

MEDIA RELEASE

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Federally-registered firefighters' union: ACTU Emergency Services Summit does not represent Australia's professional career firefighters

The federally-registered national union representing professional career firefighters, the United Firefighters Union of Australia ("UFUA"), will not be represented at the ACTU Emergency Services Summit today.

The Summit, originally convened by the ACTU for national affiliate unions to discuss union members' issues in relation to the recent Australian bushfires, will now provide a platform for state-registered unions that are not affiliated to the ACTU to hijack the forum to push their individual agendas against the backdrop of unprecedented fires across the nation.

UFUA National Secretary Peter Marshall said that the move for the national peak body of unions to progress the agendas of individual, state-registered, non-affiliated unions that do not prescribe a national approach was an injustice to the wider trade union movement.

"The Emergency Services Summit should not be used by state-based unions, that are not affiliates of the ACTU, to attack individual state governments and progress their own state-based agendas.

"The Summit was convened in the context of the trauma and devastation experienced by fire-affected communities and frontline workers, in particular professional career firefighters.

"This is a forum to collectively discuss matters between national affiliate unions. This is not the forum to elevate the status of state-based union and long-running, unresolved state-focused issues – which are a matter between that union and the respective state - over the wider, national issue.

The nationally-registered UFUA will be seeking discussions with the ACTU to discuss how to ensure these national forums will not be captured by state-registered, non-affiliate unions in future.

In light of the announcements of state-based fire inquiries in New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria last month, UFUA National Secretary Peter Marshall once again reiterated that a federal Royal Commission was not the answer to the recent bushfires. Instead, a national

COAG Committee should be established to audit the hundreds of recommendations from previous fire-related inquiries and commissions.

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