The Fire Brigades Union

Executive Council's Annual Report 2008

83rd Annual Conference

20th - 23rd May 2008

FBU – Campaigning For You

Executive Council's Annual Report to the 83rd Annual Conference 2008

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SEAN STARBUCK
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President's Introduction

2007 has been another challenging year but one in which the union has ended in a stronger position than in which it began. Against the backdrop of a tightening of public finances and a squeeze on public sector pay, we managed to achieve a pay rise in accordance with Annual Conference policy; and at long last resolved the outstanding issue of Continuous Professional Development payments. We also finally saw off the threat of the RFU having a seat on the National Joint Council.

The clamp down on ill health retirement across the public sector led to three of our London members having their pensions stopped and being left without a job or a pension. Fortunately, legal action has secured the repayment of our members' pensions, but the bigger threat remains and this will be one of the major campaigning priorities for the union in 2008. We cannot allow our members, who perform a vital, sometimes dangerous, job on behalf of the public to be left without a job or pension if they have the misfortune to be injured or become unfit.

We continued to expose the Control Regionalisation project for being the expensive fiasco that it is: over budget, over schedule and providing nothing of value for the public that we serve. We have convinced the Scottish Government of the folly of control amalgamation, but have still to achieve the same with the CLG in England. That issue will again be a top priority for the union in the coming year.

Work was done and resources put in place to ensure that two major themes will dominate the work of the union in 2008: membership recruitment, ensuring that we further increase our membership density and realise our aim of organising all uniformed fire and rescue service employees; and the provision of a vibrant education programme for our officials. These two areas of work will ensure that the union continues to grow in strength. Further work has also been done to ensure that our financial position continues to improve, leaving us in a position where we will be well equipped to mount future campaigns and fight whatever battles are necessary.

Our campaigning work on all of the major issues facing the fire and rescue service, such as flooding; attacks on firefighters; fire service funding; and retained pensions, have ensured us a high media profile and continued to demonstrate that it is the Fire Brigades Union that is the true voice of the UK Fire and Rescue Service, as well as being the only organisation that has the resources and the determination to ensure that all uniformed employees, regardless of their workplace, their role or their duty system, are properly protected.

2007 has been the first year since 2001 that we have not seen strike action in the UK Fire and Rescue Service. Hopefully, that is a sign that the employers' offensive that has masqueraded as the so-called "modernisation agenda" has calmed down and that constructive industrial relations is now the norm. The Joint Protocol on Industrial Relations agreed at the National Joint Council has certainly assisted in that development.

I am confident that the period of turmoil which followed our national pay dispute in 2002/2003 is gradually being replaced by a more realistic understanding of how to conduct industrial relations on the part of our employers and the Government and that the FBU is well placed to ensure that our members' interests are protected and advanced in the years to come.

Mick Shaw

A1 Introduction

2007

The Union appointed the following representatives to the National Joint Council for 2007:

Bro. M Wrack (Employees Side Joint Secretary)
Bro. A Dark
Sis. R Winters (replaced by Bro. M Shaw) (Employees Side Chairperson and NJC Vice Chair)
Bro. J McDonald (replaced by Bro. R Robertson)
Bro. J Barbour
Bro. A McLean
Bro. R Blackburn (replaced by Bro. S Starbuck and subsequently replaced by Bro. J Pagan)
Bro. W Gee
Bro. D Green
Bro. D Whatton
Bro. M Smith
Bro. K Handscomb
Bro. M Shaw (replaced by Bro. I Leahair)
Bro. E Thornton
Bro. P Miller
Bro. T McFarlane
Sis. S Riley (formerly Sis. S. Eames)
Sis. V Knight (substituted by Sis. D Feltham)
Bro. S Brown
Bro. J Ford
Bro. M Nicholas
Bro. T Mitchell
Bro. H Cotter (Employees Side Adviser)
Sis. S Offland (Employees Side Adviser)
Bro. D Beverley (Employees Side Adviser)

Observers:
Bro. J McGhee
Bro. D Mills
Bro. P Woolstenholmes
Bro. S Starbuck

Following the change to the NJC Constitution in September 2007 the Union appointed the following representatives to the employees side of the National Joint Council which has 14 seats. The 14th seat had been reserved for a 3 month period for the Retained Firefighters' Union (RFU) whilst an audit of the RFU membership was carried out. However, prior to the NJC meeting the RFU declined the seat and the place was filled by the Fire Brigades Union.

