



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S REPORT 2016

89th CONFERENCE

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S REPORT

TO THE

89th CONFERENCE

2016

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PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION

THE VOICE OF FIREFIGHTERS AND THE VOICE OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

2015 was another tough year for the Fire Brigades Union, but one in which we have taken significant steps to prepare for our future.

The general election in May produced the result we least wanted – a Tory majority government committed to further austerity and a new round of attacks on trade unionism.

The coalition government managed in five years to reduce the firefighting force across the UK by 6,700 firefighters. This amounts to 13% of our numbers – or one in eight firefighters.

The new Tory government came forward with a new programme of cuts, amounting to 20% out of central funding for the fire and rescue service over the next five years. This could cull a further 5,000 firefighters from our ranks, and put the public at risk. The FBU will oppose these cuts at every level and with all our might.

They also launched the Trade Union Bill introducing higher thresholds for industrial action ballots, restrictions on picketing and on political funds, as well as other rules to trip up unions. The government maligned firefighters as part of its propaganda offensive, with the London fire commissioner sadly joining the chorus. It was left to the FBU to correct the record with MPs.

The Tory government has also launched a huge attack on the governance of the fire and rescue service in England, with plans to allow police and crime commissioners to run local services instead of fire authorities. That will move at a pace and we must be awake to the possible consequences. This will undermine the humanitarian service firefighters provide, interfere with operational matters and put the public at risk. Again, it is the FBU that is in the forefront of campaigning against these plans.

In 2015 the union's pensions campaign continued. We took the arguments to Westminster and extracted a 'guarantee' from ministers, which the union is pursuing vociferously on behalf of members.

These attacks underline two things: the need to get our own house in order and to use every political lever available to defend our members and our service.

This year the FBU's executive council took important steps towards securing our finances for the years ahead. This has meant some reorganisation and some changes to the way we work. These steps are necessary to ensure our survival as an independent union. A clear strategy to plan for our future must remain our priority.

The union has also reaffiliated to the Labour Party in light of the changes going on within that party. Labour retains the unique link to the trade union movement and acts as a political voice for working people. The influx of new members and the new Labour leadership – including longstanding supporters of the FBU – offers a unique opportunity to advance our interests, to win allies and to influence national policy.

We know the road ahead will be arduous. But we take hope from our endurance, our solidarity and the irreplaceable role firefighters play in society. The attitude we require in the next period can be summed up as 'tenacity, tenacity, and more tenacity'.

Alan McLean

SECTION A

PAY AND CONDITIONS

A1 INTRODUCTION

The FBU has continued to negotiate through the National Joint Council (NJC) on firefighters' pay and conditions through 2015. The union is determined to defend UK-wide pay and conditions bargaining as the best means to achieve improvements for all firefighters, regardless of role or duty system. Linda Dickens, professor of industrial relations at Warwick University, chaired the NJC during 2015 and her report is below.

Fire and rescue service employers offered a 1% pay rise in 2015, in line with the Westminster government's public sector pay policy. After consultation with members through the union's committee structures, this was accepted.

Ultra-low inflation in 2015 meant that firefighters' cost of living did not worsen further (at least on paper) for the first time since the economic downturn in 2008. The retail price index (RPI) increased by around 1% during 2015, while the consumer price index (CPI) registered around 0%.

There were signs of a modest 2% increase in pay deals secured by trade unions across the wider economy, with private sector deals considerably higher than those in the public sector.

The election of a Conservative majority government in May 2015 set the parameters for firefighters' pay for the coming period. In July 2015 the Treasury announced the imposition of a four-year pay freeze of 1% a year on public sector workers.

This matter has been discussed through the TUC and needs to be debated within the FBU and across all trade unions organising public sector workers, with a view to building a joint campaign to challenge government pay policy. The FBU will play its part in such discussions and in any such campaign that emerges.

At the same time FBU officials continue to engage with fire service employers through the NJC about the work already undertaken by firefighters or work that might be undertaken by firefighters as our service adapts to the changing risks facing our communities. We are already aware of areas of work that employers would like firefighters to undertake, but which are clearly outside of our role maps and are therefore not part of our contracts. FBU conference in May 2015 agreed that these discussions should continue as part of our drive for a longer-term pay structure.

Clearly, none of these discussions will be easy against the background of a Westminster government committed to further attacks on public services and public sector workers. Nevertheless, we shall continue to make the case for a modern, professional fire and rescue service, and for the appropriate pay and reward system to support it.

A2 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR 2014-15 – LINDA DICKENS

Background

The National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (NJC), including the Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB), is the body responsible for the supervision, from a national point of view, of all questions affecting the conditions of service of employees (other than those in Brigade Management roles) of fire and rescue services established under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (for England and Wales), Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

The NJC handles issues that affect all employees from firefighter to area manager. The MMNB has plenary powers to deal with issues which affect employees solely in the roles of station manager to area manager.

The principal purpose is to reach agreement on a national framework of pay and conditions for local application throughout the fire and rescue service in the United Kingdom. The NJC and MMNB are committed to the local democratic control of fire and rescue services to the community.

The parties to the negotiation are the Employers' Side comprising representatives of the Local Government Association, Welsh Local Government Association, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Board. The Employees' Side comprises representatives of the Fire Brigades Union and, for the MMNB, the Fire Brigades Union and the Fire Officers Association.

An Independent Chair oversees the work of the National Joint Council and the Middle Managers Negotiating Body and is supported by two Vice-Chairs. Vice-Chair appointments alternate between the Sides on an annual basis.

For this year Cllr Maurice Heaster served as Vice Chair of the NJC and Mr Alan McLean as Vice Chair of the Middle Managers Negotiating Body.

The Independent Chair works closely with the Joint Secretariat, which is currently provided by the Local Government Association and the Fire Brigades Union.

Introduction

- 1. In my second year as the Independent Chair of the NJC I have presided over a considerable amount of work carried out by Members and Joint Secretaries. This Annual Report of the Independent Chair, which covers the period from 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015, details this activity.*

What do we do?

- 2. The National Joint Council provides:*
 - a) the national negotiating machinery for the pay and conditions of service of uniformed fire service employees in the United Kingdom.*
 - b) the services of the respective side Secretariats in assisting parties at local level to resolve areas of disagreement.*
 - c) the services of the respective side Secretariats in assisting parties at local level in the interpretation of the national scheme of conditions of employment and the flexibilities contained therein.*

Meeting dates in 2014-2015

- 3. The National Joint Council met on three occasions; 15 October 2014, 12 February 2015 and 3 June 2015. A number of issues were considered and reports from the Independent Chair and from the Treasurer for the year to 31 March 2015 were approved. The Middle Managers Negotiating Body also met on those dates.*

Issues under consideration during 2014 - 2015

- 4. Issues under consideration by the National Joint Council and, as appropriate, the Middle Managers Negotiating Body, on which there were written and oral reports from the Joint Secretaries to the June meetings, included:*

2015 Pay Award

5. *The Employees' Side sought a substantial pay rise to be applied from 1 July 2015 and for that rise to be applied to CPD payments. It also indicated its preference for a long-term pay formula.*
6. *The Employers' Side responded that whilst unable to agree a long-term pay formula, the National Employers were in a position to offer an across the board increase of 1.0% effective from 1 July 2015, which included Continual Professional Development payments.*
7. *Following a period of Employees' Side consultation a one percent uplift in pay was agreed with effect from 1 July 2015, which also applied to CPD payments.*

Pay, Terms and Conditions: Workstreams

8. *The NJC committed to work jointly on changes identified by each Side to ensure that there is a pay framework alongside terms and conditions in the fire and rescue service which reflects the responsibilities of, and current and future demands on, the service and the profession. It was agreed that it would include:*
 - *the increasing need to consider how the workforce's skills and commitment can best be utilised, including the type of activities undertaken, any additional functions that may be required and the implications of this for the nationally agreed rolemaps*
 - *the potential to build upon, and expand, this piece of work to encompass a more wide-ranging and strategic look to the future taking into account the matters of interest in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.*
9. *It was agreed that the work would be informed by the deliberations of five workstream groups, each of which would consider a broad category of fire service activity:*
 - *Environmental challenges*
 - *Emergency medical response*
 - *Multi agency emergency response*
 - *Youth and other social engagement work*
 - *Inspections and enforcement.*
10. *There was broad consensus across all of the workstreams that a set of over-arching assurances would need to put in place in order to facilitate rolling out the proposed activities. This included discussion, for example, on provision of appropriate training and equipment (where relevant), guidance to ensure consistency (e.g. welfare arrangements), and assurances around personal liability, pension and compensation issues.*
11. *The workstreams discussed a broad range of new potential activities which firefighters could carry out including detailed discussion on key areas such as co-responding and wider work to assist members of the local community, as well as deployment in incidents of marauding terrorist firearms attack (MTFA).*
12. *The five workstreams were asked to consider activities which could be undertaken by FRSs in general and whether such activity is within the currently agreed role maps or whether amendment would be required.*
13. *At the outset representatives acknowledged the need to be able to have open, frank and confidential discussions in order to best be able to explore and progress this work. Given the breadth of fire service issues discussed participants expressed the view that the workstream process and open approach to discussion was beneficial.*
14. *A number of workstreams identified that there was likely cross-over between some of the workstreams (e.g. Emergency Medical and Multi Agency) and that this should be noted and not be allowed to complicate the discussions.*
15. *It was also acknowledged that over time there had been a significant reduction in the numbers of incidents directly related to the response activities of the Fire and Rescue Service. Fire deaths in the home have halved since the 1980s, and since 2007 the number of accidental fire deaths in the home has stabilised at around 210 per year. This is a significant testament to the commitment to prevention shown by fire and rescue authorities and their employees. All the workstreams identified during the course of their work that the trend of reduction in fire calls did not justify further reduction in the provision of fire cover for the large number of fire calls and other incidents which remain and an appropriate balance would need to be maintained to ensure frontline cover was not adversely affected by other work.*

16. Phase one of this work was completed on schedule at the end of May. The report presented to the June NJC meeting was well received by members who welcomed the level of detailed discussion that had taken place.
17. The NJC looks forward to taking this work forward as part of the second stage of discussion, which is focussed more around implementation, including how that will be resourced and any necessary changes to the rolemaps.
18. Furthermore, the NJC agreed that as part of that second phase work FRAs be able to submit expressions of interest to the Joint Secretaries to carry out trials arising from the work of the Emergency Medical Response workstream. At the time of writing I am pleased to advise that nine trials have already been approved. Expressions of interest from a further six FRAs are under consideration and a further three FRAs have advised that they are in the process of finalising their proposals.
19. Discussions taking place under the over-arching commitment are very significant and will forge the direction of travel for the role of the firefighter for the future. I would like to record my appreciation to all those who have taken part.

Inclusive fire service

20. The NJC has a continuing commitment to equality, diversity and cultural issues in the fire service and has recently decided to revisit these matters.
21. Under Section 2 of the Grey Book, the expectation is that fire authorities will already have 'set out and communicated the principles and strategies that are fundamental to developing an organisation which values all'. The NJC has also reached various agreements that support family friendly working for example on matters such as maternity, paternity, adoption, ante-natal appointments, flexible working and time off for dependents.
22. In order to progress this work it has been agreed to set up an Inclusive Fire Service Group, which I shall chair, involving a number of other interested parties to assess the current position and identify guidance in relation to any further strategies that could be used at local level to lead to improvement. The group will hold its first meeting in October 2015.

Fitness issues

23. The NJC has previously reached agreement in principle on a number of issues related to fitness. One of those principles was the establishment of a joint working party.
24. Earlier this year the NJC agreed the terms of reference, structure and process required to commence this piece of work. Whilst it was agreed that this work would be conducted jointly with DCLG it would nonetheless be mindful of issues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland given the joint involvement with the Employer and Employee Sides of the NJC.
25. The terms of reference state:
The joint working group notes that pension age will undergo a separate, regular review.
This joint working group will:
 - consider aspects of the role that have been identified as the most physically intensive and how they impact upon an individual's ability and fitness to carry out their role over time;
 - examine future options and trends in respect of continued employment and develop a best practice guide.
26. The work of the group is steered by a small Strategy Group (NJC/DCLG), which first met in January 2015. The Strategy Group is chaired by Peter Holland (DCLG). The employer representative is Cllr Maurice Heaster (Employers' Side Chair). The employee representative is Sean Starbuck (FBU).
27. The first meeting of the Joint Working Group itself took place in March 2015. Employer representatives are Justin Johnson, DCFO Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and Karen Palframan, Brigade Manager Service Delivery, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service. Employee representatives are Sean Starbuck and Andy Noble, Fire Brigades Union. DCLG representatives are Peter Holland, Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser (England) and Claire Cooper, Assistant Director.

28. *The Chief Fire Officers Association, Fire Officers Association and Retained Firefighters Union have been asked to participate in the joint working group.*

29. *The timescale for conclusion of this work is the end of March 2016.*

Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations: progress regarding implementation of the Employment Tribunal settlement agreement

30. *The majority of settlement payments have been made. During the course of this year all parties have been working towards completion of that process.*

31. *The final phase, which will ensure all remaining offers are issued, together with new offers applicable to employees who moved from the retained duty system to the wholetime duty system within the same FRA and during the reference period set out in the original agreement is at the time of writing underway.*

Adoption

32. *Agreement has been reached on a claim for the Employees' Side relating to adoption. Specifically, amendment to the provision that where a uniformed employee of a Fire and Rescue Service who is seeking to adopt a child with a partner has not elected to be the partner receiving paid leave, he/she shall be entitled to receive paid leave for the first meeting with the child.*

NJC Workforce Survey

33. *In order to inform NJC discussions the NJC has sought workforce information from authorities such as levels of pay, numbers employed and various other important issues. The NJC had not conducted a joint survey, for those employees covered by the NJC (Grey Book), for several years (since 2010) in order to not overburden FRAs with requests for information. At the time of writing the majority of FRAs have completed and returned the survey.*

Grey Book (7th Edition)

34. *The Grey Book has been updated through the issue of joint circulars since 2004. Work to incorporate changes to legislation and the NJC agreements reached since 2004 into a new 7th edition of the Grey Book is nearing completion. For example, matters such as maternity, shared parental leave, childcare and dependency, health, safety and welfare and revised disciplinary and grievance procedures.*

General Joint Secretariat Activity

35. *Issues under negotiation within the NJC are in the main progressed through the Joint Secretariat acting within the remit of its respective Sides.*

36. *On occasion lead members from each Side of the NJC/MMNB may meet outside of the usual round of larger meetings. This happened twice this year.*

37. *The Joint Secretariat normally meets formally every four to six weeks to exchange information and to progress negotiations. These meetings are also an opportunity for either side to identify potential local industrial relations flashpoints and subsequently to raise those concerns with the local management or union side as appropriate.*

38. *The Joint Secretariat leads discussion in National Joint Council working parties which informs negotiations and respective Side positions, as appropriate.*

39. *The Joint Secretariat also leads discussion in the sub-Committee on changes to rolemaps and national occupational standards.*

40. *When jointly requested to do so, the Joint Secretariat can also work with parties at local level who wish to explore their current industrial relations relationship with a view to seeking improvement. During this year this took place with three services.*

41. *The Joint Secretariat has handled a considerable number of requests from local parties seeking interpretation or clarification of Scheme of Conditions of Service issues or early informal assistance where a matter is likely to prove difficult to resolve at local level.*

42. In addition to the above, the Joint Secretariat has a formal conciliation role when requested by both parties at local level to assist in resolution of local disagreements.

Joint Secretariat – Local Conciliation

43. In circumstances where discussion has been exhausted without agreement on an issue, or issues, at local level the Joint Secretariat when requested by both parties to do so can provide a conciliation process in order to assist the parties in identifying a mutually agreeable outcome.

44. The Joint Secretariat has a very good record of assisting the parties to either reach agreement at the time of conciliation or to develop the basis of an agreement which leads to a resolution following further discussion shortly afterwards at local level.

45. Over the last year eleven conciliations have been undertaken (for nine fire and rescue services), covering a total of 26 issues.

Resolution Advisory Panel (RAP)

46. The Scheme of Conditions of Service Negotiation Procedure contains a number of options that local parties can explore to facilitate resolution to local issues where negotiation at local level has been exhausted. One of those options is the NJC's Resolution Advisory Panel whose remit is to endeavour to facilitate an agreement between the parties but where that is not possible the Independent Chair will make a recommendation based upon the positions presented and discussed during the course of the meeting and which he believes can form the basis of an agreement. The current Independent Chair of the RAP is Professor William Brown.

47. The NJC's Resolution Advisory Panel, which is comprised of an Independent Chair and the Joint Secretaries, was not required to meet during 2014/15.

Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)

48. The NJC also operates a Technical Advisory Panel which can consider whether or not a new duty system proposed at local level complies with the principles contained in Section 4 of the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) where it has not been possible to reach an agreement on its introduction. As with RAP, the Technical Advisory Panel endeavours to facilitate an agreement between the parties, but where that is not possible the Independent Chair can, in addition to commenting on the extent of compliance with the principles, recommend a proposal that he believes may form the basis of an agreement. The current Independent Chair of the TAP is Mr Steve Hodder.

49. The NJC's Technical Advisory Panel, which is comprised of an Independent Chair and the Joint Secretaries met on two occasions in 2014-2015 to consider proposed shift systems in South Yorkshire and Cheshire fire and rescue services respectively.

Circulars

50. A number of circulars have been issued since the last report of the Independent Chair

NJC/5/14	Ante-natal appointments
NJC/6/14	Pay, terms and conditions update
NJC/7/14	Report of the independent chair
NJC/1/15	Adoption appointments, parental leave, flexible leave
NJC/2/15	Shared parental leave
NJC/3/15	Joint Working Group (Fitness)
NJC/4/15	Pay, terms and conditions: workstreams
NJC/6/15	Pay claim and offer
NJC/7/15	Pay, terms and conditions: workstreams update
NJC/8/15	Adoption update
NJC/9/15	Inclusive Fire Service group
NJC/10/15	Part-time workers (ET settlement agreement) closing process
NJC/11/15	Pay settlement 2015
NJC/12/15	Continual professional development payments 2015
NJC/13/15	Emergency medical response trials

General and Conclusion

51 *There are several aspects to the role of Independent Chair. This year it has involved:*

- *the chairing of NJC and MMNB meetings*
- *consideration, with the Joint Secretaries, of items due for discussion through the NJC and/or MMNB at those meetings*
- *ensuring the NJC and MMNB are each aware of the work of the other and that an opportunity for comment is provided*
- *provision of this annual report.*

52. *It is pleasing to note that much valuable work has been undertaken during the year despite a difficult external environment. In particular, as noted earlier in my report, good progress was made in taking forward the NJC commitment to work jointly on changes identified by each side to ensure there is a pay framework alongside the terms and conditions in the FRS which reflect the responsibilities of and current and future demands on the service and profession. In the coming year the second phase of this work will be undertaken, building on the contribution of the five workstream groups.*

53. *I welcome the decision of the NJC, taken at its June meeting, to set up an Inclusive Fire Service Group. As noted earlier in this report it is several years since issues around equality, diversity and culture in the fire service were looked at in detail. A number of factors make it timely to take stock of the current position and for consideration to be given to identifying what further strategies might be used at local level to address new issues and encourage improvement. I look forward to chairing the IFSG which will be led by the NJC and involve other relevant parties.*

A3 PAY RATES AND CPD PAYMENTS

In June 2015, the FBU submitted a claim for a substantial pay rise for all fire service roles in the absence of agreement to the union's demand for a long-term pay formula. In response the employers offered an across-the-board increase of 1% for the following year (circular NJC/06/15). The FBU executive council decided to recommend this offer. Following consultation with members, this was accepted.

The new pay rates were published in the FBU's all members circular (2015HOC0419MW) and are included in this report for the record (circular NJC/11/15).

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2015

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime £
Firefighter			
Trainee	22,017	10.05	15.08
Development	22,933	10.47	15.71
Competent	29,345	13.40	20.10
Crew manager			
Development	31,189	14.24	21.36
Competent	32,533	14.86	22.28
Watch manager			
Development	33,237	15.18	22.77
Competent A	34,160	15.60	23.40
Competent B	36,381	16.61	24.92
Station manager			
Development	37,842	17.28	25.92
Competent A	38,977	17.80	26.70
Competent B	41,737	19.06	28.59
Group manager			
Development	43,582	19.90	Not applicable
Competent A	44,889	20.50	Not applicable
Competent B	48,313	22.06	Not applicable
Area manager			
Development	51,165	23.36	Not applicable
Competent A	52,699	24.06	Not applicable
Competent B	56,124	25.63	Not applicable

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2015 (RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM)

	(1) £ per annum	(2) £ per annum	(3) £ per hour	(4) £ per occasion
Firefighter				
Trainee	2,202	1,101	10.05	3.86
Development	2,293	1,147	10.47	3.86
Competent	2,935	1,467	13.40	3.86
Crew manager				
Development	3,119	1,559	14.24	3.86
Competent	3,253	1,627	14.86	3.86
Watch manager				
Development	3,324	1,662	15.18	3.86
Competent A	3,416	1,708	15.60	3.86
Competent B	3,638	1,819	16.61	3.86
Station manager				
Development	3,784	1,892	17.28	3.86
Competent A	3,898	1,949	17.80	3.86
Competent B	4,174	2,087	19.06	3.86
Group manager				
Development	4,358	2,179	19.90	3.86
Competent A	4,489	2,244	20.50	3.86
Competent B	4,831	2,416	22.06	3.86
Area manager				
Development	5,117	2,558	23.36	3.86
Competent A	5,270	2,635	24.06	3.86
Competent B	5,612	2,806	25.63	3.86

Column 1 shows the full annual retainer.

Column 2 shows the retainer for employees on the day crewing duty system.

Column 3 shows the hourly rate for work undertaken.

Column 4 shows the disturbance payment per call-out.

CONTROL SPECIFIC ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2015

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime £
Firefighter (control)			
Trainee	20,916	9.55	14.33
Development	21,786	9.95	19.09
Competent	27,877	12.73	20.10
Crew manager (control)			
Development	29,629	13.53	20.29
Competent	30,906	14.11	21.17
Watch manager (control)			
Development	31,575	14.42	21.63
Competent A	32,452	14.82	22.23
Competent B	34,562	15.78	23.67
Station manager (control)			
Development	35,950	16.42	24.62
Competent A	37,028	16.91	25.36
Competent B	39,650	18.11	27.16
Group manager (control)			
Development	41,403	18.91	Not applicable
Competent A	42,645	19.47	Not applicable
Competent B	45,897	20.96	Not applicable

NON-OPERATIONAL STAFF – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2015

	£ per annum
Fire control operator equivalent	
During first six months	18,751
After six months and during 2nd year	19,581
During 3rd year	20,512
During 4th year	21,521
During 5th year	23,439
Leading fire control operator equivalent	25,101
Senior fire control operator equivalent	
During 1st year in rank	25,745
During 2nd year in rank	26,721

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2015

	£ per annum
Aged 16	10,185
Aged 17	10,944
Aged 18	22,017

The following CPD payments were published in circular NJC/12/15 and in the FBU's all members circular (2015HOC0419MW).

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PAYMENTS FROM 1 JULY 2015

Fire authority	CPD (£)	Fire authority	CPD (£)
Avon	718	London	891
Bedfordshire and Luton	633	Merseyside	679
Buckinghamshire	547	Mid and West Wales	598
Cambridgeshire	559	Norfolk	589
Cheshire	724	Northern Ireland	612
Cleveland	923	Northamptonshire	642
Cornwall	291	Northumberland	782
Cumbria	503	North Wales	604
Derbyshire	747	North Yorkshire	446
Devon and Somerset	533	Nottinghamshire	894
Dorset	628	Oxfordshire	664
Durham and Darlington	816	Royal Berkshire	667
East Sussex	528	Shropshire	657
Essex	575	South Wales	628
Gloucestershire	362	South Yorkshire	979
Greater Manchester	875	Staffordshire	673
Hampshire	624	Suffolk	383
Hereford and Worcester	655	Surrey	690
Hertfordshire	698	Tyne and Wear	943
Humberside	683	Warwickshire	563
Isle of Wight	311	West Midlands	910
Kent	614	West Sussex	498
Lancashire	684	West Yorkshire	832
Leicestershire	639	Wiltshire	673
Lincolnshire	374		

The above rates are those agreed at the NJC. In London the national CPD rate is combined with national pay rates to form London standard pay rates.

A4 NJC WORKSTREAMS

During 2015, the National Joint Council (NJC) agreed to put in place a number of workstreams to consider current and future work of the fire and rescue service. Circular NJC/06/14 set out the terms of reference, structure and process for this work. Progress was reported in April in circular NJC/04/15 and circulated by the FBU in all members circular (2015HOC0276AD).

FBU officials and employers met regularly between December 2014 and May 2015. The National Joint Council accepted reports in June and agreed a second phase of this work, including planning the detailed implementation of the outcomes (circular NJC/07/14). The workstreams are:

- environmental challenges – e.g. flooding, inland water safety, snow, wild fires
- emergency medical response – e.g. co-responding, falls, on-site trauma care, provision of community training
- multi-agency emergency response – e.g. MTFA, joint working, any issues falling out of JESIP

- youth and other social engagement work – e.g. arson reduction, working with risk of offending youth groups
- inspections and enforcement – e.g. schools, illegal homes, crown properties, expansion of unregulated business use, related fire safety advice.

On 17 November the joint secretaries wrote to ministers at Westminster and in the devolved administrations to report the progress of these workstreams.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE

In the emergency medical response workstream, the FBU was represented by John McGhee, Kevin Brown, Andy Noble, Tam Mitchell and Dave Limer. The employers were represented by Simon Pannell, Gill Gittins, Dave Boyle (Scottish FRS), Dave Brown (London) and Ian Thomson (Surrey). The workstream met on five occasions. The activities firefighters could carry out were discussed, such as:

- co-responding
- assisting health services in the movement of bariatric patients
- training in the use of defibrillators
- road safety awareness provision
- fire stations being open to the wider community for a number of health-related initiatives
- safe fitting of car child seats
- work such as that undertaken by community risk intervention teams (CRIT, GMC FRS model) responding to lower level calls
- assisting the ambulance service with forced entry to properties, subject to the legal right to do so.

The current position is that co-responding is carried out in some but not all fire and rescue services across the country by employees on a voluntary basis. The conclusion of the workstream was that co-responding is an activity that could be undertaken more widely by firefighters in general and in fire and rescue services who wish to do so, subject to:

- the provision of appropriate training and equipment
- an assurance that undertaking such work does not alter a firefighter's pension or compensation scheme entitlement
- assurances that personal liability and indemnity issues have been covered, and
- assurances on call handling.

The detailed introduction of co-responding will be considered as part of a further phase of this work, which may lead to expanding the role maps or treating co-responding as an additional responsibility.

MULTI-AGENCY EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In the multi-agency emergency response workstream, the FBU was represented by Andy Dark, Jim Parrott, Ian Leahair, Keith Handscomb and John Arnold. The employers were represented by Simon Pannell, Gill Gittins, Tim Cutbill (London), Simon Pilling (West Yorkshire) and David Goodhew (Scotland). The workstream met on five occasions.

The main focus of workstream discussions was around marauding terrorist firearm attacks (MTFA). The current position is that MTFA operational capability is voluntary and limited to a small number of fire and rescue services. There is acknowledgement that firefighters are most likely to be first on the scene of any major terrorist incident, but the genuine and serious risk to firefighters' lives and safety is paramount for the FBU in agreeing to sign up to this work in future. The FBU's position on the voluntary status of this work was previously set out in all members circular 2014HOC0086AD.

The workstream recognised willingness from both sides to engage in open and meaningful discussion on MTFA with the desire to be in a mutually beneficial position for both sides where all safety, training, equipment, guidance, insurance and 'pension' issues are resolved to allow this strand of work to be introduced without the use of volunteers. Due to complexity and time constraints discussion will need to continue into phase two.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

In the environmental challenges workstream, the FBU was represented by Dave Green, Tam McFarlane, Grant Mayos and John Arnold. The employers were represented by Simon Pannell, Gill Gittins, David Goodhew (Scotland), Nathan Travis (Oxfordshire) and Paul Hedley (Northumberland). The workstream met on five occasions.

The fire and rescue service is regularly called to and attends many other incidents that are as a result of the environmental changes we are experiencing: flooding, inland water, unstable ground, snow, wildfire, storm damage, heatwaves and drought. It is clear that there is a lot of good work already undertaken, particularly at times of emergency. This work has increased dramatically in recent years due primarily to the most extreme series of weather events ever experienced in the UK.

Looking to the future, it was felt that the existing work could be broadened to focus also upon a proactive prevention and recovery role rather than the largely reactive approach of dealing with the incident itself. This should be subject to guidance, appropriate equipment and training. The NJC should develop guidance in respect of welfare arrangements to encourage fire and rescue services to ensure plans are in place to provide appropriate and consistent treatment when firefighters work outside of their own service.

YOUTH AND OTHER SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT WORK

In the youth and other social engagement workstream, the FBU was represented by Andy Dark, Dave Sibert, Ricky Matthews and Jo Byrne. The employers were represented by Simon Pannell, Gill Gittins, Phil Garrigan (Merseyside), Lewis Ramsey (Scotland) and Peter O'Reilly (Greater Manchester). The workstream met on three occasions.

Fire and rescue services actively work with children and young people to provide fire safety and fire prevention education. A number of fire and rescue services also carry out a range of activities aimed at tackling wider health or social determinants which affect their day to day lives. These activities reduce anti-social behaviour and provide positive outcomes.

The workstream considered the potential to identify a further number of areas of 'new' activities that firefighters could carry out in the context of broadening the role, such as:

- the provision of bariatric care
- adult social care – tackling isolation and vulnerability
- tackling health inequality by expanding the prevention role of a firefighter
- excess winter deaths
- offering broader advice and support
- providing adaptations in the home
- a holistic prevention/education service in the homes of those identified as being 'at most risk' from a range of issues such as fire, falls, crime and general deterioration in health and wellbeing.

The workstream discussed the potential for an enabling NJC statement. This would be co-written/signed with full support from both sides of the NJC with the purpose of acknowledging the range of activities which are already being carried out and making it clear that the wider development of this kind of work adds value to the community.

INSPECTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

In the inspections and enforcement workstream, the FBU was represented by Andy Dark, Dave Sibert, Barry Downey and Roddy Robertson. The employers were represented by Simon Pannell, Gill Gittins, Gary Ferrand (East Sussex), Lewis Ramsey (Scotland) and Keith Brooks (Cheshire).

This workstream considered broader areas of inspection such as fixed installations and flood risk, as well as more traditional activities which form part of the statutory duties placed upon authorities. These include: the

broader regulatory role through the enforcement of fire safety legislation; the gathering, analysis and sharing of risk critical information and intelligence; and the requirement to shape future interventions and promote firefighter safety by using this information to provide a safe working environment.

The workstream recommended the following areas of activity should be embedded in the work of fire and rescue services, subject to, where necessary, gaining the right to demand entry:

- individuals/companies who consistently breach or fail to comply with fire safety regulations/compliance issues
- inspection of unregulated properties and illegal dwellings
- private rented sector
- canal barges and other boats
- caravans and motorhomes
- unregulated houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs)
- new schools
- fire hydrants
- dry and wet risers, firefighting lifts and all other appropriate fixed installations.

