer which is simply continuing to attempt to reduce your credibility even after having made and subsequently withdrawn an incorrect statement, which has (as the MFB alleges) been misquoted and taken out of context. Please note the Age newspaper does not agree with the MFB's assertion of being miss-quoted.

The UFU has clearly stated to the Sunday Herald Sun that we will not dignify ongoing slander concerning our members by providing a response to such an article.

Members should also take note that the UFU had in mid September this year specifically requested the following documents from the MFB regarding a breakdown of sick leave:

- Report to Parliament regarding sick leave within the MFB by the Victorian Auditor-Generals' Office
- Findings as a result of an 'expert analysis' in 2008 on Strategic Risk – Attendance
- Information relating to MFB's attendance management strategy.

As of today's date the MFB has refused to provide these documents and make them available to the Union. The real questions are: what is the MFB hiding, and are their figures, in line with Mr Murphy's statement to the Royal Commission, inflated or misrepresented? Only time will tell, but if the issue is so critical to the MFB and as bad as they allege it is (of which we disagree) then they should simply hand over the documents, rather than force the Union to go to court to seek orders for their release.

We understand that this ongoing attack and attempted denigration on UFU members is causing and has caused a significant amount of unwarranted stress. In this context we encourage members to seek assistance either via MFB support and/or accessing their legal entitlements for leave and/or Workcover, as we do not want members suffering significant breakdowns, or indeed any other life threatening illness as a result of the high level of anxiety, and/or depression that this attack is already causing a number of members who have contacted the office.

In closing please contact the branch secretary if you prefer not to access MFBs support system, and the UFU will be able to provide you with the relevant contacts that can assist you.

Authorised by:

Peter Marshall,

Branch Secretary

Strength in Unity

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