Bro. M Wrack (Employees Side Joint Secretary)
Bro. A Dark
Bro. M Shaw (Employees Side Chairperson and Employees Side Vice Chair)
Bro. A McLean
Bro. R Robertson
Bro. J Barbour
Bro. W Gee
Bro. D Green
Bro. D Whatton
Bro. M Smith
Sis. S Riley (formerly Sis. S. Eames)
Bro. J Ford
Bro. T Mitchell
Bro. M Nicholas

The National Joint Council met on the following dates in 2007:

6 February
15 June
28 September
13 December

National Joint Council Joint Standing Sub Committee
The Union appointed the following representatives to the NJC Standing Sub Committee for 2007:

Sis. R Winters (replaced by Bro. M Shaw)
Bro. M Wrack
Bro. A Dark
Bro. A McLean
Bro. M Smith
Bro. J. Barbour
Bro. J. McDonald (replaced by Bro. R. Robertson)
Bro. E Thornton
Bro. J Ford

The Standing Sub Committee did not meet during 2007.

A2 Pay

The Fire Brigades Union wrote to the employers in January 2007 setting out our pay claim for 2007 which we tabled at the NJC on 6th February 2007:

Agenda Item 5 **NJC 6 Feb 2007**

Sarah Messenger
Employers Side Secretary of NJC
Local Government House
Smith Square, London SW1 P 3HZ

23 January 2007

Dear Sarah,

Fire Service Pay
At the previous two meetings of the National Joint Council there has been some preliminary discussion around the issue of pay, in particular a pay increase for 2007. The employers have asked the Fire Brigades Union to formalise our position.

The F.B.U. has made clear to the fire service employers that good industrial relations within the fire service require an end to some of the instability which we have experienced in recent years. On the issue of pay, stability was achieved for a very lengthy period by the maintenance of the old fire service pay formula prior to 2002. Following the 2003 agreement a new formula was agreed and was introduced at Stage 4 and Stage 5.

The 2003 Pay and Conditions agreement stated:

> *Both sides of the NJC recognise that firefighters are now placed in the 'Associate Professional and Technical' occupational classification in the Government's new earnings' survey and that this will be an important consideration in agreeing this pay formula.*

> *Having considered the operation of the formula at Stage 4 and Stage 5 it is our view that it has successfully maintained the link to the movement in pay of the APT occupational group and provides a suitable mechanism for pay within the fire and rescue service. Of course, either side could initiate a review of this at any time. The FBU would expect any such review to be carried out jointly through the mechanisms of the NJC.*

> *Therefore the FBU seek agreement from the employers:*

> *a) That pay for employees covered by the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services should be increased in accordance with a pay formula.*

> *b) That the formula used should be the one agreed as a result of the 2003 Pay and Conditions Agreement.*

The FBU are keen to see rapid progress in resolving this issue and therefore intend to initiate preliminary discussions at the meeting of the NJC on 6th February 2006. This should be followed by discussion at a joint secretary level so that a report can be presented to both sides and to the following meeting of the NJC.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

Extensive discussions took place resulting in a pay offer of 2.4% for all members which was reported to branches in Head Office Circular 2007HOC0340MW. An NJC Circular (07/07) was also issued on the matter.

Circular 2007HOC0340MW **15 June 2007**

TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL MEETING – 15 JUNE 2007
The National Joint Council met today to discuss a range of issues, including that of Pay.

I am able to inform you that the APT Formula for 2007 produces an increase of 2.4%.

I am pleased to report that the National Joint Council has agreed to a pay increase of 2.4%. An NJC Pay circular will be issued soon.

Protected Pay Rates (Station Officers etc)
In relation to protected pay rates (Station Officers, Principle Fire Control Officers and Fire Control Officers) the NJC has agreed that the national pay rise (2.4%) should apply to these

protected rates. The review of these protected rates required under the 2003 Pay and Conditions Agreement will continue. There remains disagreement between the FBU and the Employers about how this issue should be resolved. Further reports will be issued in due course.