Reinforcing and broadening the scope of such work would increase the professionalism of the service and safety within communities. The principle of extensive knowledge and awareness visits of all commercial properties including HMOs, hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation and the private rented sector would have a range of benefits.

A5 GREY BOOK AMENDMENTS

The NJC Scheme of Conditions of Service (the Grey Book) was amended following changes to legislation and after negotiation with FBU officials.

FBU all members circular (2015HOC0274AD) and circular NJC/01/15 set out the changes to time off to attend adoption appointments, parental leave and flexible working. The NJC subsequently accepted an FBU amendment on entitlement to paid leave for meeting with the child at an adoption appointment (circular NJC/08/15).

FBU all members circular (2015HOC0275AD) and circular NJC/02/15 set out the changes to shared parental leave.

FBU officials also contributed to NJC discussions on updating the Grey Book, section 6: procedural issues – grievance and discipline. Further work is ongoing on updating the Grey Book.

A6 NJC AGREED ROLE MAPS

In April FBU head office recirculated NJC agreed role maps after concerns that some fire and rescue services were unilaterally seeking to impose additional roles. The existing role maps were sent in a brigade secretaries' circular (2015HOC0244SS).

In June, the NJC clarified that the conclusion of phase 1 of the NJC workstreams does not constitute any agreement on the introduction of new work outside of the role maps (circular NJC/06/15).

A7 NJC FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE WORKFORCE EARNINGS SURVEY

The NJC commissioned a fire and rescue service workforce earnings survey in April 2015 (circular NJC/05/15). It was carried out by the Local Government Association. The survey provides additional data from the material published by DCLG and the devolved administrations and is useful for national negotiating purposes. The FBU supported the survey (2015HOC0278AD) and provided some input at the analysis stage. The results were not published by the end of 2015.

A8 NJC – FBU AND EMPLOYERS' REPS

1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015

Employees' side		Employers' side	
<i>Fire Brigades Union</i>		<i>Local Government Association (LGA)</i>	
John Arnold	Tam McFarlane	Dave Allan (to 11/14)	Mary Malin
Jim Barbour (to 2/15)	Chris McGlone (from 2/15)	John Bell	Sue Murphy
Jo Byrne (from 2/15)	Alan McLean	Maurice Heaster	Sian Timoney
Andy Dark	Tam Mitchell	Jeremy Hilton	Fiona Twycross (from 11/14)
Keith Handscomb	Jim Quinn (from 2/15)	John Joyce	Linda Van den Hende
Ian Leahair	Sharon Riley (to 2/15)	Rebecca Knox	
Dave Limer	Roddy Robertson (to 2/15)		
Ricky Matthews	Matt Wrack	<i>Scottish FRS</i>	<i>Northern Ireland FRS</i>
Grant Mayos		James Campbell (to 2/15)	Joe McKee (to 7/15)
		Kirsty Darwent (from 2/15)	Carmel McKinney (from 7/15)
		Pat Watters	
		<i>Welsh LGA</i>	
		Paul Cannon	

A9 MIDDLE MANAGERS NEGOTIATING BODY (MMNB)

1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015

Employees' side		Employers' side	
<i>Fire Brigades Union</i>		<i>Local Government Association (LGA)</i>	
Simon Amos	Grant Mayos	Dave Allan (to 11/14)	Mary Malin
John Arnold	Alan McLean)	John Bell	Sue Murphy
Jim Barbour (to 2/15)	Chris McGlone (from 6/15)	Maurice Heaster	Sian Timoney
Jo Byrne (from 2/15)	Jim Quinn (from 2/15)	Jeremy Hilton	Fiona Twycross (from 11/14)
Andy Dark	Roddy Robertson (to 6/15)	John Joyce	Linda Van den Hende
Keith Handscomb		Rebecca Knox	
Mick Higgins			
Ian Leahair		<i>Scottish FRS</i>	<i>Northern Ireland FRS</i>
		James Campbell (to 2/15)	Joe McKee (to 7/15)
<i>Fire Officers Association</i>		Pat Watters	Carmel McKinney (from 7/15)
Glyn Morgan		Kirsty Darwent (from 2/15)	
		<i>Welsh LGA</i>	
		Paul Cannon	

SECTION B

PENSIONS

B1 INTRODUCTION

The FBU's pensions campaign continued in 2015, with political, industrial and legal strategies deployed in the face of Westminster government intransigence.

On 2 February 2015 an FBU delegation attended a Westminster 'oral answers' debate on firefighter pensions, where the fire minister was again put under pressure to guarantee firefighters would not be left without a job or a pension if they are deemed unfit to work beyond 55.

The union held a recall conference on 10 February in Manchester to discuss pensions, voting overwhelmingly to continue the campaign.

On 25 February FBU members in England took strike action for 24 hours to press the case with the Westminster government. The day of the strike included a successful march and rally through central London.

In April, when the new firefighters' pension scheme came into force, the FBU launched a legal challenge on behalf of members not fully 'protected' by the new pension arrangements. The FBU also obtained a pledge from the Labour shadow fire minister that issues around the normal pension age (NPA) of 55 for firefighters would be re-examined if Labour formed the next government.

In May the pensions ombudsman announced that the FBU's legal case on commutation had been successful, winning thousands of pounds for retired firefighters. An additional consequence of this victory was that thousands of retired police officers also received large pay-outs.

At FBU conference in May delegates resolved to continue the pensions campaign, taking note of the new political context of a Tory majority government.

During 2015 FBU officials have taken part in a joint working party on fitness, addressing the practical impact of fitness requirements for firefighters in light of the increased normal pension age. This work included taking part in producing a best practice guidance document outlining how a fire authority should support firefighters in maintaining their occupational fitness and outlining what protection should be in place if this is not possible.

In September the FBU secured a compromise on public sector exit payments, which had threatened to reduce the amount of money firefighters and other workers could get at retirement under fitness-related circumstances.

In December, the FBU won a legal case for firefighters who joined the 1992 Firefighters' Pension Scheme between 18 and 20 years of age.

FBU members continued to demonstrate marvellous unity, solidarity and determination throughout the pensions campaign. Thousands of members who are 'protected' under the government proposals have loyally supported their brothers and sisters who face pensions robbery. This unity has proved the strength of our campaign and enabled us to sustain such a long fight.

The union continues to maintain our organisation, despite having to deal with different governments across the devolved administrations. We have presented professional arguments and gone into battle in good order, always maintaining our unity. Various strands of campaigning continue and the executive council will monitor all developments and keep all options open.

B2 FBU PENSIONS CAMPAIGN: BACKGROUND

The FBU's pensions campaign continued throughout 2015. In January the executive council provided a summary as background material for the recall conference (2015HOC0030MW).

After the 2010 election the Westminster coalition government, together with devolved administrations and employers, sought to force public sector workers to pay more, work longer and still get less for their pensions.

The Westminster government imposed three-year contribution rises as a deficit-reduction measure in the October 2010 autumn statement. Firefighters were already paying among the highest contributions, in the case of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) of 11% and the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme (NFPS) of 8.5%.

The Westminster government commissioned the Hutton review, which was published in March 2011. It suggested the government 'consider' a Normal Pension Age (NPA) of 60 for firefighters, in line with the NPA in the NFPS. The FBU maintained that the proposed Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015, announced by fire minister Bob Neill in May 2012, was unaffordable, unworkable and unfair, not least because it included an NPA of 60.

After pressure from the FBU, Neill commissioned Tony Williams to investigate the health and fitness implications of firefighters' retirement at 60 and report his findings.

The new firefighters' pension scheme proposals were introduced through primary legislation (Public Service Pensions Act 2013) which imposed certain restrictions, including a minimum pension age of 60, on firefighters in England, Wales and Scotland. After extensive lobbying, the FBU managed to achieve an amendment to Northern Ireland legislation, which set the 2015 firefighters' pension NPA at age 55.

After negotiations with the FBU and further industrial action, Westminster fire minister Brandon Lewis made a new offer in June 2013, with an actuarial reduction of around 22% (as opposed to one of around 47% in the original scheme). However, this still meant that firefighters would face a hugely reduced pension should they be unable to continue, and members agreed that this was still unacceptable.

In Scotland and Wales FBU campaigning managed to get an improved reduction of around 9% but could not convince the Westminster fire minister to follow suit. In October 2014, the new DCLG fire minister Penny Mordaunt laid the regulations for the firefighters' scheme, which came into force in April 2015.

B3 FBU CAMPAIGNING SINCE 2010

The FBU has fought these attacks through public meetings, lobbies, street stalls, demonstrations, lobbying, legal action and direct action. The FBU built a strong evidence-based case against the attacks, including commissioned research from actuaries and health specialists, our own research, submissions to government consultations (such as the Williams review), articles in *Firefighter* magazine, 13 pension

bulletins, numerous briefing notes, lobby packs, media messaging documents, leaflets, as well as placards, posters and other materials for public activity.

The FBU lobbied politicians at Westminster, Holyrood, Cardiff and Stormont. At Westminster the union organised a rally at Westminster Central Hall in November 2010, while more than 100 firefighters rallied at the Scottish Parliament on the same day. In 2012 around 400 FBU members converged on Westminster against cuts and the pension attacks. In 2012-13 the FBU sought to amend the Public Service Pensions Bill at its committee and Lords stages to allow for earlier retirement, but this was rejected by the Westminster government.

In October 2013, the general secretary and other FBU officials gave evidence to the Northern Ireland Assembly, which resulted in the decision to retain 55 as the NPA in Northern Ireland. During the same month the union organised a successful pensions and cuts march in London and held a rally in Westminster Central Hall. In March 2014, around 200 FBU members lobbied MPs on pensions and cuts.

In October-December 2014, FBU members secured 283 signatures for an early day motion (EDM) to revoke the firefighters' pension regulations, the highest number of EDM signatures during that five-year parliament. It was backed by the Labour leadership and by MPs from all parties at Westminster – other than the Conservatives and UKIP. On 15 December 2014, around 300 firefighters attended Westminster to lobby politicians on pensions, as a result of the debate arising from the EDM. This was the only full parliamentary debate on an individual pension scheme arising from the changes to all public service schemes following 2010. The motion to scrap the new legislation was debated but the vote was lost 313 to 261. The Liberal Democrats split, with 33 voting with the government and seven against.

During the debate, the DCLG fire minister gave an assurance that firefighters who could no longer maintain their operational fitness through no fault of their own would not be dismissed but would instead receive an unreduced pension if they were aged at least 55. This parliamentary guarantee clearly influenced the debate. It was clear to any impartial observer that the union had won the argument, but the Tory and Liberal Democrat whips won the vote. The secretary of state Eric Pickles reiterated the guarantee to the communities and local government committee the next day.

So far, FBU members in England have taken over 50 separate periods of strike action, ranging from one-hour strikes to a four-day strike in October-November 2014. This industrial action has amounted to over 11 days in total and took place on 37 different days over 14 months. In addition, members have taken industrial action short of a strike as part of the campaign.

B4 THE BALANCE SHEET SO FAR

Compared with original proposals outlined by the Westminster government in 2011, the FBU has managed to alter, reverse or mitigate a number of aspects of the attacks on members:

- the higher cost ceiling in October 2011
- the first year smaller increase in contributions, worth around £200 for most members
- averaging the 2015 scheme contributions over all firefighters' schemes, meaning that the increases to employee contributions will be phased in from 2015
- achieving lower initial contributions for new entrants, firefighters in training and firefighters in development
- an NPA of 55 for members of the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme in Northern Ireland
- an agreement (and agreement for a pension regulation) on 'No job, no pension' in Scotland
- additional protection based on length of service as well as age in Scotland
- an improved actuarial reduction, from 47.1% at 55 to 21.8% in England, 9% in Wales and Scotland
- for 2015 scheme members, an actuarial reduction better than the 40.5% in the 2006 scheme for retirement at 55
- clarified a partial retirement option for 2015 scheme members
- forced the Westminster government to amend its national framework guidance to reflect the FBU concerns around the 'No job, no pension' issue
- achieved final arrangements for the modified scheme for RDS members.

The campaign has not:

- stopped the three-year imposed contribution increases
- stopped career average replacing final salary pensions
- achieved full protection for FPS members
- improved the commutation factors
- improved the actuarial reduction arrangements in England
- fully addressed the threat of 'No job, no pension', other than in Scotland.

The union continues to utilise every avenue to defend and improve firefighters' pensions.

B5 THE WESTMINSTER GOVERNMENT'S GUARANTEE

On 15 December 2014, ministers guaranteed firefighters would not be dismissed and lose their pension as a result of its plans to force firefighters to work beyond 55. Union officials spent the first months of 2015 trying to confirm that the guarantee was genuine and would be delivered at local level – or whether it was just an empty promise designed to mislead MPs and to force through the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme legislation.

The fire minister was first asked about the guarantee at oral questions:

Duncan Hames (Chippenham) (LD): Can my hon. Friend confirm that it is her intention that under these circumstances firefighters will be guaranteed an authority-initiated retirement?

Penny Mordaunt: Absolutely. We are very clear in the ministerial statement that we have tabled today and in the guidance that will accompany it that that is what we expect to happen. In addition, because I recognise that firefighters need those safeguards, my Department will carry out an audit. (*Hansard HC Deb 15 December 2014, vol 589, col 1115*)

When the debate got underway this guarantee was repeated:

Richard Fuller (Bedford) (Con): We have a special responsibility today to get these regulations right. So, how are we doing? The answer must be: not very well. I say to my hon. Friend the Minister that she must make this guarantee a 'must', not a 'may be' or a 'trust me' but a 'must'. We must ensure that we give that guarantee to our firefighters to do them justice for their heroism on our behalf.

Penny Mordaunt: We are introducing a measure that will improve the current situation and ensure that if there is no operational role for someone to go into, they will get not just a pension but an unreduced pension. (*Hansard HC Deb 15 December 2014, vol 589, col 1162-3, 1164*)

These clear guarantees were designed to ensure the legislation was supported. It was repeated further in the debate:

Peter Bone (Wellingborough) (Con): Turning to firefighters' pensions, there is one issue that seems to cut through all of this. I have spoken with the chief fire officer and the FBU representatives and seen firefighters on the picket line, and I went to see Green Watch in Wellingborough. In all these disputes, we should ignore the FBU and the employers and listen to the actual firefighters and what they tell us. The one problem is that firefighters are genuinely worried that when they get to 55 they might, through no fault of their own, lose their pension. If the Minister could give me an assurance that those firefighters would be redeployed or

Penny Mordaunt: I am very happy to give those assurances [Interruption.] We have done that.

Mr Deputy Speaker (Mr Lindsay Hoyle): Order. I want to hear the answer, and I am sure the rest of us will gain from what the Minister has to say.

Penny Mordaunt: If someone fails a fitness test through no fault of their own and they do not qualify for ill health retirement, they will get a redeployed role or an unreduced pension. That will be put on a statutory footing in the national framework a full, unreduced pension, if not an alternative role.

Peter Bone: Having heard the words of the Minister, I think the whole House can now support the statutory instrument. (*Hansard HC Deb 15 December 2014, vol 589, col 1166-7*)

The fire minister was not alone in providing a guarantee on this issue. The DCLG secretary of state, Eric Pickles, reiterated these guarantees on 16 December at the communities and local government committee, where the following exchange took place:

Q37 Simon Danczuk MP: This question is from the Fire Brigades Union: “As there are virtually no redeployment opportunities, surely this means, if firefighters fail a fitness test, they lose their job.”

Mr Pickles: That is certainly not the case. We were very keen to ensure - and we went through a debate yesterday to ensure - that would not be the case. It is now very clear: if firefighters fail the test on the grounds that they are unwell, they will, of course, receive a full pension. The changes that took place yesterday mean that, if a firefighter is unfit, they have to go through a process of trying to get back into a fit condition to be able to fulfil their jobs. If they cannot, and they cannot be redeployed, the effect of yesterday's decision is that they will get a full pension. If I am being really blunt, I was very hacked off with the employers' side, who refused to make this concession for two years, and that is why we are putting it into a statutory instrument. It is a sign that I thought the firefighters had made a very reasonable point.

The secretary of state was very clear that a decision had been made as a result of the debate and vote in parliament and that this decision was that a firefighter in the circumstances described ‘will get a full pension’.

However, the fire service employers confirmed that they could not provide the assurance the government had made.

The FBU suggested after legal advice that the best route for the guarantee to be delivered was still through the scheme regulations. This is the route that the Scottish government has followed and the regulation is now in the Scottish Firefighters' Pension Scheme legislation.

The FBU argued that if the guarantee was nothing more than a hollow promise designed to deflect the pressure and ensure safe passage of the legislation, then parliament had been misled by the minister.

Westminster government ministers, however, have always maintained that the guarantee given in parliament and in the amended framework outlined how it felt firefighters in these circumstances must be dealt with.

B6 RECALL CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 2015

An FBU recall conference met on 10 February in Manchester to consider the continuing campaign over firefighter pensions. Delegates from every brigade discussed the campaign so far and the next steps required. This included honest reports about the range of views that existed among FBU members across the union. Conference faced the difficult task of identifying the way forward after such a long period of campaigning and when, inevitably, a range of views exist. Nevertheless, the conference reflected the anger of firefighters at the lies used to force through the attacks on our pensions and the determination to continue with our campaign. The recall conference agreed the following resolution:

Campaigning to Defend Firefighter Pensions

The FBU campaign on pensions has developed and unfolded since the General Election of 2010. The Executive Council Statement agreed on 13 January 2015 and issued to Branches sets out a balance sheet of the developments to that point.

The executive council congratulates FBU members for the outstanding unity and determination shown over the past four years of campaigning. This unity has been maintained despite the potential for division between those on different pension schemes or facing different levels of attack due to the variations in protection arrangements.

This campaign continues against a background of the worst cuts experienced by our service since 1945 and while firefighters along with other public sector workers have seen living standards attacked and squeezed by Government pay policy.

The continuing attacks on pensions are part of a generalised, international and class-based attack on workers arising from the financial crisis of 2007/8. In this context what is required is a serious, well planned and determined opposition from workers in the UK – and across Europe. Such a movement could force back the Governments and other agencies (including the IMF, European Central Bank and others) driving the austerity measures, including the attacks on pensions.

In the absence of such a movement the FBU has fought and continues to fight a campaign founded on:

- 1. The unity and determination of FBU members.*
- 2. A strong evidence based case challenging the affordability, sustainability and workability of the Government proposals; a case based around the real occupational demands of firefighting.*
- 3. Firefighter pensions are a political matter and decisions about them are taken by politicians. Therefore, this campaign has always sought to shift the position of the politicians making these attacks using every legal, political and industrial weapon at our disposal.*

There are four key factors which require the union to assess the latest situation in relation to the attacks on our pensions:

- 1. The different approaches adopted by Governments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.*
- 2. The political campaign around EDM454 and subsequent debate in the House of Commons.*
- 3. The introduction of the secondary legislation for the 2015 schemes.*
- 4. The approaching General Election.*
- 5. The executive council congratulates all members who participated in the campaign around EDM454 and the House of Commons debate*

This demonstrated once again the strength of our evidence based case.

It enabled us to challenge and engage with politicians across the political spectrum.

We gained support from MPs from all parties with the notable exception of the Tories and UKIP.

We won the support of the Labour leadership on a number of key issues.

The lobbying and the debate forced the DCLG Minister in the House of Commons to give assurances and a 'guarantee' on the issue of No Job No Pension which clearly influenced the debate and the vote. This 'guarantee' was subsequently confirmed by the Secretary of State in the Communities and Local Government Committee.

Since the Parliamentary debate in December, correspondence and dialogue with fire and rescue service employers has confirmed the legal position outlined by the FBU that the claims of a guarantee were empty and meaningless in law. It is now clear that Parliament has been misled.

For the immediate future, the executive council recommends that:

- 1. A continued lobbying campaign is undertaken to expose the claims made by DCLG and by ministers regarding the guarantee of an unreduced pension for firefighters suffering an age related decline in fitness. This campaign must demand that this issue is addressed by central Government.*
- 2. The campaign on pensions continues with politicians of all parties in the run up to the General Election.*
- 3. A specific demand is made that Labour makes clear pledges to change and improve pension arrangements in the event of forming an administration after the General Election.*
- 4. Each brigade, regional and sectional committee builds a maximum attendance at a national rally in London on Wednesday 25 February.*
- 5. The executive council should consider further industrial action either alone or as part of a coordinated campaign with other unions.*
- 6. The executive council further recommends that the campaign on pensions must continue, taking*

account of the current situation in each part of the UK and of the approaching election. It should continue to make use of all available tactics, including legal, political and industrial tactics as appropriate. It will continue beyond the General Election and we shall seek to convince this or any future government/s of the need to provide for decent occupational pensions within the Fire and Rescue Service and to make the necessary legislative changes to achieve this.

B7 INDUSTRIAL ACTION 25 FEBRUARY 2015

FBU members in England (except control members) took 24 hours of strike action starting at 07.00 on Wednesday 25 February as part of the ongoing pensions campaign (2015HOC0158MW).

Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service refused to accept partial performance during this period of strike action, effectively locking out FBU members and leaving the people of Buckinghamshire once again without the protection of professional firefighters for up to an additional 15 hours compared with the rest of England.

Industrial action short of a strike in England commenced on 26 February 2015 and involved:

1. Not participating in duties associated with marauding terrorist firearms attack (MTFA) incidents.
2. During periods of strike action being taken by FBU members, FBU members in a non-striking fire and rescue service should not cross borders to work in a fire and rescue service where FBU members are taking strike action or in a fire and rescue service where the employer is not recognising partial performance.

The refusal to cross borders during strike action was also taken by FBU members in Scotland and Wales, but not action on MTFA (2015HOC0161MW).

B8 FURTHER CAMPAIGNING DURING 2015

FBU campaigning against the Westminster government over pensions continued during the year, despite the DCLG fire minister's refusal to meet with the union during spring 2015.

The union wrote to the speaker of the House of Commons and to the prime minister asking them what they were going to do if, as the FBU feared, parliament may have been misled about the guarantee. The speaker replied that he could only operate within his powers and could only intervene if the words or actions of an MP were out of order. The mechanism in place to deal with situations when MPs had been inaccurate or misled parliament was the ministerial code.

The DCLG fire minister wrote to all coalition MPs with her update on the situation in March. The FBU responded by writing to all MPs correcting the numerous inaccuracies and misrepresentation in the minister's letter.

FBU members from the North East and neighbouring regions protested on 10 March at the Local Government Association fire conference in Gateshead during the visit of the minister.

On 24 March FBU officials met with the shadow secretary of state Hilary Benn and shadow fire minister Lyn Brown to discuss how they would deal with the firefighters' pension scheme dispute if they formed a government after the forthcoming general election. The shadow fire minister wrote a positive letter to the FBU suggesting how Labour would deal with some of our concerns differently (2015HOC0242SS).

In May FBU conference pledged that the FBU's pension campaign would continue. The executive council submitted an emergency resolution 'Firefighter pensions in the aftermath of the general election', which was discussed by delegates from every brigade in the UK. Conference recognised that the general election

result was a serious setback for our campaign. Resolutions are published in the FBU's *Record of Decisions* 2015 booklet, and the whole debate in the FBU's *Report of Proceedings* 2015.

After the general election, the union made contact with the new DCLG fire minister Mark Francois and held a meeting with him and his officials in July.

B9 THE 2015 FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEME

On 1 April, the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme was imposed without agreement and with many of the FBU's key concerns unaddressed. The executive council agreed that the new scheme is still unworkable, most notably in England, and that the campaign should continue (2015HOC0240MW).

FBU members who were not covered by protection were automatically transferred into the 2015 scheme on 1 April. Those who are fully protected will remain in their current scheme. Those with tapered protection will also remain in their current scheme until their limited protection expires.

Both government and the employers shirked their responsibility to fully inform pension scheme members of all their options. Scheme members were left to make important decisions with very little or very vague information from the people who were imposing and managing the schemes (i.e. government and employers).

The FBU argues that the proposed actuarial reductions at age 55 in England are punitive. The union suggested a fairer method for applying actuarial reductions, which DCLG refused but Scottish and Welsh governments have agreed to use.

One of the hardest hit sections of pension scheme members is the group outside of the protection offered in the proposals. In 2006 when the NPA was increased from 55 to 60 the FBU opposed this, giving a clear warning that it was unworkable. The Labour government of the time ring-fenced the current 1992 scheme members and suggested that where members of the new scheme could not reach the new NPA, they would be able to be redeployed in roles where operational fitness was not required and would remain in employment in this way.

The coalition government reneged on the previous ring-fencing arrangement and introduced a far worse protection proposal for existing members. This now leaves a significant number of existing members who were previously protected in a totally different position. The government has applied this approach across all the public sector pension schemes. The FBU has always fought for full protection for current scheme members, but has not been able to achieve this to date.

The union managed to get an improvement in Scotland, where the 10 years protection arrangements also take account of length of service as well as age at 1 April 2012.

The FBU also provided evidence to show that there simply are no redeployment in role opportunities for firefighters who cannot maintain operational fitness as a result of ageing.

Although by law the FBU cannot give individual financial advice to members, the union did warn them against taking the decision to opt out of their current scheme or not to join the 2015 scheme without first getting independent professional advice. The union has consistently warned that such a decision would be irreversible in many instances, as the FPS is already a closed scheme and in April 2015 the NFPS closed.

The union outlined that any member of the 1992 FPS who chose to opt out or not join the 2015 scheme would automatically become a deferred member and would be unable to access their pension until age 60 (except on ill-health). Such a member would also lose some other protections relating to ill-health and injuries. They would also lose tax relief on employee contributions. This is in addition to losing the employer's contribution to the pension scheme – a real terms reduction in pay. The union provided a dedicated FBU email address to assist with members' enquiries (2015HOC0070MW).

B10 AMENDMENT TO THE FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

In February 2015 the FBU circulated DCLG's *Addendum to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England* on firefighter fitness (2015HOC0095AD). This was added instead of a statutory guarantee, which the FBU had sought from ministers on this issue. The text states:

Firefighter fitness

Firefighting is a physically demanding occupation and it is essential that firefighters have sufficient levels of fitness to enable them to carry out their tasks as safely and effectively as possible. As such, this requires higher levels of fitness than most other occupations and therefore the National Joint Council role maps set out a specific requirement for operational personnel to maintain levels of personal fitness

The Government believes that fitness standards must reflect the occupational demands of firefighting and the Secretary of State has agreed that the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser will chair a joint working group, which will include an evaluation and assessment of safe standards.

The Government has also agreed to undertake an independent review in due course to ensure that appropriate fitness standards, training, testing, monitoring and management policies and procedures are in place in each fire and rescue authority.

It is also recognised that fitness levels may decline with age and whilst this may be mitigated by fitness training, diet and other lifestyle changes it is acknowledged that there may be a general decline in fitness as a result of the ageing process.

Fire and rescue authorities have an important role in helping to ensure their firefighters remain fit, and are supported in remaining in employment.

Each Fire and Rescue Authority must:

- *have a process of fitness assessment and development to ensure that operational personnel are enabled to maintain the standards of personal fitness required in order to perform their role safely;*
- *ensure that no individual will automatically face dismissal if they fall below the standards required and cannot be deployed operationally;*
- *ensure that all operational personnel will be provided with support to maintain their levels of fitness for the duration of their career;*
- *consider where operational personnel have fallen below the fitness standards required whether an individual is able to continue on full operational duties or should be stood down, taking into account the advice provided by the authority's occupational health provider. In making this decision, the safety and well-being of the individual will be the key issue;*
- *commit to providing a minimum of 6 months of development and support to enable individuals who have fallen below the required fitness standards to regain the necessary levels of fitness;*
- *refer an individual to occupational health where underlying medical reasons are identified that restrict/ prevent someone from achieving the necessary fitness and*
- *that individual must receive the necessary support to facilitate a return to operational duties; and*
- *fully explore opportunities to enable the individual to remain in employment including through reasonable adjustment and redeployment in role where it appears the medical condition does not allow a return to operational duties.*

In those circumstances where there are no such opportunities and suitable alternative employment is either unavailable or, where available, is not agreed by the individual, then the Fire and Rescue Authority will commence an assessment for ill-health retirement through the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioner process.

If no underlying medical issues are identified and following a programme of development and support it becomes apparent that an individual will be unable to regain the necessary levels of fitness, then a fire authority will fully explore opportunities for reasonable adjustments and/or suitable alternative employment. In those circumstances where there are no opportunities for reasonable adjustments or suitable alternative employment, the fire authority will in the case of an employee aged at least 55 consider commencement of the authority initiated early retirement process for it to determine whether the individual should be retired with an authority initiated early retirement pension.

B11 PENSION SCHEMES UNDER DEVOLVED POWERS (SCOTLAND, WALES, NORTHERN IRELAND)

Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have devolved powers in relation to firefighters' pension schemes. The FBU achieved some improvements compared to the current Westminster arrangements for England (2015HOC0131MW).

In Scotland the improvements mean that:

- the legislation will include a regulation requested by the FBU to satisfy our concerns in relation to the 'No job, no pension' threat
- improved protection arrangements based on length of service and age
- a fairer actuarial reduction at age 55, instead of the more punitive 21.8% that is being imposed by DCLG
- an assurance that Scottish government will match any further improvements proposed by the Westminster government.

In Northern Ireland, the NPA for the 2015 scheme is age 55 instead of age 60 imposed everywhere else.

The Welsh government discussed various issues with the FBU and confirmed in 2015 the option of a fairer actuarial reduction at age 55 (9% instead of the more punitive 21.8% imposed by Westminster for England). This is a significant improvement, which has been welcomed by FBU members in Wales.

The FBU continues to fight for improvements in all the UK-wide proposals, which are restricted by the cost ceiling imposed by the Westminster government.

B12 SCHEME GOVERNANCE PROBLEMS

The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 (and related legislation) included a requirement to set up local pension boards and a national scheme advisory board in all parts of the UK. This legislation set out when these boards should be established, how they should function and how they should be made up.

In the majority of local cases, the FBU believes the legislation has not been applied correctly. The union raised significant concerns with the way that these boards were established. These concerns include:

- how employee representatives to these boards are being appointed
- the delay in setting up the boards
- training for board members.

In Northern Ireland and Scotland our discussions around the boards were quite productive and many of our concerns tackled. At the end of 2015 these discussions were continuing. Elsewhere our concerns have not been addressed. This further threatens to undermine confidence in the new pension scheme, at a time when many scheme members are already outraged at earlier attacks on pension rights.

In some cases significant decisions were made, even though local boards were not yet established and so had not been able to discuss the issues. These problems were challenged as soon as they emerged.

B13 JOINT WORKING GROUP ON FITNESS

DCLG fire minister Penny Mordaunt established a joint DCLG/National Joint Council (NJC) working party to look at fitness issues arising from firefighters not being able to work until age 60. While the FBU was very sceptical of the motives for establishing this body, the executive council agreed to participate on the steering group and the working party looking at the issues (2015HOC0272AD; circular NJC/03/15).

The first meeting of the strategic group, which will steer the work of the joint working party, took place in February 2015. The meeting was chaired by chief fire and rescue adviser (England) Peter Holland (DCLG). NJC representatives were Cllr Maurice Heaster (employer) and Sean Starbuck (employee).

