



22 April 2024

Leigh Hills
Tasmania Branch Secretary
United Firefighters' Union of Australia-Tasmania Branch
Sent via email: ufutas@ufutas.com

cc: Gregory McConville admin@ufua.asn.au

Dear Leigh Hills



IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED:

You must take steps after your recent election E2023/194

An election has recently been completed by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for the United Firefighters' Union of Australia-Tasmania Branch and a post-election report has been issued by the AEC.

This letter explains the next steps you must take, including what information you need to give to members and what information you need to lodge with the Fair Work Commission (the Commission).

What you must do right now

- Let your members know about the election report issued by the AEC
- Arrange financial training for officers newly elected to an office with financial management duties. (This includes all members of the committee of management).
- Complete the notification of change and email it to the Commission at regorgs@fwc.gov.au

This letter explains these steps and the tools available to help you.

STEP 1: Notify members

You must put a notice on your website once you receive your post-election report. It must tell your members they can request a copy of the post-election report from you or the AEC (regulation 141). The notice must be on your website for at least three months.



Can we put more information on our website?

Yes! Being transparent is part of good governance. You can publish the whole report or the declaration of results, as well as your notice and leave them up longer than three months. You can always do more than the regulatory minimum.

The Commission will also publish your declaration of results on our [website](#).

STEP 2: Financial training

You may have to arrange financial training for people elected to new roles.

All officers with financial management duties must complete approved financial training (section 293K). For information on when officers must redo training and hints on when to book training for officers taking up multiple offices [please see our fact sheet](#).

There are face-to-face and online [financial training packages on the Commission website](#).

You must act on this now, as affected officers **MUST** complete approved financial training OR receive an [exemption by the Commission](#) **within six months** of beginning to hold office.



Good governance tip:

Organisations should instruct officer holders about their other obligations. This is especially important for committee of management members.

Our podcast covers the [benefits of officer induction](#). Officers have responsibilities under the rules, the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009* (the RO Act), and disclosure requirements around conflicts of interest, remuneration and material personal interests. Officers will benefit from our [officer induction kit](#) and our [podcast](#), such as [episode 17 - conflicts of interest](#).

STEP 3: Notifications of change



A notification of change must be lodged with the Commission within **35 days** of the change occurring.

We have a [template](#) to help you with this, which you can send to regorgs@fwc.gov.au. An officer must sign the completed notification template.

You must lodge a notification of change if:

- any of your officers have not been re-elected;
- officers have changed offices; or
- you have new officers.

Only notify us of changes that have **already occurred**. If people take up office in the future, you must wait until the change happens before lodging the notification within 35 days of the change.

Note: One election may result in many notifications of change.



Penalties apply

Failing to lodge your notifications of change on time can expose your organisation and its officers to significant penalties.

Real-life example of penalties in Court An organisation failed to make a series of notifications of change on time.

The Full Court said ‘The record-keeping obligations imposed under the Registered Organisations Act are treated by the legislature as important and serious, and contravention of those obligations are correspondingly serious.’

The organisation was ordered to pay a penalty. More information is available in our [case summary](#).



Why do I need to tell you the results of the election when you’ve already received them?

The RO Act requires that **you** tell us this information about your officers – it is a legal obligation. The notification of change also contains information that is not in the declaration of results.

What if the officer has already done training?

Check out our [fact sheet](#) for when officers need to redo training, when they can get an exemption and when further training isn’t required.

If you have any queries we can be contacted on 1300 341 665 or by email at regorgs@fwc.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Fair Work Commission



The Commission has an interim [Compliance Policy](#) which explains how we respond to issues of non-compliance. The policy is available on our website if you would like further information on the steps the compliance team may take in response to non-lodgement of a financial report.

22 April 2024

Post-election report

United Firefighters' Union of Australia
Tasmania Branch
Scheduled Election
E2023/194

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Election(s) Covered in Post-Election Report (PER)

Organisation: United Firefighters' Union of Australia

Election Decision No: E2023/194

Election: Scheduled Election

Date the nominations closed: 2 April 2024

Date results declared: 4 April 2024

Date PER due: 4 May 2024

Relevant legal provisions

Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009 ("the Act")

197 Post-election report by AEC

Requirement for AEC to make report

- (1) After the completion of an election conducted under this Part by the AEC, the AEC must give a written report on the conduct of the election to:
 - (a) the General Manager; and
 - (b) the organisation or branch for whom the election was conducted.

