

Hi. My name is Mike O'Connor.

I don't want to be on this Committee. I don't want to get up in front of its members and I don't want to talk their ears off but I also don't want to sit back and continue to be a part of a National Union that does not have the explicit interests of its members as the first and forefront item on its agenda.

I believe the first step to getting our voices heard and represented, especially at a National level, is to start here on our own doorstep by electing those who do speak for the welfare of us firefighters, implement the rules in the way they were intended and have the balls to make the tough decisions for the majority vote.

I'd like to think I'm a straight shooter, who plays by the rules, listens to both sides of any argument fairly and who would speak for us here on the shop floor in an unbiased and open minded manner.

The manner in which members of our Local were treated over the past year by those who consider themselves above our level has made me realise that we cannot let that degree of gross, ineffective 'leadership' reach the heights it did again.

I think Auckland as a majority member and financial contributor of the National Union should have a vote which equals its membership and remittance proportion. I also believe the retention and recruitment issues facing us require serious consideration and subsequent action.

In closing, I don't know the contract off by heart yet (we already have one of those guys) but I will advocate for change and for new beds if you need them, and I will do it on the behalf of all to the best of my ability.

Mike O'Connor

SFF Mt Wellington Fire Station (Brown watch)