The first meeting of the joint working group was in March 2015. Employer representatives were Justin Johnson (Lancashire) and Karen Palframan (Norfolk). Employee representatives were Sean Starbuck and Andy Noble from the FBU. DCLG representatives were Peter Holland and Claire Cooper.

The terms of reference for the working party are:

Terms of reference

The joint working group notes that pension age will undergo a separate, regular review.

This joint working group will:

- consider aspects of the role that have been identified as the most physically intensive and how they impact upon an individual's ability and fitness to carry out their role over time
- examine future options and trends in respect of continued employment and develop a best practice guide.

The group aims to produce a best practice guide on fitness and related issues.

The FBU argued that the terms of reference were not far reaching enough to resolve the issues in the way the DCLG fire minister claimed. For example, the union believes that consistent and safe occupational fitness standard should be applied in all services. There has been extensive work to support this requirement and the government's own NPA review by Tony Williams clearly recommended it.

The government and employers have resisted this, saying fitness levels should be determined locally. The FBU argued that the role of a firefighter is determined in the nationally agreed role maps, which state that a firefighter must maintain operational fitness, and as such allowing each fire authority to set its own standard is illogical and potentially dangerous.

The union believes that employers have a duty of care to ensure that firefighters have a safe fitness standard, which takes account of the physical nature of the role.

As part of the process, the union developed a flow chart for managing fitness issues, which is in line with the best academic research and would ensure firefighters do get an unreduced pension (in line with the government guarantee if they are in this situation where they cannot maintain their operational fitness after 55). This approach was presented to the FireFit conference in October and at FBU national school in November 2015.

B14 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS)

The Local Government Pension Scheme 2014, which FBU members in emergency fire control can belong to, was imposed the previous year with the consent of other unions with members in local government. The FBU raised several concerns about the proposed scheme as part of our meetings with the LGPS trade union side. FBU members in the LGPS indicated that the scheme was not acceptable for two main reasons:

- the proposed normal pension age of (up to) 68
- the revaluation and accrual rates agreed for the career average revalued earnings (CARE) scheme.

Since then, the FBU has included concerns in relation to the LGPS as part of its submission to the public sector exit payment consultation. The FBU has also collected data from LGPS members as part of the preparation to launch an age discrimination challenge against the proposed transitional protection imposed by government.

B15 PUBLIC SECTOR EXIT PAYMENT

During 2015 the FBU secured a compromise on the public sector exit payment cap (2015HOC0542SS).

On 31 July 2015 HM Treasury opened a consultation exercise about imposing a public sector exit payment cap of £95,000. The Westminster government said the intention of this cap was to limit six-figure exit payments to high earners in the public sector. However, there were other consequences that were not so apparent. A key consequence for the FBU was that this proposal would, if imposed as suggested, completely undermine the guarantee that was given to parliament on 15 December 2014 about firefighters aged 55 who could not maintain their operational fitness.

The Treasury proposal suggested that the cap would be applied to early accessed, unreduced pensions, which would potentially affect members of the NFPS and the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

The FBU wrote to DCLG fire minister Mark Francois on 11 August and to ministers responsible for fire in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The union also submitted a response to the Westminster consultation outlining our concerns and requesting an exemption (2015HOC0507SS).

The response to the consultation, released in September, did not grant the exemption we requested but did appear to address the parliamentary guarantee concern by adding a sentence confirming that the cap would not apply in certain fitness-related cases.

The FBU wrote to the fire minister again requesting clarification that this addition covered our concerns about the guarantee, which was confirmed by DCLG. The FBU was the only fire and rescue organisation to raise this issue with ministers. This cap is part of the Enterprise Bill.

B16 LEGAL CHALLENGE: AGE DISCRIMINATION

In June 2015 the FBU announced it was mounting a legal challenge to what the government is calling pension 'protection' arrangements, which it says aim to safeguard firefighters affected by the new pension scheme (2015HOC0417MW). The 'protection' was put in place to cover older workers who were being forced out of the pensions they joined and into the new, worse, pension scheme. The FBU has argued that it is utterly unfair, inadequate and discriminatory not to provide the same protection to younger firefighters.

The union asked members to submit their claims via an online questionnaire on the union's website. By the end of 2015 over 6,000 claims had been registered. The union is planning to repeat the registration procedure to allow all affected members to apply. This initiative allowed the FBU to raise a test case from each fire authority to support its legal challenge. In addition, a number of sex, race and equal pay claims test cases were submitted. The union has already issued tribunal proceedings on behalf of all of the FPS members who do not have full protection and is preparing other cases for members in different schemes and in different circumstances.

The process also involved an early conciliation with ACAS. The government's initial response conceded that the transitional arrangements discriminated on age grounds. They also accepted that BME and women firefighters were disproportionately affected. However, they denied that the proposals were unlawful and claimed that they could be justified by the fact that they achieved a legitimate aim.

The FBU legal team indicated that the earliest we could expect any decision would be early 2017 (2015HOC0655MW). The executive council also agreed that no further strikes will be called in relation to the existing trade dispute on pensions while this legal challenge is pursued. This was reported to the union's recall conference on 10 February.

B17 LEGAL CHALLENGE: FIREFIGHTERS WHO JOINED AGED 18-20

The FBU lodged a legal challenge in relation to firefighters who joined the 1992 Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) aged 18-20 (2015HOC0696SS). Firefighters who joined the 1992 FPS aged 18-20 previously had to contribute for up to 32 years to receive a 30-year pension at the earliest age of 50. This was because the FPS, unlike many other schemes, has an accrual cap of 30 years' reckonable service – i.e. no more pension can be accrued after 30 years of contributions.

This has been an issue for many years, particularly among those members who joined the service and the pension scheme before the age of 20. As a result, the FBU challenged it with a test case in a specific hearing that was due to take place in December 2015.

Very late in the process correspondence from the DCLG confirmed that the secretary of state will now allow members under the age of 50 who have accrued 30 years' service to take a contributions holiday from the time they attain 30 years' reckonable service until they reach age 50. This effectively conceded our case.

The rules of the 1992 FPS will now be amended to allow an affected member (i.e. one who joined before the age of 20) upon reaching 50, to be able to choose to:

- retire with a pension
- continue employment and recommence payment of contributions (the accrual cap remains in place with a maximum 30 years of pension)
- or continue employment without paying contributions thereby electing to defer their pension.

The proposal is to be applied retrospectively to 1 December 2006 so that affected members will get a refund of contributions for that period if:

- a firefighter has already paid contributions in to the FPS after that date
- and has already accrued 30 years' pensionable service
- and was under the age of 50.

This refund will include an interest payment. The date of 1 December 2006 relates to the date when discrimination of this type became unlawful.

B18 LEGAL CHALLENGE: COMMUTATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE 1992 FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEME

The FBU has been engaged in a long campaign regarding the commutation rates for members of the 1992 Firefighters' Pension Scheme (2015HOC0316MW). The campaign has involved advising, supporting and providing legal assistance to those members affected. This was undertaken by means of a complaint to the pensions ombudsman that the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) had failed to review the commutation factors within the 1992 Firefighters' Pension Scheme from 1998 to 2006.

GAD's failure meant that a significant number of pension scheme members did not receive the lump sum they were entitled to. This has been a very long and detailed complaint, which the FBU has undertaken on behalf of over 5,000 retired and out-of-trade members. Because of the number of grievances involved, the pensions ombudsman decided to deal with this on a test case basis. The primary test case taken was a retired member, Milne.

In May 2015, the FBU's complaint was upheld by the pensions ombudsman who decided that GAD had failed in its responsibility to calculate appropriate factors. It ruled that GAD should notify the scheme administrator of the appropriate factor and should compensate Milne for the loss of use of the money and any tax liability.

This was a very significant FBU success for the retired members involved. The union is also examining another challenge over the 1 December 2001 date. The FBU is questioning the logic of using this month rather than an earlier one during the same year.

B19 CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PAYMENTS

In May 2015 the FBU was informed of a pension scheme manager who had announced that: (a) continual professional development (CPD) payments were not be treated as pensionable pay; and (b) active members who were absent from scheme employment because of illness or injury and were not entitled to receive pensionable pay, or because of a trade dispute or authorised unpaid absence, would be required to pay the employer's contributions as well as their own individual employee contribution (2015HOC0338MW).

The union wrote to Simon Pannell, the NJC employers' side joint secretary, about this matter, pointing out that the NJC agreement to introduce the continual professional development scheme was contingent on the regulators of the respective pension schemes accepting that CPD payments would be pensionable. This NJC agreement was reported in circular NJC/03/07 and circular NJC/05/07. On 24 April 2007 the national joint secretaries received written confirmation that ministers had agreed the pensionable status of CPD for uniformed employees for each of the three relevant schemes.

The FBU argued that the decision by the scheme manager was a breach of our national collective agreement. The FBU raised this matter at the NJC and the Middle Managers Negotiating Body on 3 June. The issue was resolved.

B20 PURCHASING ADDITIONAL YEARS OF PENSION SCHEME MEMBERSHIP

In March 2015 the FBU was made aware that the government and employers had not explained how a specific group of members could buy additional 1/60ths in their current scheme. Government and employers should have clearly explained this option to firefighters, but had not done so in many areas.

The FBU immediately produced notes to give information on how this works (2015HOC0225SS). Members of both the FPS (1992) and the NFPS (2006) can purchase additional pension years but the right to do so stops when the member ceases to contribute to the scheme.

Firefighters ceased to be a contributing member to these schemes as soon as they joined the new 2015 scheme. The FBU advised members to act immediately if they were going to transfer into the 2015 scheme on 1 April 2015 but were interested in purchasing additional pension.

SECTION C

OPERATIONS, HEALTH AND SAFETY

C1 INTRODUCTION

The FBU exists to defend and improve the health and safety of our members. No one goes to work to die or be maimed or injured. Firefighters face particular risks from the wide range of emergency and rescue work we carry out. So the FBU continues to prioritise safety and health issues at work with governments and throughout the union.

FBU conference in May 2015 passed health and safety motions on:

- mental health
- BA standards
- wholetime retained guidance
- cancer
- crewing levels
- fire behavioural and real fire training
- safety critical staffing in control rooms.

Conference also passed an executive council statement on internal arrangements within the FBU for tackling health and safety matters. The executive council discussed health and safety matters at almost all its meetings in 2015 and national officials worked to implement our policies. The union's health and safety committee met four times during 2015.

There were no operational firefighter fatalities during 2015, but legal and campaigning work arising from previous firefighter deaths continued during the year. There were developments around the deaths and injuries to firefighters in East Sussex in 2006 (Marlie Farm), Lothian and Borders in 2009 (Dalry Road) and Hampshire in 2010 (Shirley Towers).

FBU officials undertook further serious accident investigations during 2015, notably following a BA incident in East Sussex. The union continued with work around previous serious incidents, notably a hydraulic oil injection injury in Scotland and a BA training incident in East Sussex.

The FBU made a submission to government on asbestos in schools.

Last year FBU delegations visited the North American firefighters' union IAFF, which yielded valuable materials on burns, cancer, PPE and other safety matters.

C2 FBU HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The FBU health and safety committee held four meetings during 2015, all at head office:

- 17-18 February
- 22-23 June
- 24-25 September
- 16 November.

The meetings were attended by senior officials from most regions, as well as executive council members, sectional reps and national officers. The committee heard presentations on a range of safety matters, local reports and contributions from external speakers.

The FBU circulated the revised version of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations, known as the Brown Book (2015HOC0284AD).

An FBU investigation of joint management-trade union safety committees in workplaces identified concerns in some brigades about the functioning of these bodies and the extent of cooperation from management, which FBU safety reps will have to tackle. The union is taking steps to ensure that there is a joint health and safety committee in every fire and rescue service.

FBU HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE 2015

	17-18 February	22-23 June	24-25 September	16 November
President	Alan McLean		Alan McLean	
Vice-president	Ian Murray	Ian Murray	Ian Murray	Ian Murray
AGS	Andy Dark	Andy Dark	Andy Dark	Andy Dark
EC	Keith Handscomb Jim Parrott Ian Leahair Andy Noble	Jim Parrott Ian Leahair Andy Noble	Keith Handscomb Andy Noble	Keith Handscomb Ian Leahair Chris McGlone Andy Noble
R1	David Bennett	David Bennett	David Bennett	David Bennett
R2	Brian Cunningham	Brian Cunningham	Brian Cunningham	David Nichol
R3	Brian Gibson	Brian Gibson	Brian Gibson	Brian Gibson
R4	Carl Matthews	Carl Matthews		
R5	Ian McGill			Gary Bennett
R6	Claude Smythe	Claude Smythe		Claude Smythe
R7	Pete Goulden	Pete Goulden	Pete Goulden	Pete Goulden
R8	Simon Fleming			Simon Fleming
R9	Steve Kerridge			Steve Kerridge
R10	Gordon Fielden	Gordon Fielden	Gordon Fielden	Gordon Fielden
R11	Danni Armstrong			Richard Jones
R12				
R13	Kevin Herniman	Kevin Herniman	Kevin Herniman	Kevin Herniman
B&EMM				
CSNC	Lynda Rowan-O'Neill	Amelia Diallo	Lynda Rowan-O'Neill	Lynda Rowan-O'Neill
LGBT				
NRC			Lyndon Jones	
NWC				
ONC	Mick Higgins	Mick Higgins	Mick Higgins	Mick Higgins

C3 SERIOUS ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS: GENERAL

The executive council sought legal advice on how to report significant safety issues that arise from serious accident investigations without compromising the union.

The advice allows FBU officials to carry out their own independent investigations and relay lessons learned, while ensuring such reports do not risk contempt of court or jeopardise a prosecution. The advice warned about attributing blame or prejudicing other ongoing investigations.

C4 FIREFIGHTER FATALITIES: EAST SUSSEX 2006

In December 2014, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service dropped its appeal against liability for the deaths of Geoff Wicker and Brian Wembridge at a firework factory on Marlie Farm on 3 December 2006. The FBU ran a campaign urging the fire service accept liability. The union produced a summary report for the legal proceedings. This is a significant victory for the union and a climbdown by East Sussex FRS.

During 2015 the FBU continued to pressure East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to pay compensation to the families of those killed and to firefighters injured on the day.

C5 FIREFIGHTER FATALITY: LOTHIAN AND BORDERS 2009

In February 2015 the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service pleaded guilty to an amended set of charges over the death of firefighter Ewan Williamson, who lost his life in the line of duty fighting a fire at the Balmoral Bar in Dalry Road, Edinburgh on 12 July 2009.

The FBU welcomed the end of an almost six-year wait for justice, but argued that the guilty conviction does not address some of the fundamental issues that arose from the incident. FBU officials produced a report into the incident following a comprehensive investigation.

C6 FIREFIGHTER FATALITY: GREATER MANCHESTER 2013

FBU legal representatives and officials attended the pre-inquest review hearings on 22 May, 28 September and 16 December 2015 concerning the death of firefighter Stephen Hunt on 13 July 2013.

At a hearing at Manchester Crown Court on 10th April the Crown Prosecution Service did not offer evidence in the prosecution of a juvenile in a case of arson with intent to endanger life at the incident. The current decision regarding criminal proceedings may be subject to change depending on evidence put before the coroner. The coroner requested submissions from the FBU for the inquest hearing.

C7 FIREFIGHTER FATALITIES: WATTERSON REPORT PUBLISHED

An FBU-commissioned report, entitled *Firefighter Fatalities at fires in the UK 2004-2013: voices from the fireground*, was published in January 2015. It was written by Professor Andrew Watterson of the University of Stirling's occupational and environmental health research group and funded by the FBU.

In the UK over the last 10 years, 14 firefighters have died in the line of duty in London, Hertfordshire, East Sussex, Warwickshire, Lothian and Borders, Hampshire and Greater Manchester.

The Stirling University report:

- calls for direct and indirect role of central and senior local government and brigade managers in firefighter fatalities to be addressed
- provides detailed recommendations to address structural and functional failures that threaten firefighter health and safety; and
- recommends action to improve risk assessment, risk management and training.

In March Wales FBU officials met with ministers, civil servants and the chief fire and rescue adviser for Wales to attempt to gain some movement on these issues. Following these discussions, the Welsh government fire branch submitted a draft significant incident protocol to the Fire and Rescue Consultative Forum, where the FBU meets formally with civil servants, employers and chief officers. The new protocol was formally announced on 22 October 2015 by Welsh fire minister Leighton Andrews and welcomed by the FBU.

C8 SERIOUS ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION: EAST SUSSEX

On 25 June 2015, an FBU member was involved in a serious incident during his initial BA training at Maresfield in East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. The incident left the firefighter in hospital and in a very serious condition (2015HOC0455SS).

The FBU immediately provided support for the family and initiated an investigation into the cause of the incident. East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service accepted the FBU's request to suspend BA training at Maresfield. The union has contacted other appropriate authorities such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and expects them to treat it with the seriousness it warrants.

C9 SERIOUS ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION: HYDRAULIC OIL INJECTION INJURY

On 7 March 2014, an FBU member suffered a life-changing high-pressure oil injection injury while participating in an on-station road traffic collision exercise for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

During 2015 FBU officials examined a range of technologies involved from different manufacturers, as well as possible personal protective equipment that might be made available to control the risks of injury in future.

The FBU also produced a report, *The use of hydraulic rescue equipment in the UK fire and rescue service*. The union is critical of HSE's approach on the issue. In July 2015, the FBU wrote to the chief fire officer in Scotland regarding risk assessments and control measures put in place as result of this incident (2015HOC0424AD).

C10 MENTAL HEALTH

The mental health of firefighters became a higher priority for the FBU during 2015.

A report by mental health charity Mind published in March 2015 found that nine in 10 emergency services staff have experienced stress, low mood and poor mental health at some point whilst working for the emergency services. The charity launched a government-funded Blue Light Programme to provide support for emergency services personnel in England who may experience mental ill-health. The FBU undertook media work around the report and circulated information to officials about the issues (2015HOC0187AD and 2015HOC0401AD).

An FBU conference resolution in May mandated the union to produce best practice guidance on the issues around mental health. Head office is proceeding with research on firefighters and mental health, working with mental health organisations, to first understand the extent and nature of problems in the service. Once that is completed, union guidance and national standards can be developed from a strong evidence base. Firefighter suicide will be included in this work.

In December the FBU's executive council signed Mind's blue light programme's pledge committing organisations to tackling mental health stigma and discrimination in the emergency services. The union also supported a survey of mental health and emergency service workers commissioned by Mind.

C11 CANCER

The increased risks of firefighters getting cancer as a result of the work we do has long been a serious concern for FBU members. In 2015 the FBU has taken important steps on campaigning around the issues.

This year the FBU cemented relations with the IAFF firefighters' union in North America, with two delegation visits in March and August, which included an exchange of information on firefighter cancer risks. The presumptive legislation in some US and Canadian states provides a model that other firefighter unions across the globe (such as in Australia) have been able to use. The FBU wants to develop law, standards and guidance along similar lines within the UK context. The FBU is also pursuing occupational cancer risks with firefighters across the European Union, through our work with the European firefighter unions' network.

Last year FBU officials assisted Kent Fire and Rescue Service with a research and policy project on occupational cancers involving firefighters. This work is ongoing and it is hoped it will assist other fire and rescue services in developing their own policies. The FBU also made a submission to the Westminster government's consultation on asbestos in schools, working with the NUT teachers' union, emphasising the importance of an asbestos register to forewarn firefighters of potential exposure.

C12 RAPID DEPLOYMENT: SAFETY ISSUES

The executive council continued to address the issue of rapid deployment, which is increasingly used for short-crewing of appliances, introducing smaller vehicles, reductions in pre-determined attendance (PDAs) to incidents, increased attendance times of PDAs and the make-up of appliances.

In February head office requested information of occurrences of rapid deployment, particularly in relation to our demands for improved BA procedures in the operational environment (2015HOC0117AD).

The FBU believes that guidance published by DCLG *Fire and Rescue Authority – Operational guidance – Breathing apparatus* does not provide fire and rescue authorities with guidance or sufficient detail to improve the effectiveness of their emergency response or the safety of firefighters and the public when the emergency response is delivered.

The FBU is concerned that a number of fire and rescue services do not require incident commanders to report incidences of rapid deployment. The union's national health and safety committee recommends that brigade safety reps emphasise with management that the deployment of breathing apparatus is a control measure and that where BA is not deployed the employer is not carrying out the requirement to mitigate risk effectively. Management should carry out a gap analysis of where their current BA and related policies and procedures may be less safe than those in any guidance and introduce procedures that are safer than their existing BA and related policies.

In March, the FBU wrote to the HSE setting out our evidence and concerns about rapid deployment.

C13 LEGISLATION: SOCIAL ACTION, RESPONSIBILITY AND HEROISM ACT 2015

The Social Action, Responsibility and Heroism Act 2015 came into force during the year. The Act is a populist attack on health and safety with implications for firefighters in particular. The new law encourages 'volunteers' to be have-a-go heroes by limiting their liability if they are sued for negligence or breach of statutory duty after intervening in an emergency situation. The Act cuts across fire safety advice to members of the public to 'get out and stay out' and instead sanctions people to put themselves and others (including firefighters) in jeopardy by intervening in an emergency that they are not trained and equipped for. It also pressures firefighters to rush into hazardous situations, when their safety and that of the public would be better protected by a more carefully considered intervention.

The FBU gave evidence to the Westminster Bill committee in September 2014 and the FBU's concerns were referred to in debates in both the House of Commons and House of Lords during the Bill's passage. Although the Bill was effectively challenged, it has still been imposed.

C14 SYSTEL CONTROL MOBILISING SYSTEM IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

FBU members reported various problems with the new mobilising system (Systel) in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, and Leicestershire controls, which commenced in August 2015. Issues include system instability, difficulty answering calls, call handling times of up to eight minutes, instances of acoustic shock, and pumps being mobilised from afar whilst nearby available pumps have been overlooked by the system.

With risk-critical issues awaiting resolution and over hundreds of other reported faults, an impact on both control and operational members' health and safety was reported, as well as an increased risk to the public. FBU officials took up the matter with senior management within each of the three services and were ready to submit a safety critical notice.

C15 WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY

FBU members and officials observed Workers' Memorial Day on 28 April 2015 with events taking place across the UK. Firefighters at some stations held a one-minute silence at 11.00 to 'remember the dead and fight for the living'.

SECTION D

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

D1 INTRODUCTION

In 2015 there were further important developments on fire and rescue service policy, which the FBU was involved with on a number of different levels.

Penny Mordaunt, the fire minister in England for the first half of 2015, continued with her attack on firefighters' conditions of service, through the Thomas review and her specious 'upholding' of fire and rescue service values.

The fire and rescue service national framework in England was amended to include the Westminster government's pensions 'guarantee', while a new national framework came into force in Wales.

The FBU contributed to a range of operational guidance produced by various governments during 2015, including on incident command, operations, performing rescues and on fires and firefighting.

The FBU continued to be involved with a wide range of fire and rescue service stakeholder bodies, such as the Fire Sector Federation (FSF), Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), Fire Protection Association (FPA) and other bodies.

The FBU's work in this area was led by the executive council's central fire and rescue service policy board (CFRSPB) and included input from the union's fire safety and IRMP adviser, Dave Sibert.

FBU conference in 2015 included a number of resolutions on fire and rescue service policy:

- 'life risk based' fire and emergency incident cover
- fire and rescue services inspection process
- firefighter in charge
- operational preparedness of flexi-duty officers
- incident command competence.

D2 FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

The Fire and rescue national framework for England was amended during 2015 to incorporate the Westminster government's guarantee on 'No job, no pension' (see Section B).

D3 FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR WALES

In November 2015, the fire and rescue national framework 2016 for Wales came into force. In October the FBU made a written submission to the Welsh government consultation on the framework, which defended the importance of emergency response, the priority of firefighter safety and the need for robust accountability within the service. The new framework came into force on 1 January 2016. The Welsh government also said it would consult on extending the statutory duty on fire and rescue authorities in Wales to cover flooding – a longstanding FBU demand.

D4 DCLG REVIEW OF FIREFIGHTERS' CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

In January 2015 the FBU made a formal submission to the Thomas review of firefighters' conditions of service. The review was established by fire minister Penny Mordaunt in August 2014 in an effort to deflect attention away from the FBU's pensions dispute.

The FBU's submission questioned the nature, rationale, methods and timing of the review. The union did not endorse the process, but national officials met Adrian Thomas and offered our advice on how he might make some use of the opportunity presented by the review.

The union included some results from our own investigation of conditions of service, including from a YouGov survey commissioned by the FBU and undertaken in December 2014. With ten thousand responses from across the UK, this is by far the most representative survey of firefighters' conditions undertaken in recent memory.

DCLG was expected to publish the Thomas report at/during the LGA fire conference in March, but didn't do so. His report was not published during 2015.

In March Mordaunt also sought to smear firefighters and the FBU by making a series of unsubstantiated allegations of bullying and harassment, under the rubric of 'upholding the values of the fire and rescue service'. FBU officials attended the first meeting and upon realising it was a hatchet job, withdrew from participation.

D5 MARAUDING TERRORIST FIREARMS ATTACK (MTFA)

During 2015 the executive council continued to implement the marauding terrorist firearms attack (MTFA) policy agreed at conference 2013. MTFA remains a non-contractual activity, which some members have agreed to participate in on a voluntary basis.

The FBU accepts in principle that MTFA activity could become a core part of a firefighter's role, as long as the right safeguards and protections are in place. The service needs funding for this work to be done properly. Firefighters must be financially protected if the procedures fail and they are killed or injured. The added responsibilities should be reflected in a general pay rise and extra pay for specialist teams. Compensation, enhanced pension, AIF indemnity and domestic insurance policy conflicts should be resolved, so that members or their families are speedily remunerated in the event of death or injury.

The FBU is pursuing these issues through a range of channels: directly to government, joint activity via the NJC (see Section A) and with Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA). The union explained our position in an all-members circular (2015HOC0395AD) 16 June 2015. The FBU hosted a successful MTFA practitioners' event on 29 September 2015.

In light of the Paris attacks on 13 November 2015, the FBU along with UNISON and the Police Federation wrote to the prime minister requesting to meet about terrorist threats and the role of the emergency

services. The offer was declined and passed to the Home Office – but no meeting was organised by them either during 2015.

D6 NATIONAL OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE PROGRAMME

The National Operational Guidance Programme is a partnership between London Fire Brigade, the CFOA and the LGA. It had links to the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP). It aims to replace fire and rescue service operational guidance issued by the Westminster government.

To date, the programme has produced five pieces of guidance:

- water rescue and flooding
- environmental protection
- fires in the built environment
- initial operational response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, explosive (CBRN(E)) incidents
- marauding terrorist firearms attack (MTFA).

Four more pieces of guidance are awaiting approval:

- incident command
- operations
- performing rescues
- fires and firefighting.

Although the executive council has concerns with the programme, it agreed to continue to engage with the production of operational guidance through the programme to ensure that published guidance was as good as possible.

In May 2015, the programme moved to its next phase of development. Fire and rescue services in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and all of the UK's fire and rescue authorities are now involved in, and fund, the programme, subject to three years of match funding provided by the Westminster government. Westminster agreed one year of match funding, so the National Operational Guidance Programme Board agreed the production of six pieces of guidance for 2015/16:

- transport context: any incident occurring on or in one of the transport types; road, rail, air or water; it will not include specific incident activity
- hazardous materials: all hazardous materials incidents
- rural fires: fires in grassland, woodland and crops greater than 10,000 square metres
- fires in buildings under construction or demolition: fires in buildings which are either under construction, demolition or are being renovated
- fires in waste management sites: non-residential fires involving recycling or disposal of waste
- specialist operational response to CBRN(E): CBRN(E) incidents relating only to specialist operational response.

If the programme receives further funding, the board intends to commission guidance for 24 other projects.

For each piece of guidance, the board will appoint a director (normally a principal manager) and a team with specialist experience of the subject matter. Team members will require partial or full-time release of between three to six months from their service. This team will be responsible for producing draft guidance.

The Operational Guidance Group (OGG), a stakeholder body the FBU sits on, is responsible for scrutinising this guidance, to ensure that it is accurate and consistent with the aims of the programme, both before and following consultation with stakeholders. Following consultation, the OGG is responsible for final amendments, quality assurance, and recommendations to the board.

D7 INITIAL OPERATIONAL RESPONSE CBRN(E)

Initial Operational Response (IOR) is a government programme for intervention and activity at CBRN(E) events where crews are mobilised and arrive at an incident which is unknown to be a CBRN(E) before arrival. It applies to intervention prior to the despatch and arrival of the full suite of appliances and personnel to effect casualty protection and decontamination, including incident response units. Operational implementation of IOR was due to take effect from 1 September 2015.

The FBU raised safety and indemnification concerns with governments and the employers. The executive council agreed that training and preparation activity should continue, but not the operational implementation of IOR until the issues regarding PPE had been resolved. However, during the course of the year the use of gas-tight suits was reintroduced by the project leads which does provide again a safe system of work.

D8 BRITISH STANDARD 7974

The British Standards Institution (BSI) fire committee (FSH) looks after the British Standard 7974 series that addresses the fire engineering design of buildings. In 2015 the key issue discussed at this meeting was the possible involvement of ISO (the International Standards Organisation) and CEN (the European Committee for Standardisation) in the future development of fire engineering standards. If CEN creates a European standard (or adopts an ISO standard) that covers the same ground as BS 7974, the UK will be forced to withdraw BS 7974. This would be detrimental in a number of ways, particularly as the FBU has succeeded in getting a number of firefighter safety improvements into the recently updated edition of BS 7974-PD5.

D9 RISK BASED FIRE COVER DOCUMENT

The FBU's 2015 conference passed a resolution to support the use of critical attendance standards (CAST), resource planning (BROS) and 'life risk based' fire cover. This approach was initially developed by FBU head office in conjunction with region 1 officials prior to the amalgamation of the eight Scottish services into the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. A first draft of the general document has been produced and has been tested during the assistance with the FBU IRMP responses in Northern Ireland and Gloucestershire.

D10 FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS REGULATIONS

In 2014, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) announced a review of the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. It had originally planned to introduce changes to the furniture fire safety regulations by April 2015. The FBU identified proposed changes that might be detrimental to the fire safety of upholstered furniture and alerted others in the fire sector. The union played a key role in the original legislation and was keen to protect the safeguards won from that time.

In 2015, BIS published its response to the consultation it conducted on the changes and confirmed that they will not progress changes as originally set out, but instead will await the outcome of the technical review. This was expected to conclude by April 2016.

D11 FIRE SERVICE COLLEGE

In January 2015, the FBU raised concerns about newly imposed terms and conditions of service for seconded officers at the Fire Service College, which was handed over to contractors Capita in 2013. The college is reduced to 20 seconded officers, with additional input by some Capita full-time trainers, associate tutors and visiting lecturers.

D12 SHIFT CHANGES

Efforts by employers to change shift systems have been a key area of work for the union for a number of years. The executive council established a working group in 2015 to assess recent attacks and what the union can do to avert them. The group met on 25 November and 2 December and discussed ongoing disputes in South Yorkshire, Merseyside, Swansea Bay and the control merger in Wales.

D13 FIRE SECTOR FEDERATION (FSF)

The Fire Sector Federation (FSF) is an amalgamation of the Fire Sector Partnership and the Federation of British Fire Organisations (FOBFO). The FBU holds a seat on the executive of the FSF.