Note: The AEC may be able, in the same report, to report on more than one election it has conducted for an organisation. However, regulations made under paragraph 359(2)(c) may impose requirements about the manner and timing of reports.

- (2) The report must include details of the prescribed matters.

Contents of report—register of members

- (3) If the AEC is of the opinion that the register of members, or the part of the register, made available to the AEC for the purposes of the election contained, at the time of the election:
 - (a) an unusually large proportion of members' addresses that were not current; or
 - (b) in the case of a register kept by an organisation of employees—an unusually large proportion of members' addresses that were workplace addresses;

this fact must be included in the report, together with a reference to any relevant model rules which, in the opinion of the AEC, could assist the organisation or branch to address this matter.

Note: Model rules are relevant only to the conduct of elections for office, not for elections for other positions (see section 147).

Contents of report—difficult rules

- (4) If the report identifies a rule of the organisation or branch that, in the AEC's opinion, was difficult to interpret or apply in relation to the conduct of the election, the report must also refer to any relevant model rules, which in the opinion of the AEC, could assist the organisation or branch to address this matter.

Note: For model rules, see section 147.

Subsection (3) relevant only for postal ballots

- (5) Subsection (3) applies only in relation to elections conducted by postal ballot.

Note: An organisation can obtain an exemption from the requirement to hold elections for office by postal ballot (see section 144).

190 Organisation or branch must not assist one candidate over another

An organisation or branch commits an offence if it uses, or allows to be used, its property or resources to help a candidate against another candidate in an election under this Part for an office or other position.

Penalty: 100 penalty units.

193 Provisions applicable to elections conducted by AEC

- (1) If an electoral official is conducting an election, or taking a step in relation to an election, for an office or other position in an organisation, or branch of an organisation, the electoral official:
 - (a) subject to paragraph (b), must comply with the rules of the organisation or branch; and
 - (b) may, in spite of anything in the rules of the organisation or branch, take such action, and give such directions, as the electoral official considers necessary:
 - (i) to ensure that no irregularities occur in or in relation to the election; or
 - (ii) to remedy any procedural defects that appear to the electoral official to exist in the rules; or
 - (iii) to ensure the security of ballot papers and envelopes that are for use, or used, in the election.
- (2) A person commits an offence if the person does not comply with a direction under subsection (1).

Penalty: 30 penalty units.
- (3) Subsection (2) does not apply so far as the person is not capable of complying.

Note: A defendant bears an evidential burden in relation to the matter in subsection (3) (see subsection 13.3(3) of the *Criminal Code*).
- (4) Subsection (2) does not apply if the person has a reasonable excuse.

Note: A defendant bears an evidential burden in relation to the matter mentioned in subsection (4), see subsection 13.3(3) of the *Criminal Code*.
- (5) An offence against subsection (2) is an offence of strict liability.

Note: For *strict liability*, see section 6.1 of the *Criminal Code*.
- (6) An election for an office or other position conducted by an electoral official, or step taken in relation to such an election, is not invalid merely because of a breach of the rules of the organisation or branch because of:
 - (a) action taken under subsection (1); or
 - (b) an act done in compliance with a direction under subsection (1).
- (7) If an electoral official conducting, or taking a step in connection with, an election for an office or other position:
 - (a) dies or becomes unable to complete the conduct of the election or the taking of the step; or
 - (b) ceases to be qualified to conduct the election or to take the step;the Electoral Commissioner must arrange for the completion of the conduct of the election, or the taking of the step, by another electoral official.

6 Definitions

irregularity, in relation to an election or ballot, includes:

- (a) a breach of the rules of an organisation or branch of an organisation; and
- (b) an act or omission by means of which:
 - (i) the full and free recording of votes by all persons entitled to record votes and by no other persons; or
 - (ii) a correct ascertainment or declaration of the results of the voting; is, or is attempted to be, prevented or hindered; and
- (c) a contravention of section 190.

Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Regulations 2009 ('the Regulations')

140 Declaration of result of election (s 193)

- (1) Within 14 days after the closing day of an election, the AEC must issue a declaration stating the following:
 - (a) the total number of persons on the roll of voters;
 - (b) the total number of ballot papers issued (if applicable);
 - (c) the total number of envelopes that were returned undelivered by the closing day of the ballot to the AEC (if applicable);
 - (d) the total number of ballot papers received by the electoral official by the closing day of the ballot (if applicable);
 - (e) the result of the election;
 - (f) the total number of informal ballot papers (if applicable).
- (2) In subregulation (1), ***closing day***, for an election, means:
 - (a) if a ballot is not required—the day on which nominations for the election close; or
 - (b) if a ballot is required—the closing day of the ballot.
- (3) Immediately after issuing a declaration under subregulation (1), the AEC must give a copy of the declaration to:
 - (a) the General Manager; and
 - (b) the organisation or branch for whom the election was conducted.

141 Post-election report by AEC (s 197(2))

- (1) For subsection 197(2) of the Act, the following matters are prescribed for inclusion in the report (the ***post-election report***) given under subsection 197(1) of the Act:
 - (a) the declaration mentioned in regulation 140;
 - (b) any rules of the organisation or branch which because of ambiguity or other reason, were difficult to interpret or apply;
 - (c) any matters in relation to the roll of voters including those matters contained in subsection 197(3) of the Act;
 - (d) the number of written allegations (if any) of irregularities made to the AEC during the election;
 - (e) action taken by the AEC in relation to those allegations;
 - (f) any other irregularities identified by the AEC and action taken by the AEC in relation to those other irregularities.
- (2) The AEC must:
 - (a) give the post-election report within 30 days after the closing day of the election; and
 - (b) publish a notice on its web site advising that a copy of the post-election report can be obtained from the AEC on the request of a member who was eligible to vote in the election.
- (3) The AEC must supply a copy of the post-election report to the member as soon as practicable, but no later than 7 days, after receiving a request under paragraph (2)(b).

145 Elections conducted by AEC—no unauthorised action

- (1) For any election conducted by the AEC under Part 2 of Chapter 7 of the Act, a person other than the person conducting the election must not do, or purport to do, any act in the conduct of the election other than as directed or authorised by the person conducting the election.

Note: This subregulation is a civil penalty provision (see regulation 168).
- (2) The AEC must advise the General Manager of a possible contravention of subregulation (1) not later than 21 days after the AEC has become aware of the possible contravention.

Declaration of result of election

In accordance with reg 140 of the Regulations, the AEC issued a declaration of the result of election E2024/194 on 4 April 2024. For a copy, see **Attachment A**.

United Firefighters' Union of Australia Rules

United Firefighters' Union of Australia Rules used for the election:

259V: Incorporates alterations of 8 September 2022 [R2022/65] Note: Also includes alterations certified on 24 December 2020 [R2020/200] and 16 July 2021 [R2021/44] which were not included in this rulebook when it was published on 16 July 2021.

Replaces rulebook dated 22 April 2021 [R2020/174]

Roll of Voters

There were no issues with the Roll of Voters.

Written allegations of any irregularities

No written allegations of irregularities were received.

Other irregularities

No irregularities to report.

Signed

Jacqueline McHenry
Returning Officer
Australian Electoral Commission

E: IEBevents@aec.gov.au

P: 03 9285 7111

22 April 2024

Attachments

A. Declaration of Results for Contested Offices

United Firefighters' Union of Australia
Tasmania Branch
DECLARATION OF RESULTS - E2023/194
Uncontested Offices

Scheduled Election

The results of the election for the following offices conducted in accordance with the provisions of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009* and the rules of the organisation are:

Tasmania Branch

President (1)

Candidates

No Nominations Received

Vice President (1)

Candidates

WENDELL-SMITH Alexander

Junior Vice President (1)

Candidates

PATTERSON Jeremy

Secretary (1)

Candidates

HILLS Leigh

Trustee (6)

Candidates

JOYCE Grant

O'DONNELL Mark

RIPPER Jeremy

WOOLFORD Ryan

As the number of nominations accepted did not exceed the number of positions to be filled, I declare the above candidates elected.