Long Service Pay

Both sides of the NJC further agreed the following in relation to outstanding Long Service Pay. An interim payment of £100 will be made in July pay packets with the remainder of the outstanding money to be paid on conclusion of the long-running discussions regarding the pensionability of Continual Professional Development (CPD) payments.

Yours fraternally

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

CIRCULAR NJC/07/07 **15 June 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

PAY SETTLEMENT: 2007

1. *The NJC has agreed an increase of 2.4% with effect from 1 July 2007.*

   The following appendices contain the revised rates of pay.

   Appendix A
   Pay rates for firefighting roles
   Protected point G (Firefighter aged 19 or over after 6 months/in 2nd year) has been deleted, as nobody will be on this point on 1st July 2007.

   Appendix B
   Pay rates for the retained duty system

   Appendix C
   Pay rates for control specific roles
   Protected point G (Firefighter aged 19 or over after 6 months/in 2nd year) has been deleted, as nobody will be on this point on 1st July 2007.

   Appendix D
   Pay rates for non-operational staff and junior firefighters

2. *In all cases annual figures are rounded to the nearest pound and hourly rates are derived from the appropriate annual figure divided by 52.143 (rounded to nearest penny) then by 42 (rounded to nearest penny).*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

APPENDIX A

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1st JULY 2007

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Over-time rate £
Firefighter			
Trainee	20396	9.31	13.97
Development	21245	9.70	14.55
Competent	27185	12.41	18.62
Crew Manager			
Development	28893	13.19	19.79
Competent	30139	13.76	20.64
Watch Manager			
Development	30792	14.06	21.09
Competent A	31647	14.45	21.68
Competent B	33703	15.39	23.08
Station Manager			
Development	35057	16.01	24.01
Competent A	36109	16.49	24.73
Competent B	38667	17.66	26.48
Group Manager			
Development	40375	18.44	
Competent A	41586	18.99	
Competent B	44758	20.44	
Area Manager			
Development	47399	21.64	
Competent A	48821	22.29	
Competent B	51994	23.74	

PROTECTED POINTS

Firefighter			
H 19 or over during 4th year	24936	11.39	17.08
Station Officer			
L 3rd year in rank	36109	16.49	24.73

APPENDIX B

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1st JULY 2007 (RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM)

	1 £ per annum	2 £ per annum	3 £ per hour	4 £ per occ
Firefighter				
Trainee	2040	1020	9.31	3.56
Development	2125	1063	9.70	3.56
Competent	2719	1360	12.41	3.56
Crew Manager				
Development	2890	1445	13.19	3.56
Competent	3014	1507	13.76	3.56
Watch Manager				
Development	3079	1540	14.06	3.56
Competent A	3165	1583	14.45	3.56
Competent B	3370	1686	15.39	3.56
Station Manager				
Development	3506	1753	16.01	3.56
Competent A	3611	1805	16.49	3.56
Competent B	3867	1933	17.66	3.56
Group Manager				
Development	4038	2019	18.44	3.56
Competent A	4158	2080	18.99	3.56
Competent B	4476	2238	20.44	3.56
Area Manager				
Development	4740	2371	21.64	3.56
Competent A	4882	2441	22.29	3.56
Competent B	5200	2600	23.74	3.56

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

APPENDIX C

CONTROL SPECIFIC ROLES - PAY RATES FROM 1st JULY 2007

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Over-time rate £
Firefighter (Control)			
Trainee	19376	8.85	13.27
Development	20183	9.22	13.82
Competent	25826	11.79	17.69
Crew Manager (Control)			
Development	27448	12.53	18.80
Competent	28632	13.07	19.61
Watch Manager (Control)			
Development	29253	13.36	20.04
Competent A	30065	13.73	20.59
Competent B	32017	14.62	21.93
Station Manager (Control)			
Development	33304	15.21	22.81
Competent A	34304	15.66	23.50
Competent B	36734	16.77	25.16
Group Manager (Control)			
Development	38357	17.51	
Competent A	39506	18.04	
Competent B	42521	19.42	

PROTECTED POINTS

Fire Control Operator			
H 19 or over during 4th year	23689	10.82	16.23
Fire Control Officer			
L 3rd year in rank	34304	15.66	23.50
Principal Fire Control Officer			
P 3rd year in rank	43501	19.86	