During 2015, the FBU contributed to a number of FSF projects. These included:

- chairing a Fire Risk Management Competency Council that has been working on a competency standard for fire risk managers
- developing a free searchable database of fire safety technical standards that will form part of the FSF website
- working with the Fire Industry Association and CFOA on developing a technical document to explain the risk assessment, design, installation and management of fire detection and alarm systems in special housing (sheltered, extra care, and similar housing)
- plans for a guide to retrofitting sprinklers in high rise residential buildings, and
- a Guide to the Fire Safety Procedural Guidance.

In March 2015, the FSF created a think tank to develop ideas for the future of the fire sector, chaired by former London fire commissioner Brian Robinson. It discussed widening the English chief fire and rescue adviser role to a 'government fire sector adviser' and other matters. There has been no further progress since the first meeting.

In 2015, the FSF decided to try again at producing a report on the economic cost of fire. Two years ago, the FBU attempted to get the FSF to commission research on this important issue, which eventually failed because of the cost of producing such a wide ranging report.

D14 CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (CFOA)

During 2015, FBU officials continued to engage with the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) where this was necessary to advance firefighters' interests.

On 20 April, FBU officials participated in the CFOA conference on The Call for Data Answered, which included the launch of LIFE BID (Lessons In Fire and Evacuation Behaviour In Dwellings). The aim of LIFE BID is to create the world's first database of actions and motivations in accidental dwelling fires.

Dave Sibert, FBU fire safety and IRMP adviser, spoke to the CFOA fire engineering and technical standards (FETS) group on 11 June to explain the background. There was some interest in carrying out a project to look at the limitations of firefighters in large unsprinklered warehouses.

During 2015 the FBU worked through the CFOA vulnerable people working group to agree proposed amendments to BS 9991 (Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings) prior to public consultation. BS 9991 is a widely used standard in the fire sector.

The CFOA business engagement forum was set up as a requirement of Fire Safety Order enforcement coming within the scope of primary authority schemes. In 2015 it was decided to split the forum into business-specific groups. The retail sector will have their meetings with CFOA, as will the hotel sector and so on.

During 2015 the FBU campaigned for the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to recommend a reduction in the maximum compartment size of unsprinklered warehouse buildings. Very large unsprinklered warehouses are particularly high risk locations for firefighters and a recommendation from the BRE would have encouraged DCLG to limit their size and therefore improve firefighter safety.

D15 FPA'S RISCAUTHORITY

The FBU attends the Fire Protection Association's RISCAuthority passive fire safety workstream meetings and has contributed a number of firefighter safety measures that have been incorporated into the RISCAuthority's core document *Approved Document B with Insurer requirements*. The RISCAuthority is an independent, not-for-profit scheme managed by the Fire Protection Association (FPA), funded by the UK's largest property insurers, with the objective of reducing insured risk through research, advice and best practice.

During 2015, the FBU took up concerns through the RISCAuthority passive working group about a government insurance scheme that had been set up to insure free schools and academies. The scheme provides unlimited insurance (including fire insurance) and charges schools a fixed premium based only on the number of pupils, not on the level of risk. The FBU met with the NUT teachers' union to coordinate responses.

Other work within the working group during 2015 included getting a number of additional measures that would protect firefighter safety into a document called *Insurer Requirements for the Design of New Buildings*. FBU proposals on developing guidance for levels of compartmentation, that would reduce fire spread in new buildings, and guidance on access and facilities for firefighters, that would increase firefighter safety, were incorporated into the revised edition.

D16 FIRE AND RESCUE STATISTICS USER GROUP

FBU officials or staff attend the Fire and Rescue Statistics User Group. At the meeting on 13 November 2015 it was announced that the contractor who has been maintaining and updating fire service emergency cover (FSEC) since it was handed over from DCLG is to cease work. It is therefore most likely that there will be no further maintenance of FSEC.

After the merger of Scottish fire and rescue services into a single service, it has been decided to bring Scottish incident statistics in house to be collated and published by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, rather than by the Scottish government.

The incident recording system (IRS) was not improved during 2015, as had been promised by DCLG. The department put the contract out to tender because they had not been happy with the previous provider.

However, in 2015 the new provider dropped out of the project because they had recognised that they did not have the capacity to deliver. This will significantly delay any update or improvement to the IRS.

D17 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Due to the ongoing pension campaign arrangements were made that executive council member John Arnold would attend national meetings on behalf of the FBU on a temporary basis. This ended in September 2015, with national officer Sean Starbuck once again becoming the FBU attendee.

A UKFRS sector – NOS and qualifications workstream meeting took place on 17 September. This committee, which is a subcommittee of the fire and rescue service occupational committee (FRSOC), has been developing a tactical adviser standard as part of its 2015 workplan and was working on a standard for incidents involving animals.

The FRSOC meeting took place in November 2015 where the FBU raised concerns about the apparent misunderstanding of the process to make any amendments to the current role maps and associated elements contained within them. Following this intervention the suggested watch manager changes were shelved until further notice.

SECTION E

GOVERNMENT POLICY AND LEGISLATION

E1 INTRODUCTION

2015 was a pivotal year for government and politics across the UK. The Westminster general election brought about an even worse political context within which the FBU has to defend our members and our service, with a Tory majority government replacing the coalition in May.

The new government immediately launched a series of attacks on the fire and rescue service. These included:

- a 20% cut in central government funding to the fire and rescue service over the next four years
- efforts to allow police and crime commissioners to take over the running of local fire authorities
- new anti-trade union laws designed to restrict the voice of firefighters and other workers, both in the workplace and in wider politics.

A considerable amount of FBU resources were deployed into political work during 2015. This activity included submissions to governments at Westminster, Holyrood, Stormont and Cardiff, lobbies by FBU members, meetings with ministers and civil servants and the production of briefings and bulletins, as well as campaigning.

FBU conference in 2015 included a number of resolutions on fire and rescue service policy. These were:

- increased threat to public safety
- fire and rescue cuts and campaign material
- flooding – a statutory duty
- privatisation and mutualisation.

These issues were progressed in the course of 2015 and into the following year.

E2 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – ENGLAND

At the beginning of 2015, responsibility for the fire and rescue service for England lay with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The secretary of state was Eric Pickles MP. The under-secretary of state, often referred to as the fire minister for England, was Penny Mordaunt MP. After the May general election, Greg Clark MP became DCLG secretary of state, while Mark Francois MP was appointed under-secretary with responsibility for the fire and rescue service in England. FBU officials held meetings with ministers during 2015.

At the end of 2015 the FBU learned of plans to transfer responsibility for the fire and rescue service to the Home Office. This was formally announced by the prime minister on 5 January 2016. Teresa May MP was the secretary of state and Mike Penning MP under-secretary of state with responsibility for fire.

E3 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – NORTHERN IRELAND

The fire and rescue service in Northern Ireland is a devolved matter and is the responsibility of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). During 2015, the minister responsible for DHSSPS was Simon Hamilton MLA. FBU officials held numerous meetings with ministers and MLAs during 2015.

E4 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – WALES

The fire and rescue service in Wales is a devolved matter and is the responsibility of the Welsh government. During 2015 Leighton Andrews AM was responsible for public services, including the fire and rescue service in Wales. FBU officials held meetings with AMs and Welsh government fire branch civil servants during 2015. The FBU represents firefighters on the Fire and Rescue Consultative Forum, which includes senior civil servants, chief fire officers and employers' representatives.

E5 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – SCOTLAND

The fire and rescue service in Scotland is a devolved matter and is the responsibility of the Scottish government. During 2015, Michael Matheson MSP was cabinet secretary for justice and Paul Wheelhouse MSP was the minister for community safety and legal affairs, with responsibility for the fire and rescue service in Scotland. FBU officials held meetings with numerous ministers and MSPs during 2015.

E6 SPENDING REVIEW

The Westminster government announced its spending review on 16 July 2015 and published its autumn statement on 25 November. The FBU made a written submission to the Treasury, which argued that the fire and rescue service is an indispensable public service that deserves investment, not cuts. The FBU commissioned a YouGov public survey, which found that firefighters are still held in very high esteem. The submission emphasised the wide range of irreplaceable activity firefighters currently engage in, as well as ongoing discussions to broaden this work, which would be jeopardised through cuts. The FBU's view, *FBU Submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2015*, was published as a printed report and sent to local and national politicians across the UK.

The provisional local government settlement figures, detailing central government funding to metropolitan and combined fire and rescue authorities for the next four years, were published on 17 December. On average, cuts to central funding amount to 20% over that period, with some as high as 28%. The FBU does not believe local authorities have the revenue to make up the shortfall from council tax, putting huge pressure on fire budgets in the years to come.

E7 NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE REPORT ON FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE SUSTAINABILITY/PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE INQUIRY

On 5 November 2015, the National Audit Office (NAO) published its report, *Financial sustainability of fire and rescue services*, along with accompanying documents. The report was critical of the DCLG's poor management of the fire and rescue service, its lack of national standards and its lack of regard for the additional work firefighters do in communities.

The FBU briefed NAO officials during their research and welcomed the report. The union said the NAO confirmed that cuts in funding were leading to slower 999 response times and that the Westminster government was failing to provide public oversight of the fire and rescue service. The union emphasised the importance of investment, not cuts, and the need for a system of independent inspection.

The NAO report was used by the public accounts committee at Westminster to hold DCLG civil servants to account on 26 November. The FBU made a written submission to the public accounts committee explaining our key issues. However, no FBU official was asked to give oral testimony to the committee. The FBU wrote to the committee's chair to complain. The public accounts committee was due to publish its own report on the fire and rescue service in 2016.

E8 PRIVATISATION, MUTUALS AND CONTRACTING OUT

There were no significant developments on plans to mutualise the fire and rescue service in Cleveland during 2015. FBU officials kept up the pressure both at Westminster and with local politicians to thwart the proposals, which would damage both the service and firefighters' conditions.

The FBU was not aware of any further steps taken by private companies such as Falck, Capita, Babcock International and Specialist Group International to encroach on the fire and rescue service during 2015. However, some firms continued to provide limited services (such as training and contingencies) in a number of services. Given the increase in outsourcing in other areas of the public sector during the coalition government, the FBU maintained a vigilant watching brief on the activities of private profiteers with designs on the fire and rescue service.

E9 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

On 11 September, the Home Office, DCLG and the Department of Health launched a consultation on *Enabling closer working between the emergency services*. This represented a grave threat to the fire and rescue service and to firefighters in particular (2015HOC0509MW).

The measures included:

- a new statutory duty on all three emergency services to collaborate to make 'efficiencies'
- enabling police and crime commissioners (PCCs) to take on the responsibilities of fire and rescue authorities where a local case is made
- allowing PCCs to create a single employer for police and fire staff to share back office functions and to 'streamline' management
- enabling a PCC to be represented on the local fire authorities in areas where they do not take on the responsibility for fire and rescue services
- abolishing the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and giving the mayor of London total responsibility for the fire and rescue service there
- abolishing the Greater Manchester Fire Authority and giving the mayor of Greater Manchester responsibility for the fire and rescue service there.

The executive council strongly opposed the government's proposals. The FBU submission to public consultation explained why a PCC takeover would attack the fire and rescue service (2015HOC0580MW).

The proposals will compromise the independence of humanitarian services such as the fire and rescue service and the ambulance service, while undermining community engagement. Police and crime commissioners do not have the mandate, expertise and legitimacy to govern the fire and rescue service. Putting PCCs in charge would abolish local fire authorities currently made up of democratically elected councillors and replace them with unelected quangos packed with cronies.

The proposals could take some firefighters, emergency fire control staff and fire support staff in England out of national pay and conditions, pensions and other current arrangements, leading to worse conditions for all. These moves will worsen the service provided to the public and prepare the ground for wholesale privatisation of the fire and rescue service. They are an attack on independent trade unionism and the FBU in particular. The police are barred from forming a trade union and from taking industrial action.

On 25 November, as part of the spending review, the Westminster government announced that it would proceed with its plans to widen the powers of PCCs, even though it had still not published a response to the consultation. The union launched a political campaign, working with others in the sector, to persuade politicians at national, local and devolved level of our case against this takeover.

E10 TRADE UNION BILL

The Tory government elected in May 2015 moved swiftly to outline new attacks on trade union rights. The Queen's speech on 27 May announced a so-called Trade Union Bill, intended 'to reform trade unions and to protect essential public services against strikes'. The proposals will make some of the tightest anti-union laws in Europe even tighter.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- a 50% voting threshold for union ballots turnouts
- a requirement that 40% of those entitled to vote must vote in favour of industrial action in certain essential public services (health, education, fire, transport)
- tackling 'intimidation' of non-striking workers during a strike
- an opt-in process for the political fund element of trade unions' subscriptions
- time limits on a mandate following a ballot for industrial action
- making changes to the role of the certification officer.

The executive council judged that the Bill was a major attack on trade unions in general and the FBU in particular (2015HOC0521MW). FBU officials spoke at a major trade union rally against the Bill on 29 July organised by the Institute of Employment Rights. The union provided a briefing for MPs for the second reading of the Bill in September 2015.

The FBU made formal submissions to the partial and hasty 'consultation' the Westminster government convened on the Bill during August. The union argued that the Trade Union Bill was an unprecedented attack on the rights of working people, including fundamental democratic rights to organise, assemble, to free speech and collective action. A key reason why the government wished to weaken industrial action was because trade unions are major obstacles to further privatisation and to cuts to public services. The Bill was a naked attempt by the government to obliterate the right of working people to our own representation, to diminish our collective voice at work and in politics, and to undermine important democratic freedoms won through workers' struggle.

The FBU came under particular focus as part of these attacks. On 15 October the House of Commons Bill committee heard evidence on the Bill relating to the fire and rescue service. London fire commissioner Ron Dobson attacked firefighters during the proceedings, but was countered in a subsequent session by the FBU's general secretary Matt Wrack (2015HOC0561MW). The union made an additional written submission to the committee to refute allegations made against firefighters by MPs. FBU members took part in a

number of gatherings against the Bill, including the demonstration at Westminster on 14 September, the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group (TUCG) rally on 13 October, the TUC lobby on 2 November and the TUCG rally on 10 November.

E11 ARMED FORCES BILL

The Armed Forces Bill 2015-16 mostly covered military matters, but it also included provisions about Ministry of Defence (MoD) firefighters. The FBU organises firefighters employed by local authorities and does not directly organise firefighters engaged with firefighting on MoD property. However, the union made a written submission to the Armed Forces Bill select committee because of concerns about the unintended consequences of the Bill.

The Bill appeared to allow MoD firefighters, whether employed directly or as contractors, to engage in firefighting outside of their normal jurisdiction and on the fire ground of local authority firefighters. It appeared to give powers to MoD firefighters that are almost identical to those in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, without spelling out where those powers could be exercised. The FBU was therefore concerned about the impact of a wider deployment of MoD firefighters for the quality of service provided, the involvement of private contractors and the use of these operatives during industrial action by our members. MPs responded that this was not the intention of the Bill and normal cross-border protocols would remain in place (2015HOC0579DG).

E12 AUDIT SCOTLAND REPORT

Audit Scotland published a report on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in May 2015. The report claimed that the creation of a single fire and rescue service for Scotland was managed effectively, and its performance was improving. However, it said a long-term financial strategy was urgently needed to address a significant potential funding gap of £42.7m 2019-20.

FBU officials in Scotland made use of the report in testimony to the justice committee of the Scottish parliament on 28 April 2015, explaining the impact of cuts on firefighter jobs and arguing for investment in the service going forward.

E13 FLOODING RESOURCES AND STATUTORY DUTY

Work at major floods has become an increasingly significant part of firefighters' work since the turn of the century. The FBU is campaigning for more resources, training and equipment to enable firefighters to intervene at all stages of flooding. In Scotland and Northern Ireland the union has previously won a statutory duty on the fire and rescue service to respond to major flooding. However in England and Wales, governments have not applied a duty.

During 2015 the FBU continued with political work on flooding, especially at Westminster. In January the union published a report, *Inundated: The lessons of recent flooding for the fire and rescue service*, which restated the case for resources and a legal duty in light of the experience of the 2013-14 flooding. The House of Commons environmental audit committee used the report to highlight the impact of fewer firefighters on flood resilience.

The FBU convinced Labour politicians that a statutory duty was necessary and it was added to their May election pledges. In December, the new Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn backed the FBU's campaign to give fire and rescue services more resources to tackle major flooding incidents, after visiting firefighters in Cumbria tackling the fallout from Storm Desmond. The Westminster government ignored demands for

changes in the law and improved resources despite further severe flooding during December 2015. In Wales FBU officials helped convince the Welsh government to consult on extending the statutory functions of fire and rescue authorities to cover flooding in Wales.

E14 FBU PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The FBU organises a parliamentary group to advance firefighters' interests at Westminster, where many key decisions are made that affect the fire and rescue service. The group, drawn exclusively from Labour MPs, is chaired by Kate Hoey MP with John McDonnell MP as secretary.

The aim of the group is to inform MPs of firefighter issues and influence the direction of government policy. The FBU parliamentary group is a campaigning group. It is not comprised of MPs who have any financial relationship with the union because of their membership, but rather of MPs who wish to work with the union and in the interests of FBU members.

The group meets regularly every six to eight weeks whilst the House of Commons is sitting, so the union can brief MPs on its current campaigns. The union provides a written report to all group meetings and also provides regular updates at interim strategy meetings.

During 2015 a wide range of issues was raised, including:

- the FBU's pensions dispute
- the impact of cuts on the fire and rescue service
- threats of privatisation
- the threat of police and crime commissioners taking over fire authorities
- flooding and the need for regulation and resources for the fire and rescue service
- the Thomas review of firefighters' conditions of service, and
- the Trade Union Bill.

The composition of the FBU parliamentary group changed significantly as a result of the May 2015 general election. Some very supportive MPs stood down or were not re-elected. However, a number of newly elected MPs joined the FBU group.

FBU parliamentary group membership, January 2015	FBU parliamentary group membership, December 2015
David Anderson, Blaydon	David Anderson, Blaydon
Roberta Blackman-Woods, City of Durham	Roberta Blackman-Woods, City of Durham
Tom Blenkinsop, Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland	Tom Blenkinsop, Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland
Jenny Chapman, Darlington	Richard Burgon, Leeds East
Katy Clark, Ayrshire North and Arran	Jenny Chapman, Darlington
Michael Connarty, Linlithgow and Falkirk East	Rosie Cooper, West Lancashire
Rosie Cooper, West Lancashire	Jeremy Corbyn, Islington North
Jeremy Corbyn, Islington North	Jon Cruddas, Dagenham and Rainham
Jon Cruddas, Dagenham and Rainham	John Cryer, Leyton and Wanstead
John Cryer, Leyton and Wanstead	Alex Cunningham, Stockton North
Alex Cunningham, Stockton North	Nic Dakin, Scunthorpe
Tony Cunningham, Workington	Robert Fello, Stoke-on-Trent South
Nic Dakin, Scunthorpe	Paul Flynn, Newport West
Ian Davidson, Glasgow South West	Mary Glendon, North Tyneside
Frank Doran, Aberdeen North	Nia Griffith, Llanelli
Robert Fello, Stoke-on-Trent South	Harry Harpham, Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough
Dr Hywel Francis, Aberavon	Louise Haigh, Sheffield Heeley
Nia Griffith, Llanelli	Kate Hoey, Vauxhall
David Hamilton, Midlothian	Kelvin Hopkins, Luton North
Kate Hoey, Vauxhall	Imran Hussain, Bradford East
Kelvin Hopkins, Luton North	Ian Lavery, Wansbeck
Ian Lavery, Wansbeck	Clive Lewis, Norwich South
Kerry McCarthy, Bristol East	Rebecca Long-Bailey, Salford and Eccles
John McDonnell, Hayes and Harlington	Rachael Maskell, York Central
Jim McGovern, Dundee West	Kerry McCarthy, Bristol East
Austin Mitchell, Great Grimsby	Andy McDonald, Middlesbrough
Grahame Morris, Easington	John McDonnell, Hayes and Harlington
George Mudie, Leeds East	Liz McInnes, Heywood and Middleton
Linda Riordan, Halifax	Ian Mearns, Gateshead
Dennis Skinner, Bolsover	Grahame Morris, Easington
Karl Turner, Kingston upon Hull East	Kate Osamor, Edmonton
Joan Walley, Stoke-on-Trent North	Dennis Skinner, Bolsover
Chris Williamson, Derby North	Cat Smith, Lancaster and Fleetwood
Mike Wood, Batley and Spen	Jo Stevens, Cardiff Central
	Karl Turner, Kingston upon Hull East

E15 TRADE UNION CO-ORDINATING GROUP (TUCG)

The FBU is a founder member of the TUCG, established in 2008 to coordinate campaigning activities at Westminster on issues of common concern between member unions. The TUCG currently comprises nine trade unions: Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU), FBU, probation and family court staff union (NAPO), National Union of Journalists (NUJ), National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT), National Union of Teachers (NUT), Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), Prison Officers' Association (POA) and United Road Transport Union (URTU). John McDonnell MP is the TUCG parliamentary convenor. The TUCG executive council met every two months during 2015 and organised events at TUC congress and around Westminster.

E16 CAMPAIGNING AND LOBBYING

The FBU organised two major national lobbying events during 2015. The 'No more lies' protest on pensions on 25 February attracted 4,000 firefighters and included an impromptu rally outside Downing Street. The parliamentary lobby about cuts and fire service governance on 14 October involved around 100 firefighters speaking to MPs inside the Houses of Parliament. Head office officials provided resources and other assistance to these events.

FBU officials also organised some crucial local mobilisations, including:

- Lincolnshire public campaign event – 16 January
- Northamptonshire fire authority lobby – 10 February
- Leicestershire fire authority lobby – 11 February
- lobby of the LGA fire conference Gateshead – 10 March
- Great Yarmouth pre-general election protest – 5 May
- North Yorkshire fire authority lobby – 24 June
- London (reclaim Kingsland fire station) – 26 September
- Northumberland – 19 November
- West Midlands fire authority lobby – 23 November
- London LFEPA lobby – 2 December
- North Yorkshire fire authority lobby – 9 December.

In addition, head office also provided assistance in sourcing resources for campaigns in Essex, Suffolk, Hampshire, North Yorkshire, Norfolk, Derbyshire, Gloucestershire, Northern Ireland and Tyne and Wear.

SECTION F

TRADE UNION AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

F1 INTRODUCTION

The FBU has a proud reputation for solidarity and intervention in the wider labour movement, both within the UK and internationally. During 2015, the union sent delegations to a number of important trade union and labour movement conferences, to put forward the views of firefighters and to seek support for our campaigns.

The FBU has also cemented links with firefighter unions across Europe and North America during 2015. The union continues to affiliate to a wide range of labour movement-backed campaigns.

FBU conference in 2015 included a number of resolutions on the trade union and labour movement, including:

- political engagement
- joint trade union action
- climate change
- affiliation to the National Shop Stewards Network
- Palestine solidarity.

These were implemented in the course of 2015.

F2 TUC CONGRESS 2015

The annual Trades Union Congress (TUC) took place on 13-16 September 2015 in Brighton. The theme of the conference was 'Great jobs for everyone'. The FBU delegation consisted of Matt Wrack, Alan McLean, Ian Murray, Andy Noble, Tam McFarlane, Kevin Brown, Danni Armstrong, Jo Byrne, Michael Nicholas, John Arnold and Lucy Masoud. The FBU moved two resolutions at the conference, which were both carried:

- 'Blacklisting and state spying on unions' on undercover police spying on trade unionists, including spying on senior FBU officials
- 'Building a campaign to stop government attacks' on creating a mass movement to defeat government attacks on local services, pay and conditions and trade union rights.

The FBU submitted an emergency resolution on government attacks on the emergency services, highlighting the threat of police and crime commissioners taking over local fire authorities. This was supported by the congress. The FBU amended motions submitted on the UK deep-mined coal industry (subsequently withdrawn) and on campaigning for public services and against the pay cap. These were also carried. FBU delegates spoke on climate change and flooding, 'positive consultation and employee

engagement', the anti-union laws, campaigning for pregnant workers, stop and search, discrimination in survivor pensions and the trades union councils conference.

The union organised a blacklisting 'Spycops' fringe meeting, with Matt Wrack, Dave Smith (blacklist campaigner), Helen Steele (McLibel defendant) and solicitor Shamik Dutta. FBU delegates also spoke at a range of fringe meetings, including the Labour Representation Committee (LRC) meeting in Brighton.

Matt Wrack was elected to TUC general council and TUC executive committee. Michael Nicholas was also elected to the general council as a black workers' representative.

Full details of Congress, including the verbatim report of delegates' contributions, can be found at www.tuc.org.uk

F3 TUC BLACK WORKERS' CONFERENCE 2015

TUC black workers' conference 2015 took place on 17-19 April at Congress House, London. The FBU delegation consisted of Michael Nicholas, Otis Graham, Enrico Temple and Joseph Mendy. The FBU moved a resolution on equality targets, noting how these targets had been removed from the fire and rescue and calling for their reintroduction. The FBU also seconded an RMT motion on reparations and the slave trade. Both resolutions were carried. Michael Nicholas was elected to the TUC race relations committee for 2015-16.

F4 TUC LGBT CONFERENCE 2015

TUC LGBT conference 2015 took place on 25-26 June at Congress House, London. The FBU sent a delegation of four. The FBU submitted the motion 'Challenging LGBT discrimination: removing the barriers', which highlighted the lack of LGBT discrimination cases brought to employment tribunal, due to prohibitive fees and other barriers. The motion, endorsed by the conference, mandated the TUC to produce a report for the 2016 conference on these issues. Pat Carberry was re-elected by the conference to serve on the TUC LGBT committee for 2015-16.

F5 TUC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2015

TUC women's conference 2015 took place on 11-13 March at Congress House, London. The conference theme was 'Equality not poverty – use your vote'. It was focused around the TUC report, *The impact on women of recession and austerity*, and the joint report with Women's Aid, *Women's experience of financial abuse and potential implications for Universal Credit*, which revealed the hidden depths of women's financial abuse.

The FBU delegation consisted of Sam Rye, Helen Harrison, Jo Byrne and Sarah Gartland. The FBU moved two resolutions at the conference:

- 'No to *The Sun* and Page 3', which argued for a workplace campaign to discourage trade unionists from purchasing and bringing *The Sun* tabloid into our workplaces and to rid the tabloid newspaper of the objectification of women on Page 3
- 'South Sudan', condemning sexual violence and other forms of oppression of women, and calling for solidarity links with South Sudanese women's organisations.

Both resolutions were carried unanimously. Sam Rye was elected to TUC women's committee for 2015-16.

F6 ICTU BIENNIAL CONFERENCE 2015

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions' (ICTU) 2015 biennial delegate conference took place on 7-9 July in Ennis, County Clare. The theme of the conference was 'Living wage, strong economy'. The FBU delegation comprised Stephen Boyd and David Nichol. FBU delegates played a full part in the conference, speaking on motions about the economy, equality, TTIP and pensions, as well as attending many of the fringe events.

F7 STUC CONGRESS 2015

The annual Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) took place on 20-22 April 2015 in Ayr. The FBU delegation consisted of Matt Wrack, Stephen Thomson, Gordon McQuade, John McFadden and Denise Christie. The FBU submitted three motions. 'The living wage campaign' and 'Violence against women' were moved by the FBU and carried. The FBU motion on pensions was composited, seconded by the FBU and carried.

F8 STUC BLACK WORKERS' CONFERENCE 2015

The STUC black workers' conference 2015 took place on 3-4 October in Glasgow. The theme of the conference was 'No to racism, no to intolerance'. The FBU, which was represented by Joseph Mendy, amended two resolutions on 'Black workers, low pay and insecure employment' and 'BME representation in public life'.

F9 STUC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2015

The STUC women's conference 2015 took place on 2-3 November in Dundee. The theme of the conference was 'Women, the economy and health'. The FBU was represented by Denise Christie, Colleen Murray, Sandra Brown and Helen Harrison. The FBU moved two resolutions at the conference: 'Women in the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service', drawing out the impact of austerity on women firefighters, and 'Access to abortion in Scotland'. The FBU delegation also moved an emergency resolution on solidarity with the Palestinian people.

F10 WALES TUC BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The Wales TUC conference is now held biennially and there was no conference in 2015. However, having secured a seat on the Wales TUC general council in 2014, the FBU in Wales has played a full part in the work undertaken in Wales. There have been several campaigns during 2015, notably opposition to the Trade Union Bill.

F11 LABOUR PARTY

The FBU held a recall conference on 27 November to outline the union's political strategy in the aftermath of the 2015 general election at Westminster. The conference carried the executive council resolution, which proposed that the union should affiliate to the Labour Party (2015HOC0596MW). The text of the resolution stated:

FBU Political Engagement Strategy

Conference notes that since the general election of May 2015, the Conservative government has renewed the attacks on our service, our profession and our union. Fire and rescue services face a further round of horrific cuts, which will devastate local services and undermine the safety of firefighters and the public. The ultimate aim in all this is to privatise as much of the fire and rescue service as possible.

Alongside other public sector workers, firefighters also face another four years of pay restraint, when living standards have already been cut following the 2007/08 banking crisis and the austerity policies that followed.

In addition, the government is seeking to weaken our ability to resist what they do to us. They are doing this through their attack on workers' rights in the Trade Union Bill.

The situation facing firefighters, other workers and the public across the UK is bleak. The scale of attacks on wages, pensions, public services and civil rights are unprecedented in recent history. To resist will require a huge campaign beyond any single union, requiring an alliance of trade unions, community groups, campaign groups and politicians supporting the labour and trade union movement.

Politics lies behind these attacks

Conference notes that behind all these attacks there are political decisions. The Tories want to resolve the economic problems arising from the banking crisis at the expense of workers and at the expense of public services. They also seek to take the opportunity to fundamentally shift power and resources away from workers and into the hands of the wealthy few. This is what lies behind the politics of 'austerity'. In the fire and rescue service, like all other public services, all the key decisions are political decisions. Politics affects every aspect of our lives as firefighters, as workers and as citizens.

Unfortunately, for many years any resistance by unions has been weakened as a result of failures by the leadership of the Labour Party. The FBU disaffiliated from the Labour Party in 2004 following our long and bitter dispute under the Blair government. We will never forget that. Nor will we forget the failures of Labour politicians at local level who have systematically implemented the cuts demanded by central government.

Regardless of which party is in power at national or local level the Fire Brigades Union must proudly and unapologetically defend our service and our members against all attacks, wherever they originate.

The Corbyn election

Conference notes that following a remarkable turn of events over the summer of 2015, Jeremy Corbyn was elected as leader of the Labour Party. It is important for the union to consider the new situation and to consider our political strategy in the light of it.

Jeremy Corbyn has been one of the firmest supporters of the FBU at Westminster for the past three decades. Corbyn has been an active member of the FBU's parliamentary group since it was founded and a frequent contributor on fire service matters on the floor of the House of Commons. He is a strong supporter of trade union rights who opposes the current Trade Union Bill and also wants the repeal of existing anti-union legislation.

Jeremy Corbyn has stood up for firefighters at Westminster by opposing both this Tory government's and the coalition government's austerity agenda, as well as the cuts imposed by the last Labour government. Corbyn has strongly backed the FBU in our pensions campaign, has stood with our members on picket lines and intervened at Westminster to make our case. His consistent support for our union goes back as far as the 1977 pay strike.