Jacqueline McHenry
Returning Officer
Telephone: 03 9285 7111
Email: IEBEvents@aec.gov.au
04/04/2024.



United Firefighters' Union of Australia
Tasmania Branch
DECLARATION OF RESULTS - E2023/194
Uncontested Offices

Scheduled Election

The results of the election for the following offices conducted in accordance with the provisions of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009* and the rules of the organisation are:

Tasmania Branch

President (1)

Candidates

No Nominations Received

Vice President (1)

Candidates

WENDELL-SMITH Alexander

Junior Vice President (1)

Candidates

PATTERSON Jeremy

Secretary (1)

Candidates

HILLS Leigh

Trustee (6)

Candidates

JOYCE Grant

O'DONNELL Mark

RIPPER Jeremy

WOOLFORD Ryan

As the number of nominations accepted did not exceed the number of positions to be filled, I declare the above candidates elected.

Jacqueline McHenry
Returning Officer
Telephone: 03 9285 7111
Email: IEEvents@aec.gov.au
04/04/2024.



DECISION

Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009
s.189—Arrangement for conduct of an election

United Firefighters' Union of Australia
(E2023/194)

MR STEENSON

SYDNEY, 14 FEBRUARY 2024

Arrangement for conduct of election.

[1] On 17 January 2024 the Tasmania Branch (the **Branch**) of the United Firefighters' Union of Australia (the **Organisation**) lodged with the Fair Work Commission (the **Commission**) prescribed information for an election to fill the following offices for new terms of office:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| President | (1) |
| Secretary | (1) |
| Vice President | (1) |
| Junior Vice President | (1) |
| Trustee | (6) |

[2] The Branch did not lodge the prescribed information before the prescribed day as required by regulation 138(3) of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Regulations 2009*. The date that nominations are due to open is specified under sub-rule 27(10)(a) of the organisation's rules,¹ as being 14 March in an election year. As 2024 is an election year, the prescribed information should have been lodged by 14 January 2024, i.e. two months before nominations are due to open.

[3] In its statement of prescribed information dated 17 January 2024, the Branch Secretary stated the delay was due to administrative oversight and error. The Branch has requested that the General Manager of the Commission or his Delegate exercise their power under section 189(2) of the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act (**the RO Act**) to allow a later date for lodgement of the prescribed information.

[4] In reviewing the Branch's history of lodgements of prescribed information, I note that there has already been a pattern of late lodgements, such as in the previous scheduled election

¹ Rulebook R2022/65 certified 8 September 2022.

E2021/16 and in relation to the Branch election in **E2015/72**. Both late lodgements were attributed to administrative error. I note that in E2021/16, I emphasised that the normal and reasonable expectation is that registered organisations and their branches take steps to ensure that they comply with the timeframe requirements set out, not only in the RO Act, but also in the rules of the organisation (which the organisation itself has formulated).²

[5] It could therefore reasonably be expected that, following the previous decision (E2021/16) in which the issue of late lodgement was highlighted, the Branch would take steps to remedy any of the apparent ‘administrative’ deficiencies that resulted in the late lodgement. Unfortunately, this does not appear to have been the case. As indicated above, the current late lodgement in E2023/194 did not provide any further reasons for the delay in lodging the prescribed information beyond it being an ‘administrative oversight and error’.

[6] While I do not doubt the veracity of the reasons set out by the Branch, I am not satisfied that this reason is a sufficient ground to justify the failure to comply with a statutory obligation. Accordingly, I decline on this occasion to allow, under section 189(2) of the RO Act, a later day for lodgement. I draw attention to the fact that the failure to lodge before the prescribed day exposes the organisation to liability under a civil penalty provision, pursuant to section 189(2). Such late lodgement will be considered in circumstances of future non-compliance.

[7] I also draw attention to the matter of *Registered Organisations Commission v Australian Hotels Association*,³ in which the Federal Court imposed substantial penalties on a registered organisation which had contravened section 189(2) of the RO Act on multiple occasions.

