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Circular: 2026HOC087BS

Date: 29 June 2026

To: All Members

Dear member,

RDS Pensions Claims – Settlement Agreed

I am writing to update you on an important development in the ongoing Retained Duty System (RDS) pensions claims.

Following receipt of a formal offer from the Government Legal Department (GLD) and based on strong legal advice from Thompsons and Counsel, the Executive Council has agreed to accept a negotiated settlement in relation to the issue of breaks in service for members who transferred from retained to wholetime employment.

The settlement deals specifically with how breaks between RDS service and wholetime employment are treated for pension purposes.

The agreed position is:

I. Breaks of 1 month or less

These will be treated as continuous service, meaning affected members will be able to count their retained service in full for pension purposes.

II. Breaks of more than 1 month

These cases will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Members will be able to have their service treated as continuous where they can provide evidence of one of the following:

- a. An offer of wholetime employment before leaving retained service

- b. A delay between leaving retained service and starting wholetime training
- c. A break required by the employer

III. The Government has also indicated that the **same principles may be extended to non-claimants** at a later stage.

The legal advice we received is clear that this is a reasonable and beneficial outcome, particularly given that around 88% of identified affected claimants have breaks of less than one month and will therefore benefit directly and immediately. Importantly, for those with longer breaks, a route to recognition remains available where supporting evidence can be provided, and overall, the agreement is expected to deliver benefits for both claimants and non-claimants.

On balance, accepting this offer secures a strong and certain outcome for the vast majority of members.

Next Steps

We will now move to formally conclude this aspect of the case, seek to have the planned Tribunal hearing vacated, and continue progressing the remaining issues in the wider pensions case. Further detailed guidance will be issued shortly, including what members may need to do if they are affected—particularly those who may need to provide evidence relating to gaps in service.

This is an important step forward in securing full and proper pension recognition for retained firefighters. It reflects sustained legal pressure and the union's ongoing commitment to achieving fair outcomes for all members, and it should be noted that only the FBU have taken on, and won this fight.

Further updates will follow.

In Unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Selby', written in a cursive style.

Ben Selby
Assistant General Secretary