The FBU was among the first trade unions to pledge support for Jeremy Corbyn in the Labour leadership race, even before he had reached the required number of MPs to join the contest. The union supported Corbyn from the beginning because of his record of support for our union and its members. The union provided material support to his campaign, including our FBU fire engine that was visible at many rallies. The FBU and many of our officials, whether individual members of the Labour Party or not, contributed actively to the success of his campaign.

Different situations in different parts of the union

Conference notes that devolution has significantly altered the political landscape facing us. Even when the union was affiliated to the Labour Party in the past, the situation was somewhat different for FBU members in Northern Ireland since the Labour Party does not stand candidates there. More recently, the most significant changes have been seen in Scotland, and this has been reflected in the growth in support for independence and in support for the SNP. The political situation in Wales is also different to that at Westminster. These important factors need to be considered as a part of the FBU political strategy as a whole.

Conference agrees that a different political approach is necessary in relation to FBU strategy in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Labour's structure and affiliation

The Labour Party has an organic link with the trade union movement stretching back over a century. This was why the FBU affiliated to the Labour Party in the 1920s. It was founded as a party of workers, aiming to represent workers' interests, funded by unions and giving workers a voice in parliament. The Labour Party is a unique type of party, different from liberal, green, nationalist or radical parties, because of the place of organised labour within its structures.

Affiliation to the Labour Party (with a different approach in Scotland and Northern Ireland) would mean that the FBU would use some of our political fund money to contribute to the Labour Party. This would give our union a role in structures such as Labour conferences and other decision-making bodies.

Firefighters need a political voice in the Labour Party (with a different approach in Scotland and Northern Ireland) because we have interests in common with other workers, and conflicts with other forces and parties in government and industry. Currently, thousands of trade unionists are binding together around the Corbyn campaign. Together with the enthusiasm of wide layers of youth and other campaigners these factors could transform the labour movement in the months ahead.

Political debate and the fire and rescue service

An affiliation to the Labour Party now gives the FBU a once-in-a-generation opportunity to help set the wider political debate on fire and rescue service funding, firefighters' pay and conditions, fire service governance, national standards, firefighter safety and the whole range of wider issues faced by our members. It also gives us an opportunity to counter the wider attacks of austerity, privatisation and the anti-union laws that directly affect our members and our ability to defend ourselves.

Conference believes that the time is right now to re-affiliate to the Labour Party (with a different approach in Scotland and Northern Ireland) because the FBU can play a central role in the debates now going on within the party and the country about the direction Labour under Corbyn will take. From the inside, we will be able to shape and intervene in those debates and have more effective influence than from the outside.

The time is right now because Corbyn's fate will have an enormous impact on the future of our service and our union. If Corbyn thrives we have the possibility to stem the tide and start to make real gains for FBU members. The FBU has the opportunity to play an active, positive role in creating better circumstances to fight for firefighters' interests.

Concerns about re-affiliation

Conference notes that re-affiliation does not mean individual FBU members would become Labour Party members, or necessarily pay towards the party or have to vote for it. Individual FBU members would be free to pursue their own political activities as before.

Conference notes that re-affiliation does not prevent the FBU from engaging with politicians from other parties in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, where conditions are different to England because of

devolution. Indeed the FBU has always engaged with a wide range of politicians and this will need to continue.

Conference notes that re-affiliation does not prevent the FBU from criticising the Corbyn-led Labour Party or individual Labour MPs, councillors or other representatives. The union will be the voice of firefighters within the Labour Party and fight for firefighters' interests, without fear or favour. This will include challenging councillors who support or vote for cuts in our service.

Conference condemns the extreme political attack being meted out by the Conservative Government on firefighters, the fire and rescue service, other vital public services and on civil liberties. Conference applauds the clear, political opposition to that attack being loudly voiced by the current leadership of the Labour Party. Therefore, Conference resolves to affiliate to the Labour Party.

Conference agrees that this affiliation shall not mean affiliation to the Labour Party in Northern Ireland or to the Scottish Labour Party and no political fund resources from members in Scotland or Northern Ireland shall be used for any such purposes.

FBU officials attended the Labour Party conference 27-30 October in Brighton. The delegation met with shadow ministers, MPs, local councillors and party officials to raise fire and rescue service matters.

F12 PARTY CONFERENCES

During 2015 FBU officials attended conferences organised by political parties to influence their fire and rescue service policies. This generally involves running a stall, distributing FBU literature and speaking to individuals.

FBU members in Northern Ireland attended the conferences of the five major political parties represented in the Northern Ireland Assembly: the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), Sinn Féin, the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and the Alliance Party.

During 2015, FBU officials attended both the Scottish Labour Party and Scottish National Party (SNP) conferences, to lobby politicians about the ongoing cuts to the SFRS budget and other matters of the Scottish government.

F13 INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

The FBU has a proud tradition of international solidarity, with strong links with firefighters across the globe and supporting labour movement campaigns for liberty.

The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), which organises professional firefighters in the United States of America and Canada, hosted an FBU fact-finding delegation to Washington 14-21 March 2015. The FBU delegation consisted of Matt Wrack, Alan McLean, Ian Murray, Tam MacFarlane and Paul Hampton. The visit included meeting firefighters at a number of fire houses, visiting the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), a US federal facility that carries out research on PPE, firefighting techniques and other safety-critical matters, and visiting the Wellness/Fitness Centre, which supports firefighter fitness and rehabilitation.

The visit found many examples of best practice, which the executive council began to incorporate into the FBU's operations during 2015. These included improvements to our database and website, programmes on firefighter fatalities, cancers, mental health and fitness, political action and risk analysis.

In August an FBU delegation consisting of Andy Dark, Sean Starbuck, Chris McGlone and Jim Quinn attended the biennial Redmond Symposium organised by the IAFF to gather detailed safety and emergency medical response information.

The FBU participates in the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) firefighters' network, which groups together most of the firefighter unions across Europe. An FBU delegation attended the annual meeting of the network in Hannover, Germany on 11-12 June 2015.

The FBU's general secretary chaired the meeting, which discussed pan-European developments on climate change, disaster risk reduction and civil protection, the health and safety of firefighters, cancer prevention, women firefighters and working time. Delegates also attended Interschutz 2015, a huge trade fair and exhibition of new firefighting technologies.

A small FBU delegation attended the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) climate change talks, known as COP21, on 30 November-11 December 2015 in Paris, France. National officer Dave Green spoke at a trade union side event on firefighter activities in floods, storms and other extreme weather events connected to climate change. The FBU also expressed our solidarity with French firefighters in light of the Paris terrorist attacks that took place just before the conference.

F14 AFFILIATIONS

During 2015, the FBU maintained or established affiliations to the following organisations:

UNION ORGANISATIONS

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)	Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)
International Centre for Trade Union Rights (ICTUR)	Trades Union Congress (TUC)
Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)	Trade Union Coordinating Group (TUCG)
Public Services International (PSI)	

FIRE ORGANISATIONS

Fire Protection Association (FPA)	The Firefighters Memorial Trust
Fire Sector Federation (FSF)	National Fire Sprinkler Network

CAMPAIGNS - NATIONAL

Abortion Rights	Liberty
British Pensioners and Trade Union Action Association	Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)
Campaign against Climate Change	Maternity Action
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND)	Marx Memorial Library
Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom	National Assembly of Women
Campaign for Trade Union Freedom	National Pensioners Convention
Comprehensive Future	National Shop Stewards Network
Defend Council Housing	The People's Charter
End Child Poverty	Stop the War Coalition
Fabian Society	Trade Union Friends of Searchlight
Greenpeace	Unite Against Fascism
Institute of Employment Rights	The Woodcraft Folk
International Brigade Memorial Trust	Working Class Movement Library
Labour Research Department (LRD)	

CAMPAIGNS – INTERNATIONAL

Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA)	Hands off Venezuela
Amnesty International	Justice for Colombia
Burma Campaign UK	Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign
Campaign for Human Rights in the Philippines	Palestine Solidarity Campaign
Committee for the Defence of Iranian Peoples Rights (CODIR)	Venezuela Solidarity Campaign
Cuba Solidarity Campaign	War on Want
Greece Solidarity Campaign	Western Sahara Campaign

F15 BLACKLISTING AND POLICE SPYING ON UNIONS

In March 2015 the Westminster government set up an inquiry into undercover policing led by Lord Pitchford. On the same day the inquiry was announced, a House of Commons meeting heard evidence that members and officials from a number of unions – including the FBU, Unite, UNISON, UCATT, NUT, NUM and CWU – have been spied upon.

It was revealed that Matt Wrack, currently FBU general secretary, was spied upon during the 1990s while a London FBU official. Other evidence came to light of spying on Ken Cameron while he was FBU general secretary during the 1980s. Journalists have exposed police units such as Special Branch and the Special Demonstration Squad as having at least 100 covert officers infiltrating campaign organisations including trade unions, and have around 9,000 political campaigners kept under surveillance.

The FBU applied for a secured ‘core participant’ status in the Pitchford inquiry, allowing our legal representatives to question witnesses and gather further evidence as part of the inquiry (2015HOC0572MW).

F16 WIDER LABOUR MOVEMENT CAMPAIGNING

FBU head office and regional officials supported a number of labour movement events, exhibitions and mobilisations, including:

- Durham Miners Gala 11 July
- Chainmakers Festival 11-12 July
- Tolpuddle Festival 18-19 July
- Trades Union Congress 13-16 September
- Emergency Services Show 23-24 September
- Labour Party Conference 27-30 September
- People’s Assembly March 20 June
- TUCG rally against the Trade Union Bill 13 October
- TUC demonstration 4 October
- TUC lobby of parliament 2 November.

In addition, head office assisted with a handful of events during Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership election campaign and events promoting supportive Labour candidates in the general election.

SECTION G

EDUCATION

G1 INTRODUCTION

The executive council recognises the importance of education and supported a programme of nationally organised courses during the year. In 2015 the trial continued with head office organising all regional education. During the year hundreds of FBU officials completed accredited courses, while FBU reps were also well represented on other TUC courses. Several hundred members also completed FBU unionlearn courses in 2015.

G2 FBU EDUCATION STRATEGY

In 2015 the FBU's introductory programme for branch and brigade officials – the 'Branch and brigade officials' introductory pathway' – was merged into the national programme and delivered by head office at venues across the UK. An annual programme including details of venues and dates was published, giving regions advance notice to assist with recruitment of branch and brigade officials onto the programme.

In 2015 the trial continued whereby head office organised all regional education. All costs, including subsistence and travel, were paid through head office. The content of courses was updated during 2015 to ensure it remained relevant to officials in the current environment. During the year 12 courses were delivered successfully and feedback from learners, tutors and officials has been positive.

In September 2015 head office invited all regions, brigades and sections to complete a questionnaire designed to help identify education priorities for 2016. The results helped inform recommendations to the executive council. Courses in the branch and brigade officials' introductory pathway have again been identified as priorities and will be offered to encourage officials into union education where gaps in organisation are identified.

G3 COURSES

During 2015 a total of 453 learners successfully completed 20 FBU TUC-accredited courses and three section schools within the education programme. Courses in the 'Branch and brigade officials' follow-on pathway' and in the 'Brigade and regional officials' follow-on pathway' were arranged. The pathways were:

Branch and brigade officials' introductory pathway

- introductory branch officials and handling members' problems
- preparing discipline casework and representation at hearings
- introduction to fairness at work and tackling bullying and harassment
- introductory health and safety reps.

Branch and brigade officials' follow-on pathway

- developing effective bargaining skills
- engaging with politics and developing campaign skills
- promoting union learning and organising in the UKFRS
- national school – years 1 and 2.

Brigade and regional officials' follow-on pathway

- developing effective bargaining skills
- national school – years 1 and 2
- promoting union learning and organising in the UKFRS
- understanding and handling pension and medical appeals
- understanding IRMP and challenging cuts in the FRS
- building union membership and organising in the UKFRS.

The follow-on courses for brigade and regional officials delivered in 2015 were:

- building union membership in the UKFRS – a course for regional treasurers and brigade organisers
- bargaining skills for union officials – a course for brigade and regional officials
- understanding IRMPs and challenging within the process – a course for brigade and regional officials.

An introductory one-day taster course intended for potential and new branch officials was developed as a valuable introduction to the union and its education programme. The course can now be delivered within regions independently or with some assistance from head office.

Courses were arranged with section officials during the year, including:

- women's school 2015
- LGBT school 2015
- B&EMM school 2015
- ONC course handling change and workforce development
- CSNC course: organising control staff in the UKFRS.

64 ROLE OF THE REGIONAL EDUCATION AND LEARNING ORGANISER (RELO)

Changes to the organisation and delivery of course programmes for officials had consequences for the role of the regional education and learning organiser (RELO). As planning and arranging courses is now primarily the responsibility of head office, each RELO had an opportunity to refocus on the organising aspects of their role.

Another important aspect of the role of the RELO is to work with the regional officials to ensure that individuals are signposted onto the relevant course. During 2015 head office began to develop an identification system (TRAX) that records an individual's education record, which can be used to assist the RELO in this task. Each region will also receive notification of the student's completion for their own records.

65 NATIONAL SCHOOL

During 2015 the FBU reviewed the content of the national school to make it more inclusive. The programme was rewritten to take account of the political and industrial consequences of the 2015 general election and the new Conservative government, as well as subsequent changes in the leadership and direction of the Labour Party.

Some 38 students attended national school, held from Monday 9 November to Friday 13 November at Wortley Hall, Sheffield. TUC tutors John Botterill, Katherine Fry and Julie Heselwood supported the course groups. Class chairs were regional officials Pete Wilcox, Tony Curry and Gareth Beeton.

Topics and presentations at the school included:

- challenges for the FBU and the fire and rescue service
- challenges facing the NJC
- professional firefighters, a professional union with a professional approach
- the work of the research department
- fitness in the fire and rescue service
- developing union learning to support members
- the importance of a political voice
- get political – if you could change one thing
- the Trade Union Bill and the struggle for trade union rights
- the secret state and trade unions – surveillance, blacklisting and provocation
- organising members to deal with the new trade union legislation
- how and why the FBU does politics
- planning ahead – priorities and action points.

External speakers included shadow fire minister Liz McInnes, John Hendy QC and blacklisting author and campaigner Dave Smith.

66 B&EMM SCHOOL

Over 80 students and guests attended the B&EMM school, held at Wortley Hall on 9-11 October 2015. The school coincided with the twentieth anniversary of the B&EMM section and commemorated the history of B&EMM in the FBU and the fire and rescue service, including ROOT member Frank Bailey. Speakers included FBU general secretary Matt Wrack and UNISON assistant general secretary Roger McKenzie.

67 LGBT SCHOOL

Some 24 members attended the LGBT school, held in Newcastle on 25-27 February 2015. TUC tutor Catharyn Lawrence facilitated sessions around a main focus of campaigning and organising. Further sessions included presentations by Laura Noble (region 9) on diversity role models and by William Murphy from the FBU's communications department on the role of media with our campaigns.

Ray Goodspeed, a founding member of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM) portrayed in the film *Pride*, and Siân James, Labour MP for Swansea East from 2005 to 2015, addressed the school as delegates celebrated 30 years since the formation of LGSM.

68 WOMEN'S SCHOOL

The women members' school was held at Wortley Hall on 10-12 April 2015 with 45 members participating. There were plenary sessions around being active in the FBU and campaigning priorities and involving members. TUC tutors Julie Weekes and Sally-Ann Spring facilitated a variety of activities and speakers. Workshops included:

- maternity rights – 10 brigades have flagship agreements, yet too many members experience discrimination during pregnancy
- menopause and fitness – what employers and the FBU can do to change attitudes and improve workplace culture
- women in the fire and rescue service
- bullying and harassment
- finding your voice
- being a rep
- running a campaign – lessons from recent campaigns on forests and education
- understanding grievance procedures.

Guest speakers included Professor Mary Davis on women in history, Ruth Smeeth on Hope Not Hate, Lynn Collins about her trade union experience, journalist Helen Hague, Lisa Clarke (No More Page 3) and FBU national officer John McGhee. The school received a visit from the Labour pink bus and a talk from Angela Smith MP.

69 TUC DAY RELEASE COURSES

During 2015 FBU officials and members throughout the regions attended a range of day release courses organised by the TUC education service and delivered by TUC providers. These included:

- Union representatives stage 1
- Union representatives stage 2
- Health and safety representatives stage 1
- Health and safety representatives stage 2
- Union learning representatives
- Diploma in employment law
- Diploma in occupational health and safety
- Diploma in equalities
- Tackling cancer in the workplace.

The most recent TUC education annual report shows that the FBU, which then represented 0.64% of TUC membership, was responsible for 1.12% of the take-up on TUC 10-day release courses and 2.44% of the take-up on short courses.

After the 2015 general election the situation regarding future funding for TUC education courses is uncertain. In the longer term there is a real possibility of losing all government support for trade union education. A number of colleges in England that have trade union studies centres providing the TUC programme have closed due to adult skills funding issues, including Stoke-on-Trent, East Anglia and Bradford.

610 TUTORS

The executive council thanked all tutors and officials who assisted in the union's education provision throughout 2015. The following colleges and tutors have provided an excellent service during 2015:

- City of Glasgow College Department of Trade Union Studies: Brian Corrigan, Scott McCabe, Mark Pollitt
- College of North-East London Department of Trade Union Studies: Alison Foster, Sally-Ann Spring, Dave Smith, Samantha Ward-Crossley, Mark Andrew

- Huntingdon College Department of Trade Union Studies: Julie Weekes
- Leeds City College Faculty of Trade Union Studies: John Botterill, Julie Heselwood, Catharyn Lawrence, Katherine Fry
- Weston College Department of Trade Union Studies: Shan Maidment, David James.

611 UNION LEARNING FUND

In 2015 the FBU's union learning fund (ULF) secured another year of government funding through to 31 March 2016. During early 2015 a new FBU ULF structure has been implemented and a new management team has been taken over.

The FBU remains unique within the trade union movement as the only union which successfully maintains its own national learning centre and delivers courses and qualifications directly to members. This delivery of courses, qualifications and learning opportunities has broadened to FBU members' family and friends and partnerships with other trade union members who cannot access these learning opportunities with their own trade union.

The team is led by centre manager Claire Wealleans. Lara Scott and Toni Carr organise administration of information systems and FBU learner support, while Lorna Taylor provides functional skills expertise. All the team work in Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service. It has secured four years of a Skills Funding Agency sub-contract with Leeds City College. The centre is also fully accredited through City and Guilds, British Computer Society, NCFE and Ascentis.

In 2015 the centre achieved 10 Grade A external verification visits, a successful Leeds City College review, a successful unionlearn review, passing due diligence, achieving national matrix accreditation and passing an external government audit.

In the last year, the three most popular courses FBU members completed were mental health awareness, team leading, and nutrition and health. Over one thousand FBU members have completed these courses alone in the last 18 months.

Courses available from the learning centre are:

- Dyslexia awareness course Level 2, delivered locally in your brigades by qualified FBU tutors
- Level 2 Certificate in common health conditions
- Level 2 Certificate in equality and diversity
- ECDL extra (only in selected regions)
- Level 2 Certificate in customer service
- Level 2 Certificate in understanding nutrition and health
- Level 2 Certificate in awareness of mental health problems
- Level 2 Certificate in team leading
- Level 2 Certificate in information, advice and guidance
- Level 2 Certificate in principles of dementia care
- Level 2 Certificate in Maths and English (only in selected regions)
- Level 2 Certificate in working with individuals with learning disabilities.

FBU ULF upgraded its dedicated website www.fbueducation.org and continues to upload its latest news, courses, successes and information. It has its own Twitter feed @FBULearn

SECTION H

EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS AT WORK

H1 INTRODUCTION

During 2015 the National Joint Council (NJC) set up an Inclusive Fire Service Group to assess the current position on equalities. The FBU is representing the employees' side and will make proposals in 2016.

FBU conference in 2015 supported an executive council statement 'All Different All Equal' (ADAE), which sought to renovate the union's longstanding equalities policy. Conference also included a number of resolutions on equality and fairness at work:

- job migration on the fire and rescue service
- social media and political belief
- equality strategy
- discrimination and women in the fire and rescue service
- the negative impact of mainstreaming equality
- domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The union's equality sections continued to organise during 2015, representing members facing discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation at work, as well as campaigning in the fire and rescue service and in the wider world for justice.

H2 INCLUSIVE FIRE SERVICE

In June 2015, the NJC decided to re-examine equality, diversity and cultural issues in the fire and rescue service. The NJC last looked at these matters in detail in 2008, updating Section 2 of the Grey Book as a consequence. Fire authorities are expected to have 'set out and communicated the principles and strategies that are fundamental to developing an organisation which values all'. Since then the NJC has reached various agreements that support family friendly working, for example on matters such as maternity, paternity, adoption, ante-natal appointments, flexible working and time off for dependents.

During 2015 the NJC set up an Inclusive Fire Service Group to assess the current position on equalities and to identify further strategies and guidance (2015HOC0364MW; circular NJC/09/15). The group is composed of representatives from each side of the NJC, with the FBU representing the employees' side. Other organisations were also invited to participate in the group. The independent chair of the NJC, Professor Linda Dickens, chaired it. The group held its first meeting on 2 October 2015.

In 2015, the group commissioned a cultural and behavioural survey. It will use the data to develop specific strategies for fire and rescue services, including sharing best practice and guidance (such as on social media use).

H3 ALL DIFFERENT ALL EQUAL (ADAE) REVIEW

FBU conference agreed a detailed statement reviewing the All Different All Equal (ADAE) policy, the foundation of equalities policy in the union. This policy was formulated more than a decade ago and was designed to show members that if they are bullied, harassed or victimised, then it will not be tolerated in the union. That commitment remains at the heart of the policy.

The executive council came to conference in 2011 with a motion calling for a review and came back in 2013 to report that significant progress had not been made after an initial review, due to the amount of campaigning work that was going on. The executive council set up a task and finish group, which carried out a long consultation

The review found flaws in the policy, particularly relating to how the union could manage investigations and conduct them within the timescales that were laid out in the policy. The new policy therefore made changes to the timescales.

The conference statement emphasised the importance of communicating the policy to our members, because there is still behaviour which the union wants wiped out, so that people are not bullied, harassed or victimised within the fire and rescue service or within the FBU.

The new policy takes note of the changing political context. When the policy was last updated, the FBU was working with the Labour government to deliver an equality and diversity strategy for the fire and rescue service that included recruitment and retention targets as well as monitoring arrangements. These were scrapped by the coalition government in 2010 and were not reinstated by the new Tory government in 2015.

H4 B&EMM SECTION REPORT

During 2015, the FBU's black and ethnic minority members' (B&EMM) representatives had to tackle a range of incidents of alleged race discrimination, unfair treatment and harassment. B&EMM officials supported members in London, South Wales, Gloucestershire, South Yorkshire, Bedfordshire, Greater Manchester, North Wales and the West Midlands in handling their cases.

B&EMM represented a member in his struggle to return to his firefighter role in Gloucestershire. He was originally dismissed in September, but was reinstated in December. B&EMM had organised a support lobby at his appeal hearing and members wrote to the chief fire officer demanding his reinstatement.

B&EMM supported a number of wider labour movement and campaign events during 2015. On 23 October, FBU members across England, Scotland and Wales were asked to wear red as part of the Show Racism the Red Card anti-racist day of action (2015HOC0547DG). B&EMM officials attended an RMT reparations conference in July and participated in Black History Month events in October.

During 2015 B&EMM celebrated 20 years of organising within the FBU. In October 1995 some FBU black members attended a union-organised weekend at Wortley Hall and resolved to organise a section within the union. They gathered against a backdrop of the ill-treatment and discriminatory behaviour suffered across the fire and rescue service. The FBU owes a debt of gratitude to those members who put their heads above the parapet and got organised. The anniversary was commemorated in a special edition of *Advisor* magazine published in October.

Sadly, pioneer B&EMM and ROOT member Frank Bailey died in December 2015, aged 90. He was the first post-war black firefighter in the London fire service from 1955 to 1965. He was also the first black FBU branch rep, based at Silvertown fire station for all of his career. He attended many B&EMM schools, including the one in October 2015. B&EMM assisted his family in organising his funeral service, which was attended by a full guard of honour of FBU members from all over the UK and the FBU national banner was also displayed at the service.

The B&EMM national committee met four times in 2015:

- 24-25 February in Birmingham
- 23-24 June in Birmingham
- 29-30 September in Birmingham
- 11-12 December in London.

The AGM was held at the London meeting and heard reports from regional representatives. It agreed motions to the 2016 FBU conference, officers and nominations. B&EMM officials also attended an equalities sectional meeting with the general secretary on 1 July 2015. National secretary Michael Nicholas was elected to a TUC general council seat representing black members.

A list of B&EMM regional reps is found in Section L. Reports of B&EMM participation at labour movement conferences is in Section F. The report of B&EMM school is in Section G.

H5 LGBT SECTION REPORT

The FBU's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) committee has continued to provide support for members, doing case work and providing confidential support. The union's LGBT section has led a campaign for equality in the application of survivor benefits in firefighter pension schemes. Although the schemes now recognise entitlement to survivor benefits, the entitlement is only allowed for the period of accrual post December 2005 when the Civil Partnership Act came into force. The campaign received a setback after the Court of Appeal ruling in the appeal of *Walker v. Innospec*. The court ruled that pensions for surviving civil partners may be restricted to the period of a member's pensionable service completed from the date the Civil Partnership Act came in to force. This means that surviving civil partners could receive considerably less than if they had been married to opposite-sex partners. The FBU continues to campaign alongside other unions and the TUC to demand the Westminster government remove this inequality.

LGBT committee members attended various Pride events in London, Brighton, Glasgow, Manchester, Preston, Belfast, Blackpool, Chester, Hampshire and Watford. Members at Brighton Pride also attended a seminar entitled 'It's nothing to do with me', which examined transsexual issues within the fire and rescue service.

London Pride celebrated 30 years since the formation of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners. The original founders of the campaign group attended and Pride London organisers had wanted them to march at the front of the parade. Instead they choose to march with the trade union sections as their campaigning had always been about workers' rights. This year saw the largest participation of trade unions at London Pride.

The LGBT committee held its annual school in Newcastle on 25-27 February 2015. The committee also met five times in 2015:

- 25 February in Newcastle
- 9 June at head office
- 25 June in Congress House
- 31 July in Brighton
- 8 December at head office.

FBU conference 2015 passed an LGBT section policy on equality strategy and engagement at all levels. The LGBT section AGM was held on 8 December and heard reports from regional representatives. It agreed motions to the 2016 FBU conference, officers and nominations. The LGBT chair and secretary met with other equality section reps and the general secretary on 1 July 2015. Discussions took place about the falling number of members who identify as gay men. The union is commissioning a new LGBT banner to include bisexual and transsexual identity in its wording.

A list of LGBT regional reps is found in Section L. Reports of LGBT participation at labour movement conferences is in Section F. The report of LGBT school is in Section G.

H6 WOMEN'S SECTION REPORT

The FBU's national women's committee (NWC) reps and officials continued to represent women members throughout 2015. Many issues still remain in the workplace for women and reps are dealing with issues ranging from maternity arrangements through to capability, discrimination, bullying and harassment cases. The NWC has also seen a rise in menopause-related cases. It should be noted that in some regions representation cases have risen alarmingly. The NWC maintained a number of reps in 2015, with new reps in regions 1, 4 and 5. However there are some regions where there are no reps.

The legislative updating of the maternity policy was still ongoing in 2015, but the NWC hoped to have it completed by early 2016. The NWC compiled an ongoing spreadsheet recording all representation of women members. This has highlighted a sharp increase in maternity-related issues. The rise in menopause-related cases has led to numerous reps negotiating best practice guidance within fire and rescue services.

The NWC met four times in 2015:

- 13 January at head office
- 21 May at Wortley Hall
- 17 August in Bristol
- 15-17 November at Wortley Hall.

FBU conference 2015 passed three NWC resolutions, on discrimination and women in the UK fire and rescue service, on the negative impact of mainstreaming equality, and on the best practice document 'Domestic abuse and sexual violence'. Two issues of *Siren* magazine were published during 2015 and were well received by members. NWC officials met Matt Wrack in order to raise issues and concerns, mostly around communication and inclusion.

The NWC AGM was held at the November meeting and heard reports from regional representatives. The committee thanked chair Helen Harrison, who retired at the end of the year, for her passion and dedication to the committee and FBU. The NWC AGM outlined an agenda for work for 2016, namely: completion of the maternity update, continued work on the menopause, women's school, organising and building on our reps.

A list of NWC regional reps is found in Section L. Reports of NWC participation at labour movement conferences is in Section F. The report of NWC school is in Section G.

H7 ADAE REPRESENTATION REQUESTS

The table shows the number of ADAE requests for representation received by regional secretaries.

2015	Requests for representation	Granted	Not granted	Appeals	Appeals rejected	Appeals upheld
Region 1	0					
Region 2	1	1				
Region 3	0					
Region 4	2	* **				
Region 5	2	1	1			
Region 6	1	1				
Region 7	1	1				
Region 8	1	1				
Region 9	3 + ***	3				
Region 10	3	0 ***	1	1	1	0
Region 11	0					
Region 12						
Region 13	1		1			

Region 4 * One case heard before complete
 ** One ongoing

Region 9 + *** Two ongoing

Region 10 **** One denied, one resigned during investigation, one ongoing

SECTION I

ACCIDENT AND INJURY FUND (AIF)

The management committee of the accident and injury fund (AIF) is chaired by the vice-president and administrated by a national officer.

In 2015 executive council members on the committee were:

John Arnold

Kevin Brown

Ricky Matthews

Tam Mitchell.

The AIF management committee urges all officials at brigade and branch level to ensure that members adhere to the rules of the fund with particular attention to the time limits required for submitting claims.

Accident and injury fund								
Summary for the year ended 31 December 2015								
Region	Temporary disablement on duty		Permanent disablement	Death of member	Ex-gratia	Death of dependant	Total number of payments	Total amount
	ON DUTY	OFF DUTY						
1	No. of payments	7		6		3	16	£125,627.08
	Amount paid	£10,582.68		£97,612.00		£17,432.40		
2	No. of payments	56	22	4		1	83	£186,219.36
	Amount paid	£51,087.60	£21,725.76	£107,537.00		£5,869.00		
3	No. of payments			5			5	£117,957.20
	Amount paid			£117,957.20				
4	No. of payments	24	1	4			29	£125,917.80
	Amount paid	£20,746.96	£168.84	£105,002.00				
5	No. of payments	3	6	1		1	12	£53,760.32
	Amount paid	£4,234.80	£5,648.52	£23,481.00		£5,869.00		
6	No. of payments	1		4		2	7	£68,663.08
	Amount paid	£6,376.88		£50,675.60		£11,621.60		
7	No. of payments			2		2	4	£52,355.40
	Amount paid			£40,675.60		£11,679.80		
8	No. of payments		15	1		4	21	£52,519.60
	Amount paid		£9,835.20	£5,000.00		£23,301.40		
9	No. of payments		4	1		1	6	£42,901.52
	Amount paid		£7,629.12	£29,519.20		£5,753.20		
10	No. of payments	10	7	10		1	29	£216,954.20
	Amount paid	£38,935.76	£6,336.24	£151,488.40		£5,810.80		
11	No. of payments		1	4			5	£41,702.44
	Amount paid		£1,026.84	£40,675.60				
12	No. of payments	9	4	1			14	£18,551.36
	Amount paid	£8,273.88	£5,277.48	£5,000.00				
13	No. of payments	14	4	6		1	25	£110,933.92
	Amount paid	£21,898.08	£2,219.04	£81,006.00		£5,810.80		
TOTAL NO. OF PAYMENTS		14	64	3	49	0		
Total amount		£162,125.64	£59,867.04	£43,293.00	£855,629.60	£93,148.00	256	£1,214,063.28

SECTION J

LEGAL REPORT

J1 INTRODUCTION

In 2015 the FBU legal scheme, working with Thompsons Solicitors, secured nearly £4.1m in compensation for members and their families, at work and away from work. The most significant cases of the year are summarised below.