APPENDIX D

NON-OPERATIONAL STAFF – PAY RATES FROM 1st JULY 2007

	£pa
Non-operational staff	
(Fire Control Operator equivalent)	
During first six months	17371
After six months and during 2nd year	18141
During 3rd year	19003
During 4th year	19938
During 5th year	21714
Non-operational staff	
(Leading Fire Control Operator equivalent)	23253
Non-operational staff	
(Senior Fire Control Operator equivalent)	
During 1st year in rank	23852
During 2nd year in rank	24755

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS FROM 1st JULY 2007

	£pa
Aged 16	9435
Aged 17	10140
Aged 18	20396

CIRCULAR NJC/14/07 **2 July 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

CORRECTION TO CIRCULAR NJC/7/07: Pay Settlement 2007

There has been a typographic error in the pay circular issued on 15 June 2007. (NJC/7/07 refers.)

The rate shown in column 2 of Appendix B for Crew Manager Development was incorrectly stated as £1455. The correct rate should be £1445.

Please ensure that your payroll/finance sections receive this amendment notification as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

A3 NJC Continual Professional Development and pension protection for Long Service Increment

Following the meeting of the Executive Council and National Joint Council meetings held on 15th December 2006, the FBU conducted a membership consultation on the national employers' proposals on Continual Professional Development.

This consultation included a number of circulars from Head Office including a 24 page Firefighter Special sent to members home addresses on 9th January 2007 dedicated to the issue. On 6th February 2007 the Executive Council agreed the employers proposed CPD Scheme and payments subject to protection for pensionability of members' contributions made on Long Service Increment payments (LSI). This formed the basis of a qualified agreement reached at the NJC which included a revised Constitution of the National Joint Council. The status of the agreement was reflected in Circular/ NJC/ 03/ 07:

CIRCULAR NJC/03/07 **7 February 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

1. *At yesterday's meeting of the National Joint Council agreement was reached on the introduction of a Continual Professional Development Scheme, subject to acceptance by the regulators of the respective pension schemes that Continual Professional Development payments shall be pensionable.*

2. *Whilst such confirmation (which has been sought as a matter of urgency) is awaited, and given the short timescale for implementation, authorities are encouraged to plan for a positive response. However, the transitional payments referred to in circular NJC/10/06 should not be actioned until such time as that confirmation has been received.*

3. *It may be of benefit to both parties locally to consider agreeing a later implementation date, but that would be a matter for local negotiation.*

4. *A copy of the final scheme, including the level of payments, is attached (Appendix A) together with the guidance note for applicants (Appendix B) and application form (Appendix C).*

5. *In addition, to ensure that all employees receive a pay increase on promotion where they otherwise may not as a result of the loss of a CPD payment, the NJC agreed that*

a minimum increase of £300 per annum shall apply in such circumstances. This principle will also apply in cases of temporary promotion and acting up.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

APPENDIX A

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

Continual Professional Development Scheme

1. This Scheme is designed to recognise and reward experienced employees who are able to demonstrate continual professional development over and above that required at 'competent' level under each of the national standards set out in the attached Guidance to Applicants document. All parties to the process should be clear that to succeed in their application employees would be required to show that they have achieved this level of continual professional development against each of the national standards. It is the expectation of the National Joint Council that the vast majority of eligible employees will both achieve, and maintain, these standards.

Eligibility

2. To qualify for the payment employees will be required to demonstrate that their application is indicative of continual professional development against each of the national standards.

3. Employees covered by the NJC's Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) who have served the minimum period of time following attainment of 'competent' level in their respective role (Firefighter to Area Manager and control equivalents) may apply for this payment. At Firefighter (or Control equivalent) the minimum period shall be five years. Continual Professional Development payments will not be retained on promotion. However, once individuals at Crew Manager (or Control equivalent) level, and above, have attained competence in their new role, data in respect of his or her portfolio of evidence may be gathered over the subsequent year with a view to accessing a Continual Professional Development payment from the following July. It is recognised however that it may be appropriate to include some data relating to a period outside of the previous year.

4. Successful applicants will receive the payment with effect from the 1 July each year.

5. Employees who apply for but do not satisfy the requirements of the Scheme in any one year can reapply only after a period of twelve months has elapsed since their last unsuccessful application.

6. The first payments under this Scheme will be made from 1 July 2007. The payment will be retrospective, pensionable[1], taxable, and paid in accordance with normal pay periods.

