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Circular: 2024HOC0345MW

Date: **04/09/2024**

To: **All Members**

Dear Brother/Sister,

Grenfell Tower Inquiry – Phase 2 Report

The final report of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry has now been published. The FBU was a core participant of the Inquiry, and we represented the interests of firefighters and control staff throughout.

First and foremost, this is a time to remember 72 people who tragically lost their lives in a horrific and entirely preventable disaster. The FBU shares the grief and anger of the bereaved, survivors and residents of Grenfell Tower. Throughout the past seven years, the FBU has demanded justice and FBU members have attended the regular commemorative walks in the community. We will continue to demonstrate our solidarity in any way we can.

This is also a difficult time for many firefighters and fire control staff. We remember the bravery, professionalism, and commitment of those who responded to the Grenfell Tower fire and did their best in impossible conditions to save lives. We have defended the role of front-line firefighters and emergency control staff from the start. From the start, we have made the obvious point that firefighters did not re-develop Grenfell Tower and did not cause the numerous failings in fire safety which led to such a terrible disaster.

For decades before the fire, and years after it, the FBU warned that deregulation, privatisation and cuts were endangering lives. This report completely vindicates our position. It makes clear that the fire was the result of decades of failure by central government to regulate the building industry – the prioritisation of private profit over human life.

It sets out how construction companies gamed the system to maximise their profits, and how a system of semi privatised building control put commercial interests ahead of regulatory duties.

Again and again, residents and firefighters warned of the dangers of combustible cladding but were ignored.

We are still digesting the report's recommendations. In time, we will give a detailed summary of them and how and whether we support each of them. On first reading, many are worthwhile, but it is unlikely that on their own they will address all the structural problems raised by the report.

Our position has been entirely vindicated and our demands remain the same. The deregulation of recent decades must be comprehensively reversed. The systems for delivering building safety must be brought under public ownership and must be given the resources they need.

The lessons of the Grenfell Tower fire are relevant to fire and rescue services across the UK. To implement them, we need national standards set by a statutory advisory body on fire policy, giving a voice to firefighters and control staff and drawing on the best expert advice.

And most of all we demand justice for all of the victims of the fire. Seven years on from this horrific event, our thoughts and solidarity are with them.

Yours in unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Wrack', written in a cursive style.

Matt Wrack
General Secretary