J2 EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL DECLARES CLOSE PROXIMITY CREWING UNLAWFUL

The FBU was successful in bringing a case against South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (SYFRS) after 24 FBU members were forced to transfer stations when they refused to sign up to a change in shift patterns which was itself found to be in breach of the Working Time Regulations 1998 (WTR).

Two stations in South Yorkshire, Lowedges and Aston Park, had been selected to take part in a trial of different working hours to the normal 2-2-4 pattern. The existing system meant firefighters would work no more than 48 hours in one week, while the new system, known as 'CPC', meant that, including hours spent on call, firefighters could end up working up to 96 hours per week in one go. The new CPC system would therefore require individual employees to opt out of the maximum weekly working hours under the WTR.

CPC required firefighters to work four consecutive 24-hour shifts, consisting of 12-hour day shifts and 12-hour nights on call. The on-call time had to be spent at or in close proximity to the station. The new pattern also meant that firefighters would not have the minimum 11-hour rest period in any 24 hours as required under the WTR.

The two stations were selected as suitable for this trial as they were seen as quieter stations and much less likely to be required to attend incidents at night. Despite no agreement being in place with the recognised union, the FBU, around a move to the new shift pattern, SYFRS required firefighters at these stations to 'volunteer' to work under CPC. Any who did not were liable to be compulsorily displaced.

Concerned that the move to CPC constituted a breach of the WTR, and that the process that governed the change went against the principles of collective consultation as set out in the Grey Book, the FBU pursued action against SYFRS in the Leeds employment tribunal. The employment judge found that the transfer to a new shift pattern, which had not been agreed by the FBU, was unlawful and that, when the firefighters who did not want to work under CPC were forced to move to another station, they suffered a detriment for which they should be compensated. The tribunal will decide on a remedy at a further hearing to take place shortly.

LANDMARK CASE FOR UNFAIR DISMISSAL

An FBU member of 21 years successfully fought her case for unfair dismissal with the support of the FBU legal service.

The firefighter, who had also served as an FBU official in Cambridgeshire, resigned following a dispute with the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) after she was compulsorily transferred to another station.

The new station to which she was moved used a different shift pattern, which prevented her from spending more than 24 hours at home with her family each week. In addition, her former station was also affected by the member's transfer as it was now left with an inadequate number of drivers. The move also disrupted her trade union commitments. After proceeding with a grievance process, the transfer was upheld and she was told that personal circumstances were not considered when transferring an employee, despite the fact that in the past other firefighters had been consulted on those grounds.

She worked for four weeks at the new station before leaving and claiming constructive dismissal, which allows an employee to resign if they believe their employer has been in breach of contract and to treat themselves as if dismissed. An employment tribunal ruled that the member was dismissed due to an 'irrational and perverse exercise' that lacked transparency. CFRS was unable to name the person who made the unlawful decision or to explain the reasons behind her transfer.

FBU MEMBER COMPENSATED AFTER RACIST REMARKS MADE AT WORK

A black British FBU member raised concerns with his employer about sexist comments made by a manager towards a female colleague. He was then ostracised, which the tribunal found to be unlawful victimisation.

The tribunal awarded him £18,862.13 in relation to the unlawful race discrimination suffered, plus reimbursement of £1,200 tribunal fees paid on behalf of the firefighter, plus written recommendations for the employer to follow.

Unfortunately, following his long-term absence, the member was subsequently dismissed in September 2015. Thompsons opened a separate file and have supported the FBU in successfully obtaining his reinstatement.

CORNWALL FIREFIGHTER RECEIVES COMPENSATION AFTER CONTRACT NOT EXTENDED

An FBU member was employed by Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service as an on-call (i.e. retained) firefighter. In July 2012 he participated in the service's wholetime firefighter duty transfer scheme and was successful and placed on a waiting list of transferees. The purpose of the scheme was to create a pool of on-call firefighters ranked in order of merit eligible for a slotting-in move to a wholetime role as and when a suitable vacancy arose.

The member was offered and accepted a wholetime firefighter role at Newquay fire station on a six-month contract. The fixed-term role ended on 31 August 2014 and he was moved back to his on-call role on 1 September 2014. The member was aggrieved about the fact that his fixed-term role was not extended. In rejecting his grievance, it was stated that the role was not extended due to a reduction in the need for firefighters in Newquay at the end of the summer season.

The member submitted a claim of unfair dismissal to the employment tribunal. He argued that not renewing the fixed-term contract constituted a dismissal and that the reason for his dismissal was redundancy. He contended that the redundancy dismissal was unfair as there was no consultation or selection exercise undertaken.

The unfair dismissal claim was settled prior to the final hearing for the sum of £7,000 plus the reimbursement of the issue fee.

J3 HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

MARLIE FARM UPDATE

Thompsons and the FBU continue to battle East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to obtain proper compensation for the injured and bereaved victims of Marlie Farm. All but two of the cases have now settled and a final hearing date for those remaining cases has been set for April 2016.

J4 PERSONAL INJURY

ACCIDENTS AT WORK

Firefighter secures six-figure sum following career-ending injury

An FBU member with eight years' experience who suffered a career-ending injury while working at Ilkley fire station has secured a substantial damages settlement.

The member was seriously injured during a training exercise in May 2011. He and two colleagues were taking part in a drill that involved working at height when the 13.5 metre ladder they were using cracked, causing them to fall to the ground.

He was wearing an improvised chest harness which held him to the ladder at the time of the accident. As it fell, the top of the ladder landed on a solid fence surrounding the training area, leaving him suspended six inches above the ground.

While his colleagues suffered minor injuries, the force of the recoil as the ladder impacted on the fence left him with a fracture to his arm, two dislocated elbows and forearms. His right foot was also fractured in the fall and he was left with concussion.

Due to his injuries, the member had to undergo two operations on his arms, which were then fixed in plaster and latterly a metal brace for several months. He was forced to take medical retirement from his role with the fire service and also from his other job as an HGV driver – a career he had enjoyed for over two decades. He continues to have twice-weekly physiotherapy to improve the range of motion in his elbows and his grip and is due to see a specialist regarding having a spinal cord stimulator fitted to help alleviate his ongoing pain symptoms.

With instructions from the FBU, Thompsons began a case for compensation on behalf of the member. They were able to secure an interim payment for him, which paid for adaptations to his lifestyle – such as the purchase of an automatic car – and access to rehabilitation specialists. Thompsons went on to secure a substantial six-figure sum.

Firefighters across the UK compensated for sickness caused by polluted swift water training centre in Nottingham

FBU members from across the UK have secured compensation after several flood rescue training sessions that took place between 2008 and 2012 at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham left them with gastric illness.

Following the UK government's requirement that all fire brigades undergo swift water rescue training (SWRT) in fast-flowing water which replicates flood conditions, a number of brigades from across the country sent members to carry out their training at the UK National Water Sports Centre, which includes a slalom course designed for use by Olympic canoeists.

In 2008 the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service was one of the first brigades to use the facility and almost all the firefighters fell ill after the training course with diarrhoea and sickness. The water at the centre flowed from the River Trent, a polluted source which had been found to contain harmful pathogens and bacteria.

Following this event, the FBU approached Thompsons to investigate a compensation claim against the centre's management as well as against the brigades and authorities that agreed to training taking place there.

Thompsons' investigation found that the water at the centre posed a public health risk. They went on to claim compensation for the firefighters who had become ill.

Unbelievably, despite letters of claim and then formal legal action, the centre continued, misleadingly, to promote itself as a safe and suitable venue for fire brigades to carry out SWRT. Between 2009 and 2012 numerous other fire brigades from areas including Yorkshire and Derbyshire sent FBU members there.

Despite overwhelming evidence of the contaminated water causing illnesses and the evidence from the 2008 claim, the authorities and brigades for those firefighters exposed and made ill between 2009 and 2012 decided to fight the claims all the way. Their defence was that the firefighters should not have swallowed any water and they even questioned the hygiene of the firefighters themselves. Thankfully for the members concerned, these arguments eventually failed and Thompsons secured full compensation for all claimants.

Member receives £108,000 in compensation after accident on duty

An FBU member from Louth, Lincolnshire has received £108,000 in compensation after an accident at work left him with a permanent shoulder injury.

The firefighter was part of a team responding to a call where a lorry transporting pigs had turned over. Their station manager instructed the firefighters to move the dead pigs out of the back of the lorry to allow access to the animals that were trapped but still alive.

The lorry was lying on a slope, which meant two of the firefighters had to climb up an incline to access the back of the vehicle. The member was standing at the top of the slope while his colleague was standing inside of the lorry. The men were able to move some of the animals by lifting them over the lip in the back door of the lorry, but they were heavy and difficult to grip. When lifting one of the pigs out of the doorway the member slipped on the embankment and fell backwards, landing on his elbows and jolting his left shoulder.

The member was diagnosed with a muscle injury but after four months of physiotherapy he was re-examined and it was discovered that he had in fact torn his shoulder muscle and tendons. Nine months after his accident he had surgery but doctors were unable to repair the damaged tendons. He was referred to a rehabilitation centre run by the Fire Fighters Charity where he had a further six months of physiotherapy, after which he was fit enough to return to work.

The member was sent in without a proper risk assessment of the environment in which he would be operating and the result was a permanent injury. With a little bit more thought, the personal cost to his health and to the brigade's finances could have been avoided.

Retained member forced to retire after fall at work

A retained FBU member, who sustained severe foot and ankle injuries as a result of a fall, received £120,000 in compensation. The member fell due to an uneven surface on a yard at his place of work, caused as a result of building work. The member was subsequently forced to retire on the grounds of ill-health and secured compensation which covered his significant loss of earnings.

Firefighter forced to retire after slipping on ice in a station

A London FBU member was inspecting the wash area in the back room of his fire station when he slipped on ice and damaged his knee. He did not know that one of the fire engines had been cleaned previously and the water had failed to drain away, resulting in the wash area icing over.

He suffered serious damage to his knee and was forced to retire from the service and with the help of the union legal service was eventually secured £23,000 compensation, including loss of earnings.

Member compensated for car crash injuries

An FBU member who works as a wholetime watch manager and retained crew manager was injured in a rear-end shunt when returning from a training session. He was a front seat passenger being driven by a colleague and sustained injuries to his lumbar spine. He underwent several sessions of physiotherapy and made a full recovery within 10 months of the date of the accident. Due to his injury, the member was restricted to light duties for six weeks, during which time he was unable to perform his role as a retained crew manager.

The FBU legal service brought proceedings against the defendant and, following detailed negotiations, Thompsons was able to achieve a settlement of £3,000 a few days before the trial started.

Member develops tinnitus from house explosion

An FBU member who attended a house fire, where three other properties suddenly exploded without warning as a result of a gas leak, secured £6,200 for the permanent tinnitus he now experiences as a result. The gas leak was a result of the criminal theft of copper wiring so Thompsons and the FBU submitted evidence to the Criminal Injury Compensation Authority (CICA) which agreed with the case for compensation.

Falling debris leaves firefighter with a fractured wrist

An FBU member attending a domestic fire that was deliberately started by the homeowner was struck by falling debris which caused a fracture to his wrist. The member needed physiotherapy treatment to overcome the injury and secured £2,400 in compensation.

Member injured in slip at work

An FBU member who injured after slipping and falling while attempting to enter the driver's side of a work vehicle has been awarded with compensation of £4,500. While entering the vehicle the member slipped on a plastic drip tray that was protruding from underneath the vehicle. She fell and suffering immediate and severe pain in her left ankle. Subsequent x-rays confirmed a diagnosis of ligament damage.

As well as inhibiting her ability to work for this period, the member's daily living was also affected including her ability to look after her two young children for two months after the injury.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT

Compensation secured for member seriously injured in motorcycle accident

An FBU member, who was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident which was not his fault, received £200,000 in compensation with the help of Thompsons and the FBU legal service. The member sustained a fracture to his left ankle which required multiple surgeries and also sadly suffered psychological injuries.

SECTION K

ORGANISING AND MEMBERSHIP

K1 INTRODUCTION

There were no new ballots during 2015, but the pensions dispute continued and firefighters in England took 24 hours of strike action on 25 February. In addition, FBU members in Essex took industrial action on a number of occasions during the year.

The main efforts on organising and recruitment centred on the responding to the Westminster government's attack on the check-off system of collecting membership dues. Work was also carried out on retired and out of trade (ROOT) and non-Grey Book members.

FBU industrial sections – in control, officers and retained – continued to meet and organise during 2015. The FBU continues to add further services to help members, including discounts on new cars.

FBU membership fell by around two thousand members during 2015. This reflected ongoing cuts to firefighter jobs. Wholetime, retained and control were all reduced, which affected all parts of the UK fire and rescue service. In addition, a recruitment freeze in many brigades meant retirees were not replaced.

K2 INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

PENSIONS

The FBU's industrial dispute over firefighter pensions continued in 2015.

The union first registered a trade dispute on the matter of firefighter pensions in September 2011. A ballot of members in England, Scotland and Wales took place in 2013 and remains live. FBU members who were members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, primarily our members working in emergency fire control rooms, were not balloted for strike action.

A supplementary ballot of members in England, Scotland and Wales on the matter of action short of strike took place in 2013. FBU members working in emergency fire control rooms were included in this ballot.

Members in Northern Ireland were never balloted for strike action, due to a different timeline for legislation. After the Northern Ireland government amended its original proposals to set firefighters' normal pension age 55, FBU members were balloted and the trade dispute with that government was lifted in 2014.

FBU members in England took strike action over pensions for 24 hours on 25 February 2015. Industrial action short of a strike was also taken during 2015. The dispute had not been resolved by the end of 2015 (see Section B).

ESSEX

In 2014 FBU members in Essex were balloted on staffing levels, terms and conditions and duty systems imposed by principal managers. In 2015 Essex members took strike action during the following days as part of the dispute:

- 14-16 January
- 1-2 March
- 10-19 March
- 12-15 June
- 6 August
- 17 August
- 19 August
- 21-26 August
- 28 August
- 1 September.

The dispute had not been resolved by the end of 2015.

K3 ORGANISING AND RECRUITMENT

Despite overwhelming opposition from trade unions, the Tory government decided in 2015 to push ahead with their Trade Union Bill (see Section E). In most parts of the UK, this is likely to see the end of the FBU's ability to collect union membership fees through deduction at source (known as check-off).

In 2015, the FBU began a programme of change to direct debit, with members receiving a direct debit mandate form at their home address. These were sent out in a phased process in different regions, to better manage the changeover.

The exercise of transferring members to direct debit was a focus for all officials of the union and will continue until the work is completed. To successfully transfer all members has required a considerable amount of work by staff and officials at all levels of the union. The risk to the union of not dealing with this threat could be potentially devastating.

The executive council carried out further work in 2015 on expanding the membership of the FBU to non-Grey Book roles. Preliminary work was done to identify posts that came into this category and on the level of membership subscriptions for non-Grey Book members.

In 2015, the executive council also discussed further steps to organise our ROOT members, who have considerable experience and continue to benefit from FBU activities, legal cases and campaigns.

K4 CSNC SECTION REPORT

In 2015 the FBU's control staff national committee (CSNC) continued to take up a range of firefighter issues in relation to emergency fire controls. A key priority was the ongoing and proposed control mergers and collaborations in Scotland, Wales, the North West, the Thames Valley, Hertfordshire and the East Coast, and the West Midlands and Staffordshire. Control officials have also highlighted the impact of so-called 'upgrades' in control room technology, often going live before adequate testing and then experiencing

problems when live. The CSNC also provided support to members taking industrial action in Essex. The committee mapped staffing and supervisory levels and shift patterns.

Within the structures of the FBU, the CSNC took an active part in lobbies and rallies, as part of the union's campaign against cuts. During 2015 officials raised the profile of the CSNC by visiting branches and explaining how it can assist brigade officials with control specific issues. CSNC officials represented control members in grievance and discipline cases. Officials took part in wider FBU health and safety meetings and joined delegations to labour movement conferences. CSNC members provided articles in *Firefighter* magazine and press releases, as well as raising the profile of committee through social media – particularly Twitter #PartOfTheTeam.

The CSNC met five times in 2015:

- 27 January at head office
- 3-4 March at head office
- 28-29 July at region 1 office
- 16-17 September at head office
- 24-25 November at Wortley Hall.

The CSNC AGM was held at the November meeting and heard reports from regional representatives. A list of control regional reps is found in Section L. Reports of control participation at labour movement conferences is in Section F. The report of the control seminar is in Section G.

K5 RETAINED SECTION REPORT

The FBU's national retained committee (NRC) continued to meet to discuss firefighter issues affecting members working the retained duty system. During 2015 the committee looked at issues relating to incident command, job migration, wholetime retained and crewing levels with a view to providing guidance to the executive council. The NRC also worked on advice for officials who were facing problems relating to lower pay banding for retained firefighters.

During 2015 retained members were given advice on the modified New Firefighters' Pension Scheme (NFPS) and the final phase of the terms and conditions settlement, which involved sending offers to members affected, as set out in NJC circular 10/15. The process was set out in an all-members circular (2015HOC0386AD).

Legislation introducing the modified NFPS came into force in April 2015 and retained members were encouraged to submit an expression of interest in joining. Members received advice on several areas of this scheme throughout 2015.

The NRC committee met three times in 2015:

- 3-4 July in Birmingham
- 12-13 September in Birmingham
- 8 December in Birmingham.

The NRC AGM was held at the December meeting and heard reports from regional representatives. A list of retained regional reps is found in Section L. Reports of retained participation at labour movement conferences is in Section F. The report of retained seminar is in Section G.

K6 OFFICERS' SECTION REPORT

In 2015 the FBU's officers' national committee (ONC) gave advice and assistance to officer members in regions primarily on role maps, pension disputes and car schemes. FBU officials successfully challenged contracts in North Wales for station managers that were outside of Grey Book terms and conditions.

The ONC identified the need to campaign around the issue of the organisation and retention of FBU officer members. Region 10 worked on targeting watch managers as they came through to promotion to station manager and were successful in keeping FBU members promoted to station manager in the FBU.

Conference May 2015 passed two ONC resolutions on incident command and the competency of those in charge at any level. The ONC provided assistance to head office in progressing these.

The ONC has experience across all roles in the fire and rescue service. Many ONC members are now senior officers in their own brigades with a wealth of knowledge, not just in firefighting but also in specialist roles.

Work is ongoing to ensure ONC representation in regions where the role is currently vacant. The ONC met four times in 2015:

- 11 February in London
- 2 June in Edinburgh
- 14 October in London
- 14 December in Manchester.

The ONC AGM was held on 14 December and heard reports from regional representatives. A list of officers' regional reps is found in Section L. Reports of officers' participation at labour movement conferences is in Section F. The report of officers' seminar is in Section G.

K7 MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

The FBU has negotiated some exclusive benefits for our members. These include:

- home insurance from UIA
- travel insurance from UIA
- car insurance from UIA
- pet insurance from UIA
- a health cash plan from BHSF
- Union Prepaid Plus MasterCard
- UnionRewards.com for online shopping.

In addition, in 2015 the FBU negotiated a new exclusive benefit that entitles FBU members to discounts of up to 30% on brand new cars from a wide range of manufacturers from Motor Source Group.

Membership services continue to grow year on year and reports suggest a high level of satisfaction with the products. The union advertised these to members through *Roll Call* and *Firefighter* magazine, as well as on our website.

These services provide a small commission to the union, which is invested in the wider campaigning work. The union will examine whether further services can be added during the coming year.

K8 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

STATISTICS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

Region	Brigade name	Wholetime	Retained	Control	Total	Political levy	Political levy no affiliation	No political levy	Total	AlF – Yes	AlF – No	Total	Male	Female	Total
Head Office	National official	5	–	–	5	3	2	–	5	5	–	5	5	–	5
Total		5	–	–	5	3	2	–	5	5	–	5	5	–	5
1	Scotland	3,459	1,301	182	4,942	4,218	13	711	4,942	4,824	118	4,942	4,561	381	4,942
Total		3,459	1,301	182	4,942	4,218	13	711	4,942	4,824	118	4,942	4,561	381	4,942
2	Northern Ireland	834	745	53	1,632	25	685	922	1,632	1,612	20	1,632	1,554	78	1,632
Total		834	745	53	1,632	25	685	922	1,632	1,612	20	1,632	1,554	78	1,632
3	Cleveland	344	60	22	426	22	302	102	426	388	38	426	387	39	426
3	Durham	286	104	26	416	175	189	52	416	382	34	416	379	37	416
3	Northumberland	114	142	19	275	47	226	2	275	273	2	275	241	34	275
3	Tyne and Wear	635	9	34	678	35	435	208	678	663	15	678	620	58	678
Total		1,379	315	101	1,795	275	1,153	367	1,795	1,706	89	1,795	1,627	168	1,795
4	Humberside	435	177	20	632	371	210	50	632	575	57	632	591	41	632
4	North Yorkshire	253	140	15	408	172	119	116	408	377	31	408	377	31	408
4	South Yorkshire	549	56	16	621	42	503	76	621	594	27	621	574	47	621
4	West Yorkshire	939	42	18	999	352	286	361	999	916	83	999	944	55	999
Total		2,176	415	69	2,660	938	1,119	603	2,660	2,462	198	2,660	2,486	174	2,660
5	Cheshire	357	92	24	473	442	26	5	473	460	13	473	436	37	473
5	Cumbria	148	149	–	297	160	74	63	297	260	37	297	281	16	297
5	Greater Manchester	1,220	15	–	1,235	713	415	108	1,235	1,214	21	1,235	1,207	28	1,235
5	Isle of Man	6	51	–	57	34	2	21	57	51	6	57	57	–	57
5	Lancashire	594	293	–	887	550	333	4	887	883	4	887	845	42	887
5	Merseyside	598	2	25	625	324	276	26	625	569	56	625	568	57	625
Total		2,923	602	49	3,574	2,221	1,126	227	3,574	3,437	137	3,574	3,394	180	3,574
6	Derbyshire	328	221	13	562	284	211	67	562	533	29	562	530	32	562
6	Leicestershire	347	119	12	478	219	169	90	478	462	16	478	454	24	478
6	Lincolnshire	173	258	16	447	326	100	21	447	434	13	447	398	49	447
6	Northamptonshire	209	67	8	284	22	212	50	284	276	8	284	265	19	284
6	Nottinghamshire	486	177	23	686	272	351	63	686	663	23	686	645	41	686
Total		1,543	842	72	2,457	1,128	1,039	290	2,457	2,368	89	2,457	2,292	165	2,457
7	Hereford and Worcester	211	95	14	320	211	37	71	320	305	15	320	292	28	320
7	Shropshire	135	72	12	219	84	57	78	219	208	11	219	206	13	219
7	Staffordshire	277	197	–	474	205	227	43	474	452	22	474	442	32	474
7	Warwickshire	192	41	11	244	49	69	126	244	228	16	244	221	23	244
7	West Midlands	1,245	–	37	1,282	544	610	128	1,282	1,178	104	1,282	1,183	99	1,282
Total		2,060	405	74	2,539	1,093	1,000	446	2,539	2,371	168	2,539	2,344	195	2,539
8	Mid and West Wales	318	361	30	709	345	342	23	709	696	13	709	663	46	709
8	North Wales	197	374	23	594	312	253	29	594	592	2	594	540	54	594
8	South Wales	748	384	41	1,173	647	447	79	1,173	1,057	116	1,173	1,111	62	1,173
Total		1,263	1,119	94	2,476	1,304	1,042	130	2,476	2,345	131	2,476	2,314	162	2,476
9	Bedfordshire	230	54	18	302	100	154	48	302	283	19	302	272	30	302
9	Cambridgeshire	192	68	12	272	67	120	86	272	266	6	272	249	23	272
9	Essex	664	152	20	836	449	328	59	836	810	26	836	787	49	836
9	Hertfordshire	388	66	9	463	235	195	33	463	451	12	463	441	22	463
9	Norfolk	226	169	16	411	181	228	2	411	408	3	411	387	24	411
9	Suffolk	152	127	–	279	128	134	17	279	255	24	279	262	17	279
Total		1,852	636	75	2,563	1,160	1,158	246	2,563	2,473	90	2,563	2,298	165	2,563
10	London	4,646	–	10	4,656	2,644	1,775	237	4,656	4,382	274	4,656	4,332	324	4,656
Total		4,646	–	10	4,656	2,644	1,775	237	4,656	4,382	274	4,656	4,332	324	4,656

STATISTICS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

Region	Brigade name	Wholetime	Retained	Control	Total	Political levy	Political levy no affiliation	No political levy	Total	AIF – Yes	AIF – No	Total	Male	Female	Total
11	East Sussex	334	80	19	433	99	67	267	433	396	37	433	398	35	433
11	Kent	662	289	17	968	364	172	432	968	919	49	968	909	59	968
11	Surrey	459	50	16	525	379	141	5	525	518	7	525	493	32	525
11	West Sussex	251	58	–	309	188	77	44	309	301	8	309	296	13	309
Total		1,706	477	52	2,235	1,029	458	748	2,235	2,134	101	2,235	2,096	139	2,235
12	Berkshire	304	50	19	373	225	114	34	373	366	7	373	346	27	373
12	Buckinghamshire	188	58	3	249	180	–	69	249	239	10	249	243	6	249
12	Hampshire	495	123	23	641	139	226	276	641	578	63	641	597	44	641
12	Isle of Wight	67	71	–	138	58	51	29	138	138	–	138	134	4	138
12	Oxfordshire	178	114	3	295	187	1	107	295	270	25	295	275	20	295
Total		1,232	416	48	1,696	785	398	512	1,696	1,591	105	1,696	1,595	101	1,696
13	Avon	470	107	31	608	244	253	110	608	543	65	608	564	44	608
13	Cornwall	179	173	10	362	57	177	128	362	354	8	362	348	14	362
13	Devon and Somerset	514	309	24	847	249	173	425	847	759	88	847	806	41	847
13	Dorset	221	97	–	318	37	198	83	318	297	21	318	300	18	318
13	Gloucestershire	135	65	12	212	83	41	87	212	200	12	212	182	30	212
13	Wiltshire	140	83	10	233	98	82	53	233	223	10	233	212	21	233
Total		1,659	834	87	2,580	768	925	887	2,580	2,376	204	2,580	2,412	168	2,580
Grand Total		26,737	8,107	966	35,810	17,572	11,909	6,329	35,810	34,086	1,724	35,810	33,410	2,400	35,810

Section H of the FBU's rulebook governs the union's political fund. This is a part of the FBU membership contribution, which is used to further the FBU's political objectives. These include producing materials for members on voting in elections for particular candidates (and against other candidates), meetings with political parties and payments to political parties. As politicians make crucial decisions about the funding and governance of the fire and rescue service, the FBU believes it is right to pursue political objectives on behalf of our members.

FBU members can choose whether to pay into the union's political fund or not. Members who do contribute to the political fund may also state that they do not wish any subscriptions are used for affiliation to political parties. Any member of the FBU may at any time give notice that they object to contributing to the political fund or that they wish their contribution not to be used for the purpose of a party affiliation.

SECTION L

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

L1 INTRODUCTION

The executive council spent important time and resources getting our own house in order, so that the FBU can face the challenges ahead. It met 39 times during 2015.

The finance and administration committee (FAC) continued to monitor the finances of the union and to propose practical measures to balance the books. This included further reorganisation agreed at a recall conference on 27 November. The FBU's political fund came under attack as part of the Trade Union Bill 2015.

The FBU organised a large number of elections during 2015, as part of the democratic renewal of the organisation. The executive council puts on record our thanks to those who have served and welcomes those elected to represent our members.

FBU conference in 2015 included a number of resolutions on internal administration, including:

- FBU unity
- Mergers and union organisation.

These were implemented during 2015.

L2 RECALL CONFERENCE 27 NOVEMBER

The union held a recall conference on 27 November to discuss the union's internal situation (2015HOC0571MW). The conference discussed an executive council resolution, 'Organising FBU Structures and Finances to Address the Challenges of Austerity', and agreed the following practical measures to maintain and strengthen our role as an independent union:

1. *Executive Council – the size of the Executive Council be reduced and that representation at the Executive Council should be on the basis of one representative per region. This process should be managed by the Executive Council to minimise disruption to our work.*
2. *Regions – the number of regions should be reduced from thirteen to twelve by the merging of regions 11 and 12. This process should be managed by the Executive Council to ensure that the support for officials at brigade and regional level is not reduced. The transition of the merging regions will be in a structured and phased manner to ensure the new region can function effectively.*

3. *Regions –the number of regional officials be the same in each region i.e. (excluding the executive council member) – Regional Secretary, Regional Chair and Regional Treasurer. The Executive Council will work with regions to ensure adequate numbers of officials are available at local level to take account of the different structures and requirements in different regions.*
4. *Regions – the Executive Council should conduct a further review of brigade and regional structures to ensure that arrangements are efficient and democratic and that they ensure the best possible system for representing and organising FBU members at local level.*
5. *Support for sectional structures – the Executive Council will put in place improved structures to ensure that issues affecting members of the ‘trade’ sections are identified and raised in good time at the Executive Council or with appropriate officials at brigade, regional or national level.*
6. *National Officers – the Executive Council should conduct a further review into the role and function of the Full Time Officials (General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary and National Officers) to see whether the current arrangements are the best and most cost effective available. While this review is conducted, elections for National Officers should be further suspended.*
7. *Head Office will provide additional support for maintaining and improving our workplace organisation, as well as additional support for local and regional officials with media work, campaign materials and research where necessary.*
8. *The Executive Council shall review the role, membership services and subscription rate options for ROOT members.*
9. *The Executive Council shall review all premises owned, leased and rented by the union.*
10. *The Executive Council shall review all staffing matters, communications, investments, contracts and other expenditure, IT and legal services.*
11. *Head Office shall explore ways to seek financial support from retired members who may have benefitted from the union’s recent legal victories.*
12. *A further report shall be given to Conference 2016 dealing with the above points, including Executive Council recommendations as appropriate. This report to address the longer term arrangements for FBU structures and organisation.*
13. *Rules – that in each of the areas identified above the Executive Council should bring the necessary rule changes to Conference 2016.*

Conference agrees that, subject to the provisions above, the Executive Council will implement these recommendations and will bring the necessary Rule changes and alterations to Conference Standing Orders at the earliest opportunity.