[8] Separate to this decision (but related to it), the Commission will seek information from the Branch about the specific steps that it proposes to take to avoid non-compliance with this election-related obligation going forward.

[9] The refusal of an extension of time under section 189(2) of the RO Act does not however affect the requirement to conduct an election under section 189(3) of the RO Act.

[10] I am satisfied that an election for the abovenamed offices is required to be held under the rules of the organisation and, under subsection 189(3) of the RO Act, I am making arrangements for the conduct of the election by the Australian Electoral Commission.



DELEGATE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Printed by authority of the Commonwealth Government Printer

² This was in my capacity as Delegate of the Registered Organisations Commissioner.

³ [2019] FCA 1516.

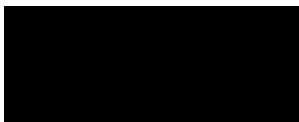
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PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR ELECTIONS in accordance with Section 189 Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009 and Regulation 138 Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Regulations 2009

I, Leigh Hills, being the Secretary of the United Firefighters Union of Australia, Tasmania Branch make the following statement:

1. I am authorised to sign this statement containing prescribed information for United Firefighters Union of Australia, Tasmania Branch.
2. The following information is lodged under subsection 189(1) of the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009 (the RO Act).
3. The elections that are required are set out in the table in Annexure A.
4. No rule alterations are pending that will impact the election.
5. This statement **IS NOT** lodged at least 2 months before nominations open for the election(s) in Annexure A. The reason it is lodged after the prescribed time is:
 - a. Administrative oversight and error. The relevant information needed to be provided on or prior to 14 January 2024
 - b. We respectfully request an extension of time to lodge this information.

Signed:

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of Leigh Hills.

Dated: 17 January 2024

Annexure A

Elections that are required:

| Branch | Name of Office | Number required | Voting System <i>Direct voting system; Collegiate electoral system</i> | Reason for Election <i>Scheduled; Casual vacancy; New office created; Insufficient nominations</i> | Electorate |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--|--|--|
| Tasmania | Secretary | 1 | Direct Voting System | Scheduled | 'all members of a Branch who are financial members at the time of the close of the roll of voters shall be entitled to vote in the election of the President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Assistant Secretary where required, and Trustees of the Branch' – Rule 70.(3)(a) |
| Tasmania | President | 1 | Direct Voting System | Scheduled | 'all members of a Branch who are financial members at the time of the close of the roll of voters shall be entitled to vote in the election of the President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Assistant Secretary where required, and Trustees of the Branch' – Rule 70.(3)(a) |
| Tasmania | Vice President | 1 | Direct Voting System | Scheduled | 'all members of a Branch who are financial members at the time of the close of the roll of voters shall be entitled to vote in the election of the President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Assistant Secretary where required, and Trustees of the Branch' – Rule 70.(3)(a) |
| Tasmania | Junior Vice President | 1 | Direct Voting System | Scheduled | 'all members of a Branch who are financial members at the time of the close of the roll of voters shall be entitled to vote in the election of the President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, |

| | | | | | |
|----------|---------|---|----------------------|-----------|--|
| | | | | | Assistant Secretary where required, and Trustees of the Branch' – Rule 70.(3)(a) |
| Tasmania | Trustee | 6 | Direct Voting System | Scheduled | 'all members of a Branch who are financial members at the time of the close of the roll of voters shall be entitled to vote in the election of the President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Assistant Secretary where required, and Trustees of the Branch' – Rule 70.(3)(a) |

- Important dates:

| | Direct Voting System | Collegiate Electoral System |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Nominations OPEN | 0900 Thursday 14 March 2024- 'date for the opening of nominations shall be the first weekday occurring on or after 14th March' Rule 27(10)(a) | NA |
| Nominations CLOSE | 1700 Monday 1 April 2024 – 'the time on which nominations close shall be 5pm on the first weekday occurring on or after 31st March' Rule 27(10)(b) | NA |
| Roll of Voters cut off date | Thursday 7 March 2021 – 'The roll of voters for any election to be conducted pursuant to this rule is to be closed seven days before the day on which nominations are opened in relation to elections by a direct voting system for all offices in the Union' Rule 27 | NA |