7. Eligible employees will be able to submit their application for the payment by 1st March in the year in which they first become eligible. Decisions will then be notified by 1 June.

8. Until such time as a Fire and Rescue Service has in place a process for assessing competency in role for a period of 5 years, employees with 8 years service who have been deemed competent for pay purposes through the 2003 Pay and Conditions Agreement should be deemed competent for the purpose of being eligible to apply for a CPD payment. This is subject to the provisions of paragraph 3 above; therefore employees who have been promoted to a new role and are in development are not eligible to apply for a CPD payment until after they have been assessed as competent. In those authorities without a formal process for assessing competence, these employees should be deemed competent for the purpose of being eligible to apply for a CPD payment after a period of 18 months.

Application process

9. In the first instance, individual employees are responsible for applying for the payment, which will be by completion of a standard application form. Employees will be required to complete the application form in accordance with the guidelines provided. This will include specific examples of success/achievement against each of the criteria under the national standards.

10. On application, examples should relate to experience and knowledge gained since attaining competence in role (see paragraph 3 above).

11. The completed application form will be submitted to the appropriate designated manager who will consider the application and refer his/her recommendation to the verification manager for final decision.

12. From then on the respective fire and rescue service will review and assess those in receipt of a Continual Professional Development payment to determine their on-going eligibility. Individuals will be notified of the outcome, in writing, prior to 1 June each year. The expectation is that non-renewal of the payment will be the exception. Please see paragraphs 15 and 16 below.

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1 Subject to acceptance by the respective pension scheme regulators

Level of payment

13. The level of payment in each Fire and Rescue Service has been determined by the National Joint Council. These amounts have been agreed taking into account estimated net savings resulting from the 15-year long service increment being phased out and reasonable assumptions about the number of eligible employees. A breakdown of the level of payments within each Fire and Rescue Service is attached. These figures will rise in accordance with the pay award reached each July.

14. The National Joint Council recognises the importance of the Continual Professional Development scheme in rewarding employees whose experience, skills, and knowledge bring value to their Fire and Rescue Service. Consequently, and where appropriate, whilst the Continual Professional Development payment rates for individual Fire and Rescue Services have been calculated and agreed by the National Joint Council each Fire and Rescue Service is encouraged to explore ways in which the value of a Continual Professional Development payment can be brought up to a minimum level of £500 per annum (full-time equivalent) within the constraints of affordability and other priorities for the Fire and Rescue Service.

Unsuccessful applications

15. Individuals are entitled to raise the decision not to award/continue the payment through their Fire and Rescue Service's grievance procedure on the following grounds:
    - proper account was not taken of the material presented;
    - account was taken of irrelevant or inaccurate factors;
    - unfair treatment
    - the Fire and Rescue Service failed to fully take into account all evidence to justify continuance of the payment.

16. Reasons for not awarding or renewing a Continual Professional Development payment must be given to the individual in writing, with reasons, by 1st June.

Maintaining standards

17. It is expected that employees awarded the payment will maintain this high level of continual professional development and commitment to the job necessary to achieve the payment. Each Fire and Rescue Service should put in place local procedures that will support and encourage employees to maintain those standards.

18. Where, under any formal management procedures, including the performance assessment process operated by the Fire and Rescue Service, concerns are identified with respect to the maintenance of this continual professional development by an employee in receipt of the payment, managers will inform the applicant in good time and provide opportunity for those concerns to be rectified prior to the renewal date.

Relationship to basic pay

19. A Continual Professional Development payment will be treated as basic pay for all pay-related purposes i.e. maternity leave, annual leave, pensionability, sickness.

Transfers, secondments and maternity leave

20. For the purposes of this scheme continuous service in the UK Fire and Rescue service will count towards eligibility.

21. In addition to paragraph 19 above, on return to work following any period of unpaid maternity leave an individual's Continual Professional Development payment will be reinstated and subsequently become subject to the normal re-assessment process the following July, or following a period of six months whichever is the sooner.

Part-time employees

22. Part-time employees including those employed on the retained duty system must not be treated less favourably than whole-time employees in the assessment process. All such employees will be paid on an individual pro-rata basis, subject to a minimum payment of 25% of the full-time equivalent rate.