The conference also agreed a resolution proposed by Essex brigade, adding further measures. These points were:

- *The Executive Council shall consider a range of interim, reversible measures – such as the introduction of a levy on all members, temporary removal/reduction of officials allowances – to ensure financial sustainability until any time that more permanent savings can be implemented*
- *In addition to the points above The Executive Council shall set up a committee with representatives from Brigade and Regional committees and the Executive Council to assist with the review and with the intention of consulting through our structures.*

L3 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD

	POSSIBLE	ACTUAL	REASONS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE
Alan McLean (president)	39	39	
Mat Wrack (general secretary)	39	37	1½ – other union business ½ – sick leave
Andy Dark (assistant general secretary)	39	37½	1 – other union business ½ – sick leave
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS			
Roddy Robertson	14	2	1 – other union business 9 – sick leave 2 – medical appointment
Chris McGlone	25	25	
Jim Quinn	39	37	1 – annual leave 1 – travel difficulties
Andy Noble	39	34	1 – other union business 3 – annual leave 1 – family leave
Ian Murray	39	39	
Kevin Brown	39	36	3 – annual leave
Dave Limer	39	38	1 – annual leave
Barry Downey	39	36	1 – annual leave 2 – sick leave
Grant Mayos	39	38	1 – annual leave
Keith Handscomb	39	38	1 – medical appointment
Ian Leahair	39	36	2 – annual leave 1 – medical appointment
Jim Parrott	26	23	2 – annual leave 1 – sick leave
Danni Armstrong	13	13	
Ricky Matthews	39	34	1 – other union business 1 – sick leave 3 – personal appointment
Tam McFarlane	39	34	5 – sick leave
John Arnold	36	33	1 – other union business 1 – sick leave 1 – medical appointment
Tam Mitchell	36	34	2 – family leave
Sharon Riley	3	3	
Jo Byrne	33	30	3 – annual leave
NATIONAL OFFICERS			
Dave Green	39	35½	3½ – other union business
John McGhee	39	29	3 – other union business 1 – annual leave 5 – sick leave 1 – medical appointment
Sean Starbuck	39	35 ½	2½ – other union business 1 – annual leave
Paul Woolstenholmes	3	0	3 – sick leave

L4 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS 2015

8 January	3 March	16 June	13 October
9 January	31 March	17 June	14 October (morning)
13 January	1 April	18 June	14 October (afternoon)
3 February	30 April	21 July	15 October
4 February	11 May	13 August (morning)	19 November
5 February	12 May	13 August (afternoon)	26 November
9 February	13 May	8 September	1 December
12 February	14 May	9 September	2 December
23 February	15 May	10 September	3 December
24 February	3 June	30 September	

L5 FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The finance and administration committee (FAC) continued to review all current structures and practices of the union, including education, resources, finances, research, publications and other communications, whilst ensuring that the structures of the organisation are adequate to provide sufficient support to officials and service to members.

In 2015, the FAC met on the following occasions:

2 March
18 November
2 September.

Membership of the FAC in 2015 comprised the following officials:

Matt Wrack	Dave Limer
Andy Dark	Tam McFarlane
Alan McLean	Keith Handscomb
Ian Murray	Andy Noble

National officer Dave Green is secretary to the FAC.

L6 ELECTIONS

ELECTION OF NATIONAL TREASURER (ELECT)

Andy Noble elected to office 21 September 2015
Term of office commenced 17 December 2015

ELECTION OF ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

Andy Dark re-elected to office 8 May 2015
Term of office commenced 27 July 2015

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Region 1

Number of voting papers returned..... 1,174
Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt) 2
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted..... 1,172

Result (one to elect)

Denise Christie.....	405
Chris McGlone.....	536
Ken Ross.....	231

Certified by Popularis Ltd 11 May 2015

Chris McGlone elected to office 11 May 2015

Region 6

Phil Coates elected to office 24 June 2015

Term of office commenced 17 December 2015

Region 8

Number of voting papers returned.....	473
Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt).....	1
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted.....	472

Result (one to elect)

Mick Higgins	224
Grant Mayos	248

Certified by Popularis Ltd 1 June 2015

Grant Mayos re-elected to office 1 June 2015

Region 9

Number of voting papers returned.....	692
Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt).....	0
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted.....	692

Result (one to elect)

Alan Chinn-Shaw	318
Jamie Wyatt	374

Certified by Popularis Ltd 26 August 2015

Jamie Wyatt elected to office 26 August 2015

Term of office commenced 12 December 2015

Region 10

Ian Leahair re-elected to office 8 July 2015

Region 11

Danni Armstrong elected to office 24 June 2015

Term of office commenced 8 September 2015

CSNC

Number of voting papers returned.....	291
Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt).....	0
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted.....	291

Result (one to elect)

Jo Byrne.....	181
Sharon Riley.....	110

Certified by Popularis Ltd 15 January 2015

Jo Byrne elected to office 15 January 2015

ELECTION OF REGIONAL AND SECTIONAL SECRETARIES

Region 2

Stephen Boyd elected to office 23 March 2015

Region 7

Pete Goulden elected to office 23 March 2015

Term of office commenced 25 July 2015

Region 8

Number of voting papers returned..... 523

Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt) 1

Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted..... 522

Result (one to elect)

Cerith Griffiths 311

Andrew Hearne 211

Certified by Popularis Ltd 16 September 2015

Cerith Griffiths elected to office 16 September 2015

Region 9

Riccardo La Torre elected to office 28 October 2015

Term of office commenced 12 December 2015

Region 10

Paul Embery elected to office 28 October 2015

Region 11

Richard Jones elected to office 28 October 2015

National women's committee secretary

Samantha Rye elected to office 15 January 2015

Officers' national committee secretary

Simon Amos elected to office 23 March 2015

Term of office commenced 30 June 2015

ELECTION OF REGIONAL CHAIRS

Region 1

Number of voting papers returned..... 1,078

Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt) 2

Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted..... 1,076

Result (one to elect)

Gordon McQuade..... 805

Alan Paterson..... 271

Certified by Popularis Ltd 15 January 2015

Gordon McQuade elected to office on 15 January 2015

Region 3

Dave Howe elected to office on 23 March 2015

Region 6

Marc Redford elected to office on 28 October 2015

Term of office commenced 17 December 2015

National women's committee chair

Helen Harrison elected to office on 23 March 2015

LGBT national chair

Yannick Dubois re-elected to office on the 24 June 2015

ELECTION OF REGIONAL TREASURERS

Region 1

Number of voting papers returned..... 962

Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt)..... 2

Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted..... 960

Result (one to elect)

Denise Christie..... 488

Alan Johnston..... 472

Certified by Popularis Ltd 26 August 2015

Denise Christie elected to office 26 August 2015

Region 2

David Nichol elected to office 24 June 2015

Region 5

Steve Shelton re-elected to office 15 January 2015

Region 7

Sasha Hitchins elected to office 28 October 2015

Region 9

Del Godfrey Shaw re-elected to office 23 March 2015

Region 10

Number of voting papers returned..... 2,473

Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt)..... 341

Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted..... 2,132

Result (one to elect)

Lucy Masoud..... 1,197

Dave Shek..... 935

Certified by Popularis Ltd 1 June 2015

Lucy Masoud elected to office 1 June 2015

Region 12

Paul Watts re-elected to office 23 March 2015

Region 13

Val Hampshire re-elected to office 23 March 2015

L7 REGIONAL OFFICES AND OFFICIALS

REGION 1 – SCOTLAND

FBU Regional Office
4th Floor
52 St Enoch Square
Glasgow
G1 4AA
Tel: 0141 221 2309

Executive council member

Roddy Robertson (Jan-April)
Chris McGlone

Regional secretary

Stephen Thomson

Regional chair

Gordon McQuade

Regional official

John McFadden

Regional treasurer

Denise Christie (elected Aug)

REGION 2 – NORTHERN IRELAND

FBU Regional Office
14 Bachelors Walk
Lisburn
County Antrim
BT28 1XJ
Tel: 02892 664622

Executive council member

Jim Quinn

Regional secretary

Stephen Boyd

Regional chair

Dermot Rooney

Regional official

David Nichol (Jan-June)

Regional treasurer

Stephen Boyd (Jan-Mar)

David Nichol

REGION 3 – NORTH EASTERN

FBU Regional Office
1 Carlton Court
5th Avenue
Team Valley
Gateshead
NE11 0AZ
Tel: 0191 487 4142

Executive council member

Andy Noble

Regional secretary

Pete Wilcox

Regional chair

Dave Howe

Regional treasurer

Tony Curry

Brigades

Cleveland
Durham

Brigade secretary

Dave Howe
Tony Curry

Brigade chair

Brian Gibson
Sam Rye
Jimmy Bittlestone
(elected Dec)
Steve Walker
Brian Harris

Northumberland
Tyne and Wear

Guy Tiffin
Russ King

REGION 4 – YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

FBU Regional Office
9 Marsh Street
Rothwell
Leeds
LS26 0AG
Tel: 0113 288 7000

Executive council member

Ian Murray

Regional secretary

Pete Smith

Regional chair

Richard Walker

Regional treasurer

Graham Wilkinson

Brigades

Humberside
North Yorkshire
South Yorkshire

Brigade secretary

Richard Walker

Steve Howley

Neil Carbutt

Brigade chair

Rob Vaux

Simon Wall

Graham Wilkinson

(Jan-June)

Nicky Brown

Paul Drinkwater

West Yorkshire

Dave Williams

REGION 5 – NORTH WESTERN

FBU Regional Office
The Lighthouse
Lower Mersey Street
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire
CH65 2AL
Tel: 0151 357 4400

Executive council member

Kevin Brown

Regional secretary

Les Skarratts

Regional chair

Ian McGill

Regional treasurer

Steve Shelton

Brigades

Cheshire
Cumbria
GMC
Isle of Man
Lancashire

Brigade secretary

Dave Williams

Graeme Higgins

Gary Keary

Peter Cain

Steve Harman (Jan-May)

Ian McGill

Mark Rowe

Brigade chair

Stuart Hammond

Dave Burn

Simon Yaffa

Richard Harvey

Kevin Deacon

Merseyside

Kevin Hughes

REGION 6 – EAST MIDLANDS

FBU Regional Office
19-21 Musters Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7PP
Tel: 0115 981 7489/4935

Executive council member

Dave Limer
Phil Coates (EC elect from June)

Regional secretary

Karl McKee

Regional chair

Phil Coates
Marc Redford (elect from Oct)

Regional treasurer

Chris Hides

Brigades

Derbyshire

Leicestershire
Lincolnshire
Northamptonshire

Nottinghamshire

Brigade secretary

Chris Tapp

Graham Vaux
Dan Taylor
Sheldon Fenning

Alan Coates (Jan-June)
Steve Bull

Brigade chair

Marc Redford
Ben Keiller (elected Dec)
Gavin Lynch
Ben Selby
Mark Jones (Jan-Oct)
Chris Kemp
Sean McCallum (Jan-June)
Alan Coates

REGION 7 – WEST MIDLANDS

FBU Regional Office
195-7 Halesowen Road
Old Hill
West Midlands
B64 6HE
Tel: 01384 413633

Executive council member

Barry Downey

Regional secretary

Andy Dennis (Jan-July)
Pete Goulden

Regional chair

Richard Williams

Regional treasurer

Pete Goulden (Jan-July)
Sasha Hitchins (elected October)

Brigades

Hereford and Worcester
Shropshire
Staffordshire
Warwickshire
West Midlands

Brigade secretary

Steve Gould
Matt Lamb
Richard Williams
Marcus Giles
Steve Price-Hunt

Brigade chair

Julian Jenkins
Stephen Morris
Mark Tattum
Wayne Vaughan
Andrew Scattergood

REGION 8 – WALES

FBU Regional Office
2nd Floor
Hastings House
Fitzalan Court
Cardiff
CF24 0BL
Tel: 02920 496474

Executive council member

Grant Mayos

Regional secretary

Cerith Griffiths (elected Sept)

Regional chair

Cerith Griffiths (Jan-Sept)

Regional official

Roger Curran (Jan-June)

Regional treasurer

Arwel Roberts

Brigades

Mid and West Wales
North Wales
South Wales

Brigade secretary

Barry Davies
Shane Price
Alex Psaila

Brigade chair

Jeremy Oliver
Sandra Williams
Steve Saunders

REGION 9 – EASTERN AND EAST ANGLIA

FBU Regional Office
28 Atlantic Square
Station Road
Witham
Essex
CM8 2TL
Tel: 01376 521521

Executive council member

Keith Handscomb

Jamie Wyatt (elect from Aug)

Regional secretary

Jamie Wyatt

Riccardo La Torre (elect from Oct)

Regional chair

Brian Hooper

Regional treasurer

Del Godfrey-Shaw

Brigades

Bedfordshire

Cambridgeshire
Essex
Hertfordshire
Norfolk
Suffolk

Brigade secretary

Jamie Newell (Jan-April)
Pat Carberry
Cameron Matthews
Alan Chinn-Shaw
Darren Scotchford
Kevin Game
Roy Humphries

Brigade chair

Pat Carberry (Jan-April)
Jason Hollamby
Martin Harding
Riccardo La Torre
Derek MacLeod
Peter Greeves
Andy Vingoe

REGION 10 – LONDON

FBU Regional Office
John Horner Mews
Frome Street
Islington
London
N1 8PB
Tel: 020 7359 3638

Executive council member

Ian Leahair

Regional secretary

Paul Embery

Regional chair

Gordon Fielden

Regional official

Gareth Beeton

Regional treasurer

Laurie Brightman (Jan-May)
Lucy Masoud

REGION 11 – SOUTH EASTERN

FBU Regional Office
Unit 11
Hunns Mere Way
Woodingdean
Brighton
BN2 6AH
Tel: 01273 309762

Executive council member

Jim Parrott (Jan-Oct)
Danni Armstrong

Regional secretary

Danni Armstrong (Jan-Oct)
Richard Jones (elected Oct)

Regional chair

Mark Simmons

Regional treasurer

Bill Woodfine

Brigades

Kent
Surrey

East Sussex
West Sussex

Brigade secretary

Mark Simmons
Richard Jones
Lee Belsten (elected Dec)
Mark Brown
Francis Bishop

Brigade chair

Jenny Impey
Asif Aziz

Simon Herbert
Mick Cambers

REGION 12 – SOUTHERN

FBU Regional Office
Unit 26
Broughton Grounds Lane
Newport Pagnell
MK16 0HZ
Tel: 01296 482 297

Executive council member

Ricky Matthews

Regional secretary

James Wolfenden

Regional chair

Steve Allen

Regional treasurer

Paul Watts

Brigades

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Hampshire
Isle of Wight
Oxfordshire

Brigade secretary

Steve Collins
Greg O'Neill
Gary Jackson
Spencer Cave
Steve Allen

Brigade chair

Matt Clark
Damon Robertson (Jan-Aug)
Nigel McCullen
Peter Mawhood
Mark Ames

REGION 13 – SOUTH WEST

FBU Regional Office
158 Muller Road
Horfield
Bristol
BS7 9RE
Tel: 0117 935 5132

Executive council member

Tam McFarlane

Regional secretary

Trevor French

Regional chair

Kevin Herniman

Regional treasurer

Val Hampshire

Brigades

Avon
Cornwall
Devon and Somerset
Dorset
Gloucestershire

Wiltshire

Brigade secretary

Chris Taylor
Stuart Pulley
Trevor French
Karen Adams
Michael Tully (Jan-May)
Scott Turner (elected Aug)
Brent Thorley

Brigade chair

Gary Spindler
Rich Simpson (Jan-Aug)
Bob Walker
David Gale
Scott Turner (Jan-Aug)

Tony Littler

EQUALITY REPS

	B&EMM	LGBT	NWC
Secretary	Michael Nicholas	Pat Carberry	Sam Rye
Chair	Otis Graham	Yannick Dubois	Helen Harrison
Region 1	Joseph Mendy	Vacant	Stacey Hodge
Region 2	Joe Doherty	Karen McDowell	Lynda Rowan O'Neill
Region 3	Vacant	Vacant	Sarah Gartland
Region 4	Delroy Galloway	Maggie Meszaros	Louise Connell
Region 5	Uche Ihiekwe	Lorraine Lowe	Helen Tooley
Region 6	Dalton Powell Ronnie Stanley	Carina Peel	Clare Hudson
Region 7	Rod Barrett	Vacant	Helen Harrison
Region 8	Brian Amos	Vacant	Vacant
Region 9	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Region 10	Anthony Edwards	Lucy Masoud	Sally Harper
Region 11	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Region 12	Vacant	Alli Burrows	Vacant
Region 13	Enrico Temple	Vacant	Diane Critchlow

INDUSTRIAL REPS

	CSNC	NRC	ONC
EC member	Jo Byrne	Tam Mitchell	John Arnold
Secretary	Sue Offland	Peter Preston	Martin Pottinger Simon Amos
Chair	Lynda Rowan O'Neill	Harry Cotter	Mick Higgins
Region 1	Stephen Reid	Jim Love	Chris McGlone Alex Smart
Region 2	Lynda Rowan O'Neill	John Catherwood	John Denvir
Region 3	Caroline Saunderson	Andy Stubbings	Ian McLean
Region 4	Richard Stevens	Vacant	Vacant
Region 5	Vacant	Vacant	Craig Drinkald
Region 6	Amelia Diallo	Paul Revill	Andy Mitchell
Region 7	Jayne Mason	Mario La Barbera Simon Poole	Neil Johnson
Region 8	Vacant	Lyndon Jones	Ian Buckley
Region 9	Sharon Thorndyke	Vacant	Matt Hughes
Region 10	Stephanie Winters	— — —	Simon Amos Greg Ashman
Region 11	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Region 12	Vacant	Bryan Stanislas	Mark Ames
Region 13	Vacant	Jez Rawlings	Simon Dennett

OTHER REPS

	Education	Fairness	H&S
Region 1	Gerry McLeod Ian Bryden	Denise Christie	Dave Bennett
Region 2	Lynda Rowan O'Neill	Rod O'Hare	Brian Cunningham
Region 3	Russ King	Sarah Gartland	Brian Gibson
Region 4	Graham Wilkinson	Dave Gillian	Carl Matthews
Region 5	Stuart Guy	Steve Wiswell	Gary Bennett
Region 6	Mick Chilton	Chris Hides Carina Peel	Claude Smyth Adam Taylor
Region 7	Jane Gummery	Jayne Mason	Pete Goulden
Region 8	Mike Davies	Andrew Hearne	Simon Fleming
Region 9	Adrian Mayhew Martin Harding	Peter Greeves Cameron Matthews	Steve Kerridge
Region 10	Lucy Masoud	Graeme Lester Lucy Masoud	Gordon Fielden
Region 11	Richard Jones	Vacant	Simon Herbert
Region 12	Vacant	Vacant	Dave Dymond
Region 13	Kevin Herniman Bob Walker	Paul Lawler	Kevin Herniman
B&EMM	Michael Nicholas	Brian Amos	Dalton Powell
CSNC	Sue Offland	Sue Offland	Lynda Rowan O'Neill
LGBT	Yannick Dubois	Alli Burrows	Pat Carberry
NRC	Lyndon Jones	John Catherwood	Lyndon Jones
NWC	Vacant	Sam Rye	Sally Harper
ONC	Vacant	Mick Higgins	Mick Higgins

L8 RETIRED OFFICIALS

The executive council thanked the following senior officials for their contribution to the union over many years:

Roddy Robertson
Dave Limer
Keith Handscomb
Jim Parrott
Andy Dennis
Martin Pottinger
Harry Cotter
Helen Harrison
Laurie Brightman
Roger Curran
Steve Harman
Richard Stevens

Executive council member region 1
Executive council member region 6 and national treasurer
Executive council member region 9
Executive council member region 11
Regional secretary region 7
Secretary ONC
Regional secretary retained
Chair NWC and NWC region 7
Regional treasurer region 10
Regional official 8
Brigade secretary Lancashire
CSNC region 4

L9 FINAL APPEALS COMMITTEE

Region	Nominee
1	Stephen Thomson
2	David Nichol
3	Pete Wilcox
4	Pete Smith
5	Les Skarratts
6	Karl McKee
7	Rich Williams
8	Cerith Griffiths
9	Jamie Wyatt
10	Gordon Fielden
11	Mark Simmons
12	James Wolfenden
13	Trevor French
B&EMM	Otis Graham
ONC	Simon Amos
NRC	Harry Cotter
CSNC	Sue Offland
NWC	Sam Rye
LGBT	Pat Carberry

L10 UNION TRUSTEES

The executive council wishes to place on record its appreciation to Stan Fitzsimmons and Mick Harper, both former presidents of the union, for continuing to serve as trustees of the union in accordance with the provision of the rule book.

L11 POLITICAL FUND

The FBU's political fund continues to be used to support campaigning political work as well as some of the union's political education and international campaigning. The financial resources in the political fund are used in all areas of political work to benefit members by campaigning on their behalf at a local and national level.

During 2015 the political fund was threatened by the Trade Union Bill, which sought to impose a compulsory 'opt-in' for individuals into the political fund every five years, affecting all union campaigning funds, including political donations. Previously union members have been balloted every 10 years on whether to have a political fund. The new measure was designed to reduce the funds available to trade unions for campaigning purposes and to prevent unions from representing members' views in politics. It was also an attempt to reduce funds donated by trade unions to the Labour Party. No such limits exist for other donors – with no limits on business owners and their senior managers to hand over political funds to their friends, which is currently done without consulting the workforce. Disgracefully, the Westminster government did not even consult formally on this proposal. The FBU nevertheless made a submission opposing these changes (see Section E).

The FBU's recall conference in November 2015 agreed that the union should affiliate to the Labour Party. This affiliation is paid for out of the political fund on a pro-rata basis as determined by the union. The FBU did not affiliate to the Scottish Labour Party or the Labour Party in Northern Ireland, and no political fund money from members in Scotland or Northern Ireland was used in relation to the affiliation (2015HOC0596MW, see Section F).

L12 COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

The communications department is responsible for all of the FBU's internal communications and campaigning work and all of the promotional and 'reactive' work (responding to external events) we do with print, online and broadcast media. The department manages the union's newly re-launched website, all of its social media, and the publication of *Firefighter* magazine.

The union attracted substantial media coverage at the start of the year around the pensions dispute and a substantial report on firefighter fatalities. Communications achieved national and regional coverage around the government's continued cuts to the service, the PCC threat, the union's pensions legal victories and the Trade Union Bill. The spotlight shone brightly on us when we re-affiliated to Labour at the end of November and at the end of the year when devastating floods hit the UK and our members led rescues in the affected areas.

Our first quarterly 'media report' covering September-November 2015 showed that we achieved almost 1,700 'mentions' (ranging from literally just an FBU reference to substantial articles) in online publications and national press, 412 in national and regional print, and 456 for broadcast media. During the same quarter we uploaded 20 FBU videos to YouTube, which attracted 8,459 views.

Twitter generated almost 1,000 tweets for December only (the month we began monitoring it). The new-look website launched in December after several months of design and set-up work, and is far more comprehensive to use, attracting 40,432 users and 144,946 views. Following the launch of our new national Facebook page on 20 October, we attracted 3,977 page 'likes' from its launch to the end of November, reaching 13,370 members during the same period. The department's national and regional press releases had very good take-up from the media.

The FBU won three TUC Communications Awards in 2015. The first was a commendation for *Firefighter* magazine, alongside another for our Justice for Firefighters campaign. The third was for the Best Video category which announced the four-day strike in autumn 2014. It was decided at the end of the year to reduce the number of *Firefighter* issues from eight to six a year for cost saving reasons. A 'refresh' of the magazine was commissioned, with new layout, font and improved paper quality. The magazine has a print-run of 48,000 copies and goes to members' home addresses, stations, MPs, out of trade members and other interested bodies. The department decided in 2015 to launch a membership survey in February 2016 to assess what members feel about how information is communicated to them, including through *Firefighter*.

FBU conference 2015 decided on a short film to assist with anti-cuts campaigns but the cost implications of the original project halted its advancement. Communications is now working with other suppliers to deliver on this resolution. The department has produced posters, leaflets, flyers, pro-forma lobby letters, briefings and bulletins for national multi-dimensional campaigns on cuts, flooding, the Trade Union Bill, blue light mergers and pensions.

Online 'Lobby your MP' sites were set up for campaigns on EDM 513, flooding and the Trade Union Bill. Nearly 1,000 people used this tool, in addition to those who sent letters directly to their MP. Initial work has been planned for 2016 to utilise new technologies into the union's digital campaigning strategy.

L13 RESEARCH REPORT

The research department has continued to contribute to the work of head office under the direction of the general secretary and national officers. Its aim is to provide original, high-quality, robust evidence that will assist FBU members when making coherent policy. The department's work expanded during 2015, with Rhian Jones recruited to work alongside Paul Hampton.

During 2015, the department provided materials for executive council papers, as well as statements to annual conference and the recall conference on matters such as pensions, emergency medical response, internal finance and political strategy. Research drafted publications such as the *Inundated* report on flooding and the spending review publication. The department produced three issues of *Fire and rescue service matters*, a political briefing aimed at MPs and other senior politicians. These were on firefighter jobs, rescues and PCCs. It also drafted parliamentary group briefing papers.

A significant part of the department's work in 2015 was drafting submissions to Westminster government consultations. The most high-profile examples were submissions to the Thomas review into firefighters' conditions, the spending review, the Trade Union Bill, the PCCs consultation and pensions.

During 2015, the research department commissioned external academics and consultants to produce reports on the European Union referendum, firefighters across Europe and the FBU's centenary book. It commissioned YouGov to survey public attitudes to the fire and rescue service after the general election. The results of the survey fed into work around the spending review.

The department carried out a number of freedom of information requests, including on firefighter job cuts, rescues and attacks on firefighters. Researchers also undertook projects on police spying on FBU officials, firefighters' pay, firefighters' mental health, cancer and on control members' issues. The research department assisted the executive council with drafting and editing the 2015 annual report.

SECTION M

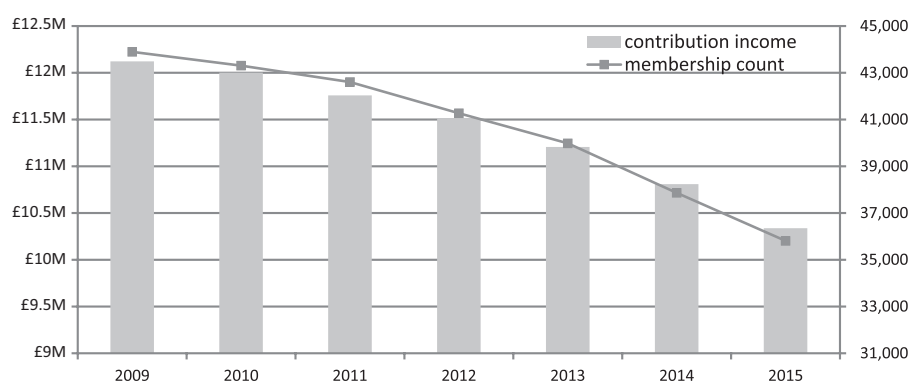
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

M1 INTRODUCTION

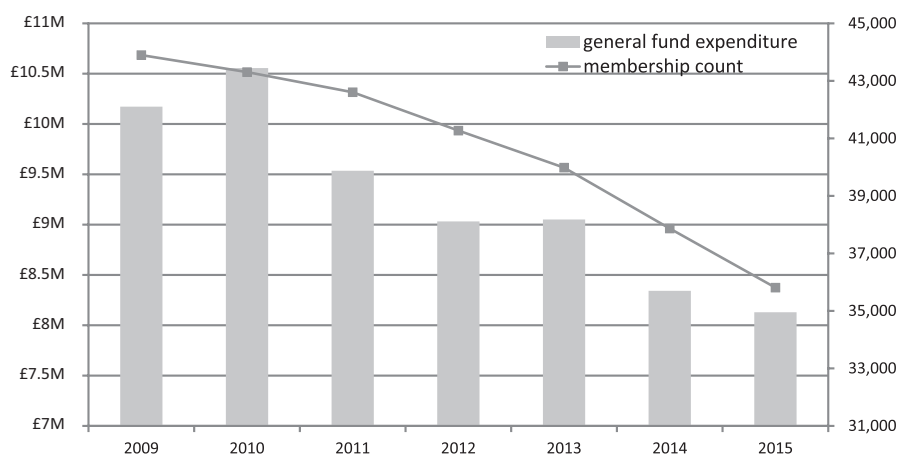
National treasurer's and general secretary's introduction

The union's statement of comprehensive income shows a 2015 operating surplus for the year of £559,746 (before other comprehensive income/expense), compared to a 2014 operating surplus of £597,755.



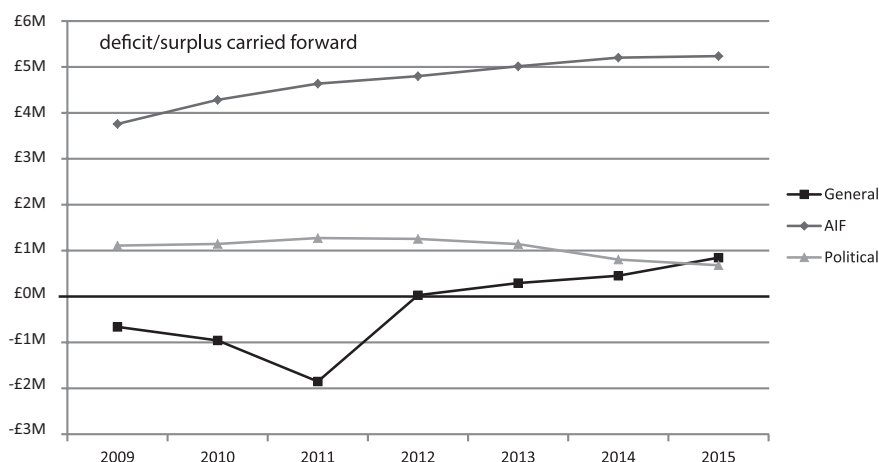
The above graph details the decline in member contributions and members over the last seven years.

The general fund details a 2015 operating surplus for the year of £650,982 (before other comprehensive income/expense).



The above graph illustrates the reduced expenditure on the general fund compared to membership over the last seven years.

The 2015 statement of financial position shows a total funds carried forward figure of £6,763,294 (2014 £6,460,548) and the general fund shows a surplus of £846,386 (2014 £452,404).



Job losses within the fire and rescue service in recent years have resulted in a downward trend in membership, which in turn has produced a fall in income. The executive council took various steps during 2015, including proposals supported at a recall conference on 27 November, to reduce expenditure to offset the fall in income.

In a number of areas, significant progress has been made, resulting in general fund surplus for 2015. The union has reduced administration spending by reductions in trade union leave, staff salaries and other expenses. Further savings agreed in 2015, including a smaller executive council and the merger of regions 11 and 12 will work through in the coming years. There have been further staffing reductions at head office this year and the number of national officers has now been reduced from four to three. Changes to the clerical staff pension scheme are underway and a review of elected officials' pensions is ongoing.

Nevertheless, long term planning is necessary to continue reducing expenditure as well as producing short and medium term budgets. New budgeting systems at head office have been introduced. This work continues and will provide further challenges at all levels of the organisation in the years ahead.

This is the first year that the union has presented its financial statements under Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) issued by the Financial Reporting Council. The transition to FRS 102 has resulted in a number of changes in the union's accounting policies and in the layout of its financial statements.

Matt Wrack
General Secretary

Andy Noble
National Treasurer

M2 ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The legislation relating to trade unions requires the union to submit a return for each calendar year to the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations. This return contains accounts, which must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the union at the year end and of its transactions for the year then ended. The accounts set out on the following pages have been prepared on the same basis and are used to complete the return to the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations.

