

Proposal to facilitate firefighters requesting payment of part their recreation leave

There have been a number of occasions where firefighters have requested a payment in lieu of part of their recreation leave balance. Typically this has occurred where the firefighter is facing some form of personal or other financial hardship.

For example, a firefighter may have a recreation leave balance of 14 weeks, and requests a cash payment of 2 weeks recreation leave to address a personal issue. Unfortunately, such requests cannot be accepted under the *NT Fire and Rescue Service Enterprise Agreement*, as there is no provision to facilitate such a request.

In contrast, the majority of employees in the NT public sector can request a payment in lieu of part of their recreation leave. This includes police, nurses, correctional officers, medical officers, Power and Water employees, Darwin Port employees and all general public servants, among others.

In this current bargaining round, an option is to also provide firefighters with the right to request a payment in lieu of part of their recreation leave. This would be subject to conditions, including that the firefighter maintains a minimum leave balance of 4 weeks and that an agreement is made in writing.

Any payment would be a once-off arrangement only, and would not impact on the ordinary accrual of recreation leave.