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To: All Members

Dear Brother/Sister

CUTS LEAVE SCARS CAMPAIGN: PETITION AGAINST CUTS TO SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is facing some of the worst cuts to its frontline response since its creation in 2013.

The service has announced £11 million worth of cuts for 2023/24 that will devastate firefighters' ability to keep the public safe. These cuts include 'mothballing' ten fire engines, reducing the number of high-reach appliances from 25 to 14, scrapping the dedicated 24-hour water rescue team covering the River Clyde and slashing hundreds of frontline firefighter posts.

It is projected that a further £25 million worth of savings will need to be found over the next three financial years up to 2026/27 to offset the real-terms budget cuts imposed by the Scottish Government.

The service has already suffered brutal cuts over the last decade, with 1100 firefighter posts removed from the frontline. Response times have increased as a result of fewer firefighters and fewer fire engines available, rising from 7 minutes in 2015/16 to 8 minutes in 2020/21 for the first fire engine arriving at an incident.

The Scottish Government are laying the blame at the door of the fire service, claiming that the cuts are operational decisions by fire service management. The cuts are not operational decisions but the outcome of deliberate under-investment by the Scottish Government, who have slashed £57 million in real-terms from the fire service's budget over the last decade.

Firefighters across Scotland have been tirelessly campaigning to raise awareness of the risks to public safety and pressure the Scottish Government to properly invest in the service to stop and reverse cuts.

As firefighters, we know first-hand the danger cuts pose to our communities. We lead the way in fighting back against any cuts that fire service bosses try to inflict. That is why it is vital that we get behind Scottish firefighters and support them in their campaign.

A petition directed at Siobhian Brown MSP, Minister for Victims and Community Safety, demanding an end to the cuts is now live. Please sign it and share it with your co-workers, families and friends.

You can find the petition on Megaphone at the following link: <https://www.megaphone.org.uk/petitions/fbu-scotland-cutsleavescars>

There will be more action over the coming weeks in opposition to these cuts. We will keep you informed of any developments and how you can get involved.

Yours in unity

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Wrack". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matt Wrack
General Secretary

MW/sa