In relation to The Fire Brigades Union these requirements are the responsibility of the executive council. The accounts of the union have been prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). In preparing the accounts the executive council is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed.
- Prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to do so.

The executive council is responsible for keeping proper accounting records and establishing and maintaining a satisfactory system of control over its records and transactions in order to comply with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (Amended). It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the union and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The union is also responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the union's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of accounts may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION

We have audited the financial statements of The Fire Brigades Union for the year ended 31 December 2015 which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Changes in Equity, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the members of the union as a body, in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the union those matters we are required to state to them in an independent auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the union and the members of the union as a body, for our work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND AUDITOR

As explained more fully in the statement of the executive council's responsibilities, the executive council is responsible for the preparation of the accounts, which have been prepared in accordance with applicable law and accounting standards.

We have been appointed as auditor and our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board (APB) Ethical Standards for Auditors.

SCOPE OF THE AUDIT OF THE ACCOUNT

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the union's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the executive council; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the national treasurer's and general secretary's introduction to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

OPINION

In our opinion the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the union's affairs as at 31 December 2015, and of its surplus for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (Amended).

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (Amended) requires us to report to you by, if in our opinion:

- The union has not kept proper accounting records or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- A satisfactory system of control over transactions has not been maintained;
- The accounts are not in agreement with accounting records;
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.



Gareth Jones (Senior Statutory Auditor)

Moore Stephens LLP

Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditor
150 Aldersgate Street
London
EC1A 4AB
Date 12 April 2016

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 31 December 2015

	Note	General fund £	Accident and injury fund £	Political fund £	Union learning fund £	2015 £	2014 £
Income							
Contributions	1(i)	8,691,572	1,401,400	244,637	–	10,337,609	10,808,894
Investment income		50,156	–	–	–	50,156	47,117
Grants		–	–	–	764,331	764,331	789,858
Sales of publications and merchandise		632	–	–	–	632	1,883
Other income		12,039	–	–	–	12,039	7,034
Commission received		15,510	–	–	–	15,510	13,000
VAT recoverable		10,273	–	–	–	10,273	9,171
		<u>8,780,182</u>	<u>1,401,400</u>	<u>244,637</u>	<u>764,331</u>	11,190,550	<u>11,676,957</u>
Expenditure							
Benefits	2	434,315	1,156,751	–	–	1,591,066	1,716,839
Conferences		315,164	–	13,811	–	328,975	56,175
Affiliations		160,274	–	33,905	–	194,179	162,878
‘Firefighter’		234,540	–	–	–	234,540	265,918
Commissions		49,453	49,453	24,727	–	123,633	140,620
Union learning costs		–	–	–	524,331	524,331	789,858
Administration	3	6,880,855	162,360	296,266	240,000	7,579,481	7,660,058
Depreciation	1(b)	299,690	–	–	–	299,690	285,618
(Surplus)/loss on disposal of fixed assets		(47,528)	–	–	–	(47,528)	2,138
Loss on disposal of investments		497	–	–	–	497	8,075
Loss/(surplus) on revaluation of quoted investments		9,940	–	–	–	9,940	(39,975)
Surplus on revaluation of unquoted investments		(240,000)	–	–	–	(240,000)	–
Defined benefit net interest cost		32,000	–	–	–	32,000	31,000
		<u>8,129,200</u>	<u>1,368,564</u>	<u>368,709</u>	<u>764,331</u>	10,630,804	<u>11,079,202</u>
Operating surplus/(deficit) for the year		650,982	32,836	(124,072)	–	559,746	597,755
Other comprehensive income/(expense)							
Actuarial gains/(losses) on post employment benefit obligations		438,000	–	–	–	438,000	(898,000)
Return on assets excluding amount included in net interest		(754,000)	–	–	–	(754,000)	93,000
Experience gains		59,000	–	–	–	59,000	47,000
Total other comprehensive expense		(257,000)	–	–	–	(257,000)	(758,000)
Total comprehensive income/(expense) for the year		393,982	32,836	(124,072)	–	302,746	(160,245)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

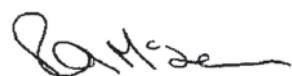
As at 31 December 2015

	Note	2015 £	2014 £
Fixed Assets	4	2,154,675	2,457,691
Investments	5	1,421,629	1,196,559
Long term loans	6	175,834	312,829
		3,752,138	3,967,079
Current assets			
Debtors	7	807,864	948,067
Cash at bank and in hand		4,584,605	4,287,644
Total current assets		5,392,469	5,235,711
Current liabilities	8	(1,265,313)	(1,818,242)
Net current assets		4,127,156	3,417,469
Total assets before pension liability		7,879,294	7,384,548
Defined benefit pension fund	9		
National officials' scheme asset		1,022,000	819,000
Staff scheme liability		(2,138,000)	(1,743,000)
Net defined benefit pension liability		(1,116,000)	(924,000)
Net assets		6,763,294	6,460,548
Represented by:			
General fund (excluding defined benefit pension liability)		1,962,386	1,376,404
Defined benefit pension liability		(1,116,000)	(924,000)
General fund		846,386	452,404
Accident and injury fund		5,236,117	5,203,281
Political fund		680,791	804,863
Total funds		6,763,294	6,460,548

Movement in the union's funds are shown on page 119.



M. Wrack – General Secretary



A. McLean – President

Date 12 April 2016

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the year ended 31 December 2015

	General fund £	Accident and Injury fund £	Political fund £	Total £
At 1 January 2014 (as restated)	464,692	5,014,431	1,141,670	6,620,793
Operating surplus/(deficit) for the year	745,712	188,850	(336,807)	597,755
Other comprehensive (expense)/income for the year				
Actuarial (losses) on post-employment benefit obligations	(898,000)	–	–	(898,000)
Change in assets not recoverable in the future	93,000	–	–	93,000
Experience gains	47,000	–	–	47,000
Total other comprehensive expense for the year	(758,000)	–	–	(758,000)
At 31 December 2014 (as restated)	452,404	5,203,281	804,863	6,460,548
Operating surplus/(deficit) for the year	650,982	32,836	(124,072)	559,746
Other comprehensive income/(expense) for the year				
Actuarial gains on post-employment benefit obligations	438,000	–	–	438,000
Change in assets not recoverable in the future	(754,000)	–	–	(754,000)
Experience gains	59,000	–	–	59,000
Total other comprehensive expense for the year	(257,000)	–	–	(257,000)
At 31 December 2015	846,386	5,236,117	680,791	6,763,294

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

	2015 £	2014 £
Cash flows arising from operating activities		
Total surplus on ordinary activities for the year (page 117)	559,746	597,755
Depreciation	299,690	285,618
(Surplus)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	(47,528)	2,138
Loss on disposal of investments	497	8,075
Loss/(surplus) on revaluation of quoted investments	9,940	(33,926)
Surplus on revaluation of unquoted investments	(240,000)	–
Change in debtors	140,203	(201,139)
Change in creditors	(431,250)	(9,998)
Change in pension liability	(65,000)	(178,000)
Cash flows arising from operating activities	226,298	470,523
Cash flows from investment activities		
Purchase of fixed assets	(81,674)	(238,023)
Repayment of hire purchase creditors	(121,679)	(121,680)
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets	132,528	329,000
Purchase of investments	(24,802)	(63,121)
Sale of investments	29,295	43,771
Repayment of mortgages	136,995	25,317
Net cash arising/(used) in investment activities	70,663	(24,736)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	296,961	445,787
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	4,287,644	3,841,857
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	4,584,605	4,287,644

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

1 Accounting Policies

- (a) These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with UK GAAP, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 ("FRS 102"), modified by the revaluation of fixed asset investments. Income and expenditure is dealt with in the various fund accounts of the union.

Before 2015 the financial statements were prepared in accordance with UK GAAP applicable prior to the adoption of FRS 102. The union transitioned from previous UK GAAP to FRS 102 as at 1 January 2014. Details of how FRS 102 has affected the reported financial position and financial performance are set out in note 13.

- (b) Fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, except for freehold land, on a straight line basis, at rates estimated to write off the cost or valuation of each asset over its expected useful life.

The rates used are:

Buildings	2.50%
Computer equipment	25%
Fixtures or fittings	10% or 20%
Motor vehicles	25%

No depreciation is provided on freehold land. Where no information is available as to the allocation of the original cost or valuation of property between land and buildings, best estimates of that allocation are used.

- (c) Rental payments in respect of operating leases are charged to the general fund income and expenditure account in the period in which they are incurred. Assets held under finance leases and hire purchase contracts are capitalised and depreciated over the shorter period of the lease and the useful economic lives of the assets. The finance charges are allocated over the period of the lease and are charged to the statement of comprehensive income.

- (d) Investments are stated in the balance sheet on the following basis:

Quoted investments – at market value

Unquoted investments – at market value unless no market value can be obtained without undue care and effort, in which case they are held at cost.

Provision is made against investments where there is a permanent impairment in value. Income from the investments is recognised when the monies are received.

- (e) Members' legal expenses are charged in these accounts net of reimbursements obtained in respect of certain cases, on an invoiced basis. No provision is made for outstanding legal costs not invoiced, or for reimbursements not received at the balance sheet date. All other income and expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.
- (f) Provisions for future expenditure are included in the accounts, only where the union has a present obligation to meet such expenditure.
- (g) Provision is only made for material corporation tax on investment income and capital gains arising in the year after relief given for provident benefits paid. No provision is made for any potential corporation tax liabilities arising as a result of revaluations of the union's properties or investments.
- (h) Under FRS 102, deferred tax is recognised in respect of all timing differences which are differences between the taxable profits and total comprehensive income that arises from the inclusion of income and expenses in tax assessments in periods difference from those in which they are recognised in the financial statements. No deferred tax has been recognised in respect of the revaluation of investments to market value on the basis that sufficient provident benefits exist to cover the capital gains should the investments be sold.
- (i) Contributions include those amounts receivable from members in respect of the year under review.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

- (j) The union operates two defined benefit pension schemes as detailed in Note 9. The national officials' scheme is in a net asset position. The asset has been recognised in accordance with section 28 of FRS 102 on the basis that it would be recoverable by the union after members' benefits have been secured, as detailed in the scheme rules. The staff scheme is in a net liability position. The pension scheme asset and pension scheme liability are shown separately on the Statement of Financial Position and not offset as this is not allowed under FRS 102.

For the defined benefit schemes the amounts charged to the operating profit are the costs arising from the employee services rendered during the period and the costs of plan introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included in staff costs. The net interest cost on the defined benefit liability is charged to the profit or loss and included within finance costs. Remeasurement comprising actuarial gains and losses and the return on scheme assets (excluding amounts included in the net interest on the net defined benefit liability) are recognised immediately in other comprehensive income.

Defined benefit schemes are funded, with the assets of the scheme held separately from those of the Association in the separate trustee administered funds. Pension schemes assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on the actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each date of the statement of financial position.

- (k) Accident and injury fund contributions are recognised on an accrual basis in accordance with union rules. Provisions for expenditure are included in the accounts when there is certainty that a future payment will be made as at the date of the statement of financial position.
- (l) All union learning fund grant income is recognised as and when the union is entitled to the monies and matched against relevant expenditure.
- (m) The preparation of financial statements in conformity with FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the accounting policies selected for use by the union. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements are disclosed below. Use of available information and application of judgement are inherent in the formation of estimates. Actual outcomes in the future could differ from such estimates.

Taxation

The tax expense for the year comprises current and deferred tax. Management estimation is required to determine the amount of deferred tax assets or liabilities that need to be recognised, based upon likely timing and level of future taxable profits.

Defined benefit pension and other post-employment benefits

The present value of the defined benefit pension and other post-employment benefit obligations depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a number of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pension and other post-employment benefits include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions will have an effect on the carrying amount of pension and other post-employment benefits.

After taking appropriate professional advice, management determines the appropriate discount rate at the end of each reporting period. This is the interest rate that should be used to determine the present value of estimated future cash outflows expected to be required to settle the pension obligations. In determining the appropriate discount rate, consideration is given to the interest rates of high-quality corporate bonds that are denominated in the currency in which the benefits are to be paid and that have terms to maturity approximating the terms of the related pension liability.

Other key assumptions relevant to the defined benefit pension and other post-employment benefit obligations are based in part on current market conditions. Additional disclosures concerning these obligations are given in note 9.

Depreciation and residual values

Management have reviewed the asset lives and associated residual values of all fixed asset classes and have concluded that the asset lives and residual values are appropriate.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

	2015 £	2014 £
2 Benefits		
Legal fees	278,259	444,803
Education	153,496	162,472
Accident and injury claims	1,156,751	1,083,614
Payments for support	2,560	25,950
	1,591,066	1,716,839

3 Administration		
Salaries and national insurance contributions	1,657,659	1,769,438
Pension contributions	585,223	624,917
FRS102 pension scheme adjustment (note 9)	(97,000)	(209,000)
Travel	339,026	320,122
Mileage	497,046	540,005
Hotels	196,532	259,160
Subsistence and evening meals	398,604	423,204
Officials' allowance	624,214	627,102
Motor expenses	12,467	37,262
PAYE agreement	4,637	7,321
Other organising expenses	29,843	38,178
Trade union leave	823,594	730,543
Reports, journals and subscriptions	75,307	66,432
Ballot expenses	37,416	69,671
Donations	114,599	78,190
Goods for presentations and campaigning	47,954	266,679
Repairs and renewals	33,975	32,344
Office expenses	578,601	548,631
Communications	619,337	615,954
Printing and stationery	266,086	259,610
Advertising	20,661	59,200
Insurance	30,926	36,681
Bank charges and interest payable	18,475	17,513
Audit, pension audit and accountancy	47,120	41,440
Professional fees	617,179	399,461
	7,579,481	7,660,058

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

	Land & buildings £	Fixtures fittings & equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
4 Fixed assets				
Cost				
1 January 2015	2,905,501	1,251,624	164,721	4,321,846
Additions	–	81,674	–	81,674
Disposals	(100,000)	–	(19,790)	(119,790)
31 December 2015	2,805,501	1,333,298	144,931	4,283,730
Depreciation				
1 January 2015	969,570	753,627	140,958	1,864,155
Charge for the year	58,767	222,975	17,948	299,690
Disposals	(15,000)	–	(19,790)	(34,790)
31 December 2015	1,013,337	976,602	139,116	2,129,055
Net book value				
31 December 2015	1,792,164	356,696	5,815	2,154,675
Net book value				
31 December 2014	1,935,931	497,997	23,763	2,457,691
5 Investments				
			2015 £	2014 £
Quoted equities and unit trusts (note 5a)			941,099	956,029
Unquoted equities (note 5b)			480,530	240,530
Fair value of total investments			1,421,629	1,196,559
a) Quoted equities and unit trusts				
			2015 £	2014 £
Market value at 1 January			956,029	904,779
Additions at fair value			24,802	63,121
Disposal proceeds			(29,295)	(43,771)
Change in fair value of investments				
Realised loss on sale of investments			(497)	(8,075)
(Loss)/surplus on revaluation of financial assets to fair value			(9,940)	39,975
Market value at 31 December			941,099	956,029
Historical cost at 31 December			745,437	750,427

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

5 Investments (continued)

All investments related to quoted investments on readily accessible markets, primarily the London Stock Exchange. Investment are carried at fair value, being the market value at the year end. Asset sales and purchases are recognised at their transaction value. The main investment risk lies in the combination of uncertain investment markets and volatility in yield. The union manages these risks by retaining expert advisors.

b) Unquoted equities

Unquoted shares held by the union at the year end are broken down as follows:

> 240,000 Unity Trust Bank plc ordinary shares held at fair value of £2/share.

> 530 Labour Education, Rec. and Holiday Homes Ltd shares held at cost of £1/share.

	2015 £	2014 £
Market value at 1 January	240,530	240,530
Surplus on revaluation of financial assets to fair value	240,000	–
Market value at 31 December	480,530	240,530

No provision for permanent impairment in value of investments is considered necessary.

6 Long-term loans

	2015 £	2014 £
Mortgages repayable	152,799	289,794
Loans – co-op societies		
CRS London Ltd.	35	35
People's Press Printing Society Ltd.	20,000	20,000
Loans – co-op societies		
Scottish TUC	3,000	3,000
	175,834	312,829

The mortgage loans to officials are secured by a charge on the property.

Under FRS 102, financial assets such as mortgages should be held at the present value of future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar instrument. The union has made the decision not to reduce the value of the mortgages to amortised cost on the basis that this adjustment would be misleading to the users of the financial statements as it does not reflect the cash position of the mortgages. Furthermore, the adjustment is immaterial to the financial statements.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

	2015 £	2014 £
7 Debtors		
Trade debtors	399,114	514,598
Other debtors	108,407	148,348
Prepayments	300,343	285,121
	807,864	948,067

	2015 £	2014 £
8 Current liabilities		
Trade creditors	343,442	375,207
Hire purchase creditors	–	121,679
Other creditors	208,065	375,690
Accruals	713,806	945,666
	1,265,313	1,818,242

9 Defined benefit pension fund

	Staff Scheme		Officials' Scheme	
	2015 £'000	2014 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Opening balance	(1,743)	(1,439)	819	1,095
Current service cost	(195)	(159)	(231)	(197)
Administration expenses	(17)	(17)	(21)	(21)
Contributions by the union	301	343	260	260
Gain on settlements	(2,139)	–	–	–
Loss on business combinations	2,139	–	–	–
Total service cost	89	167	8	42
Net interest cost	(61)	(81)	29	50
Actuarial (loss)/gain	(423)	(390)	166	(368)
Closing balance	(2,138)	(1,743)	1,022	819

	Combined	
	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Opening balance	(924)	(344)
Current service cost	(426)	(356)
Administration expenses	(38)	(38)
Contributions by the union	561	603
Gain on settlements	(2,139)	–
Loss on business combinations	2,139	–
Total service cost	97	209
Net interest cost	(32)	(31)
Actuarial loss	(257)	(758)
Closing balance	(1,116)	(924)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

9 Defined benefit pension fund (continued)

The major assumptions used by the actuary for the national officials' scheme.

	At 31.12.2015	At 31.12.2014
Rate of increase in salaries	1.5%	1.5%
Allowance for revaluation of deferred pensions of CPI or 5% p.a. if less	2.2%	1.9%
Allowance for pension in payment increases of RPI or 5% if less	3.2%	2.9%
Discount rate	3.8%	3.5%
Inflation rate (RPI)	3.2%	2.9%
Inflation rate (CPI)	2.2%	1.9%

The assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return for the national officials' scheme

	% of total Scheme assets	Value at 31.12.2015 £'000	% of total Scheme assets	Value at 31.12.2014 £'000
With profits fund	48%	4,303	45%	3,830
Secured annuities	52%	4,612	55%	4,759
Total market value of assets		<u>8,915</u>		<u>8,589</u>

The major assumptions used by the actuary for the clerical staff scheme.

	At 31.12.2015	At 31.12.2014
Rate of increase in salaries	1.5%	1.5%
Rate of increase for deferred pensioners	2.2%	2.5%
Rate of increase of pensions in payment	3.2%	3.1%

The mortality assumptions are in accordance with the S1PA CMI 2011 (1.25%)

The assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return for the clerical staff scheme

	% of total Scheme assets	Value at 31.12.2015 £'000	% of total Scheme assets	Value at 31.12.2014 £'000
Cash accumulation policy	40%	1,950	50%	2,610
Secured annuities	60%	2,932	50%	2,605
Total market value of assets		<u>4,882</u>		<u>5,215</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

9 Defined benefit pension fund (continued)

The amounts recognised in the statement of financial position are as follows:

	2015 National officials' scheme £'000	2015 Clerical staff scheme £'000	2015 Total £'000	2014 National officials' scheme £'000	2014 Clerical staff scheme £'000	2014 Total £'000
Present value of defined benefit obligation	(7,893)	(7,020)	(14,913)	(7,770)	(6,958)	(14,728)
Fair value of scheme assets	8,915	4,882	13,797	8,589	5,215	13,804
Net asset/(liability) recognised	1,022	(2,138)	(1,116)	819	(1,743)	(924)

The amounts recognised in the income and expenditure account are as follows:

Service costs	231	195	426	197	159	356
Administration expenses	21	17	38	21	17	38
Net interest (credit)/charge	(29)	61	32	(50)	81	31
Gain on settlements	(2,139)	–	(2,139)	–	–	–
Loss on business combinations	2,139	–	2,139	–	–	–
Total recognised	223	273	496	168	257	425
Actual return on scheme assets	256	(517)	(261)	772	(97)	675

The amounts recognised in other comprehensive income:

Actuarial gains/(losses)	153	285	438	(859)	(39)	(898)
Return on assets excluding amount included in net interest	(46)	(708)	(754)	444	(351)	93
Experience gains arising on the plan liabilities	59	–	59	47	–	47
Total recognised	166	(423)	(257)	(368)	(390)	(758)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

9 Defined benefit pension fund (continued)

	2015 National officials' scheme £'000	2015 Clerical staff scheme £'000	2015 Total £'000	2014 National officials' scheme £'000	2014 Clerical staff scheme £'000	2014 Total £'000
Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the present value of scheme liabilities:						
Scheme liabilities at 1 January	7,770	6,958	14,728	6,623	7,411	14,034
Current service cost	231	195	426	197	159	356
Expenses	21	–	21	21	–	21
Secured liability in members' names	–	–	–	–	(872)	(872)
Interest cost	273	252	525	299	335	634
Contributions by scheme participants	42	31	73	43	32	75
Settlements	–	(7,020)	(7,020)	–	–	–
Business combination	–	7,020	7,020	–	–	–
Actuarial (gain)/loss	(212)	(285)	(497)	812	39	851
Benefits paid	(232)	(131)	(363)	(225)	(146)	(371)
Scheme liabilities at 31 December	7,893	7,020	14,913	7,770	6,958	14,728

Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the fair value of scheme assets

Fair value of scheme assets at 1 January	8,589	5,215	13,804	7,718	5,972	13,690
Expected return on scheme assets	302	191	493	349	254	603
Expenses	–	(17)	(17)	–	(17)	(17)
Actuarial (loss)/gain	(46)	(708)	(754)	444	(351)	93
Contributions by employer	260	301	561	260	343	603
Contributions by scheme participants	42	31	73	43	32	75
Settlements	–	(4,881)	(4,881)	–	–	–
Business combination	–	4,881	4,881	–	–	–
Secured liability in members' names	–	–	–	–	(872)	(872)
Benefits paid	(232)	(131)	(363)	(225)	(146)	(371)
Fair value of scheme assets at 31 December	8,915	4,882	13,797	8,589	5,215	13,804

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

9 Defined benefit pension fund (continued)

National Officials' Scheme

The most recently completed actuarial valuation as at 31 October 2011 showed a surplus of £28,000, hence no deficit contribution is required. However in accordance with the actuarial valuation, the union has agreed with the trustees that it will pay 67.2% of pensionable earnings in respect of the cost of accruing benefits. This includes an allowance to cover standard administration and management fees that are deducted annually from the scheme's assets. In addition, the employer will pay amounts into the scheme equal to the levy payments made by the scheme to the Pension Protection Fund. Insurance premiums for death in service benefits and any fees other than standard policy charges are also payable in addition as and when they are due. Member contributions are payable in addition at the rate of 11.0% of pensionable pay. Contributions will be revised as part of the 31 October 2014 valuation.

FBU Clerical Staff Pension Scheme - future funding obligation

The last actuarial valuation of the FBU Clerical Staff Pension Scheme was performed by the Actuary for the Trustees as at 30 June 2014. The union agreed to pay annual contributions of 30.00% of members' pensionable salaries, less the members' contributions, each year, plus payments to pay off the deficit of £106,000 pa for 10 years. The Scheme closed to future accrual on 30 October 2015, and all assets and liabilities were transferred to the FBU Pension Scheme on 23 December 2015. The union agreed to continue contributions in line with the existing Schedule of Contributions, with the first valuation of the FBU Pension Scheme to be performed in 2016.

Transition from FRS 17 to FRS 102

Annuities held in the name of the trustees have been included as an asset and in the defined benefit obligation. The amounts are of equal value and there is no change in the amount of net defined benefit asset/liability. Interest cost is equal to interest income and actuarial gains/losses on the assets is equal to actuarial gains/losses on the defined benefit obligation.

Administration (that is non investment expenses) are now shown separately from the current service cost. Under FRS17, such expenses were included in the service cost.

Under FRS17 the expected return on the defined benefit scheme assets was recognised in the profit or loss account. Under FRS102, a net interest cost, based on the net defined benefit liability is recognised in the profit or loss account. There has been no change in the defined benefit liability at either 31 December 2015 or 31 December 2014. The effect of the changes has been to increase the cost to the profit or loss account in the year to 31 December 2014 by £44,000 and increase the credit in other comprehensive income by the same amount.

10 Taxation

The union is not liable to tax on income from its members. Taxation is payable to the extent that investment income and capital gains exceed allowable provident benefits.

11 Operating leases

As at 31 December 2015 the union has future commitments under non-cancellable operation leases as follows:

	2015 £	2014 £
Within one year	106,842	114,298
Between two and five years	93,842	199,968
In more than five years	—	—

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

12 Key management personnel

Key management personnel compensation of £647,533 (2014 – £748,021) was paid in the year, comprising salary, benefits in kind, employer national insurance contributions and employer pension contributions. See analysis of officials' salaries and benefits for a further breakdown of the key management personnel compensation.

13 Transition statement

This is the first year that the union has presented its financial statements under Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) issued by the Financial Reporting Council. The transition date was 1 January 2014. The union's last financial statements prepared in accordance with previous UK GAAP were for the year ended 31 December 2014. The transition to FRS 102 has resulted in a number of changes in the union's accounting policies compared to those used when applying previous UK GAAP. The following explanatory notes to the financial statements describe the difference between the results presented under previous UK GAAP and the newly presented amounts under FRS 102 for the reporting period ended 31 December 2014, as well as the fund totals in the opening statement of financial position (i.e. at the date of transition, being 1 January 2014).

	Total funds as at 1 January 2014	Income and expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2014	Other comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2014	Total funds as at 31 December 2014
	£	£	£	£
Total funds as stated under previous UK GAAP	6,449,117	673,829	(868,000)	6,254,946
Transitional adjustments:				
1) Revaluation of investments	171,676	33,926	–	205,602
2) Inclusion in Income and Expenditure of interest on defined benefit scheme assets rather than expected return on scheme assets	–	(110,000)	–	(110,000)
2) Inclusion of actual returns on scheme assets in Other Comprehensive Income	–	–	110,000	110,000
Total funds as stated under FRS 102	6,620,793	597,755	(758,000)	6,460,548

1) Revaluation of investments

Under previous UK GAAP, the union adopted a policy of measuring investment assets at cost less impairments. FRS 102 requires that investments be measured at fair value, with changes in fair value recognised in the statement of comprehensive income. The effect has been to uplift the value of investments at the date of transition, being 1 January 2014, and adjusting the value of these investments to fair value during the year ended 31 December 2014.

2) Pension movements

Under previous UK GAAP the expected return on the defined benefit scheme assets was recognised in Income and Expenditure. Under FRS 102, a net interest cost, based on the net defined benefit liability is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income. There has been no change in the defined benefit liability – the effect has been to increase the cost to the Income and Expenditure and increase the credit to Other Comprehensive Income.

ANALYSIS OF OFFICIALS' SALARIES AND BENEFITS

For the year ended 31 December 2015

Salaries

Name	Office held	Gross salary £	Equivalent rank	
Matt Wrack	General secretary	72,178	Area manager	Competent "B"
Andy Dark	Assistant general secretary	68,087	Area manager	Competent "A"
Sean Starbuck	National officer	62,851	Group manager	Competent "B"
John McGhee	National officer	62,851	Group manager	Competent "B"
David Green	National officer	62,851	Group manager	Competent "B"
Paul Woolstenholmes (to 31 January 2015)	National officer	5,214	Group manager	Competent "B"

Note: All national officials' salaries are in line with fire service ranks, endorsed by annual conference.

Benefits

Name	Office held	Employer's N.I. cons. £	Employer's pension cons. £	Benefits in kind £
Matt Wrack	General secretary	8,891	48,503	6,003
Andy Dark	Assistant general secretary	8,284	45,755	5,909
Sean Starbuck	National officer	7,748	42,236	12,949
John McGhee	National officer	7,676	42,236	12,580
David Green	National officer	7,752	42,236	10,314
Paul Woolstenholmes (to 31 January 2015)	National officer	628	3,504	297

Note: Full-time officials currently pay 11% of salary in employee pension contributions. The executive council is currently reviewing the pension provision for full time officials.

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

For the year ended 31 December 2015

Benefits

Name	Office held	Officials' allowance £
A. McLean	President	10,150
I. Murray	Executive council and vice-president	8,772
D. Limer (to 16 December 2015)	Executive council and national treasurer	8,406
A. Noble (from 17 December 2015)	Executive council and national treasurer	7,453

The following executive council members were paid an officials' allowance at the rate of £7,395 per annum.

R. Robertson	(to 30 April 2015)
C. McGlone	(from 11 May 2015)
J. Quinn	
K. Brown	
P. Coates	(from 17 December 2015)
B. Downey	
G. Mayos	
K. Handscomb	(to 27 December 2015)
J. Wyatt	(from 28 December 2015)
I. Leahair	
J. Parrott	(to 30 September 2015)
D. Armstrong	(from 8 September 2015)
R. Matthews	
T. McFarlane	
J. Byrne	
T. Mitchell	
J. Arnold	

Note: The union made reimbursement to local authorities of £823,594 (2014 – £730,543) in respect of trade union leave in connection with trade union duties by executive council members and regional officials.

Irregularity statement

"A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring, or has occurred, in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and, if necessary, securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors' of the union, the certification officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the secretary of state) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been conducted in breach of the law or in breach of rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice."

The above statement is taken from the certification officer website.

SECTION N

OBITUARY

The executive council records with deep regret the deaths of the following members in 2015:

Name	Region	Brigade
Colin Douglas Laing	1	Scotland
Alistair McLean	1	Scotland
John Henery	1	Scotland
Fred Tulloch	1	Scotland
Andrew Dunleavey	1	Scotland
James Bruce	1	Scotland
Lawrence Patrick Ward	2	Northern Ireland
Brian Stanley Liggett	2	Northern Ireland
Ian Bell	3	Durham
Matthew Alexander Wood	4	West Yorkshire
Jonathan Allan Hughes	5	Cheshire
Malcolm Pawilowicz	5	Cumbria
Lee Richard Gaunt	5	Greater Manchester
Darren Bryan	6	Nottinghamshire
Martin Middleton	6	Derbyshire
Steven Paul Cotterell	6	Nottinghamshire
Mark Ryan Hancock	7	Staffordshire
Stephen Bredenkamp	8	South Wales
Edward James Stephen Ellis	10	London
James Jonathan Moyle	10	London
Andy Corrigan	10	London
Mark Innes	11	Kent
Paul Keenor	11	East Sussex
Timothy Jonathan Lockett	11	Surrey
Martin William Poynter	12	Isle of Wight
Philip John Selby	12	Isle of Wight
Martin James Page	13	Cornwall
David Alan Curtis	13	Cornwall
Matthew Paul Norman	13	Dorset



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