APPENDIX B

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Guidance Notes for Applicants

This guidance is designed to help you complete the application form for the continual professional development payment. In order to qualify for the payment, you will need to demonstrate continual professional development over and above that required at 'competent' level under each of the national standards.

High continual professional development is reached under each national standard by demonstrating that continual professional development against each of the criteria.

For each of the national standards you are required to provide evidence of how you have continually professional developed. Evidence, which should include specific examples where appropriate, will result from the acquisition of experience and knowledge. This may be acquired through day to day experience in the role, training courses, or a mixture of both. You will be judged on the quality of the evidence not the length of the submission.

The national standards and their related criteria are as follows:

(i) **Professional competence**
- Effective organisation of work to meet the demands of your role
- Commitment to the values of the Fire and Rescue Service
- Commitment to health and safety requirements

(ii) **Commitment to the job**
- Commitment to achieving your Fire and Rescue Service's objectives
- Commitment to personal and professional development
- Commitment to achieving high levels of attendance

(iii) **Relations with the public and colleagues**
- Promoting equality, diversity and human rights in working practices
- Contributing to your Fire and Rescue Service's objectives, recognising the needs of all relevant communities
- Working as part of a team

(iv) **Willingness to learn and adjust to new circumstances**
- Making best use of available technology
- Demonstrating an openness to change

The Application Process
You will find attached to this guidance an application form for you to complete. Remember, the onus is on you to show how you have achieved continual professional development over and above that required at 'competent' under each of the national standards.

Care should be taken in completing this form to ensure fair and appropriate decisions are made. If you have any questions that are not covered in this guidance please talk to your line manager before submitting the application form.

For each national standard you are required to provide sufficient evidence to enable a fair assessment to be carried out. This does not necessarily mean that you must provide an example for every indicator under each standard.

Eligible employees may submit their applications by 1st March in the year in which they become eligible. Decisions will be notified by 1st June. To be eligible, applicants need to have served for five years following attainment of 'competent' level in your current role.

You are not required to prepare a portfolio of supporting evidence. Please do not attach additional pages to the form. Use only the space provided. If your line manager or the verifier requires additional supporting information, they will ask you for it.

From the second anniversary onwards the respective fire and rescue service will review and assess those in receipt of a Continual Professional Development payment to determine their on-going eligibility. Individuals will be notified of the outcome prior to 1 July each year. The expectation is that non-renewal of the payment will be the exception.

The Assessment Process
A designated appropriate manager will assess your application. It will then be passed to a higher level manager who will act as a verifier for review and to determine whether or not payment should be made.

PERSONAL DETAILS
Please enter your name, role, employee pay number, and the date at which you attained 'competent' level in your current role.

National Standard (i): PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE
Under this national standard, you will need to demonstrate continual professional development and results appropriate for your role. Using only the box provided for your comments, set out clearly and concisely your achievements against the evidence for which managers and verifiers will generally be looking for. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Effective organisation of work to meet the demands of your role
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Make sure that all matters relating to the processing of information are carried out in a prompt, efficient manner and in accordance with policy and procedure.

Commitment to health and safety requirements
- A copy of your Fire and Rescue Service's health and safety requirements and risk assessment for your role may be obtained from your Fire and Rescue Service.

Experience
- You should indicate the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding gained through experience, beyond that required for 'competence'.

National Standard (ii): COMMITMENT TO THE JOB
Under this national standard, you will need to show how you have, to the necessary standard, demonstrated commitment to your job in the role in which you have achieved competency and are currently in.

Using only the space provided, set out clearly and concisely how you have shown the sorts of achievements that assessors will be looking for. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Commitment to achieving Fire and Rescue Service objectives
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Take personal responsibility for your actions;
- Are focused on achieving results;
- Demonstrate sound judgement;
- Identify, implement and monitor development activities to enhance your own performance.

Commitment to personal and professional development
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Keep yourself up to date with changes affecting your role;
- Assess your skills and identify potential personal development needs;
- Undertake continuous self-development activities;
- Obtain and utilise feedback from relevant people.

Commitment to achieving high levels of attendance
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Achieved a satisfactory level of attendance in accordance with local policy and/or targets. In making such a judgment Fire and Rescue Service's will wish to be mindful of any reasonable circumstance which may have impacted upon an individual's ability to achieve this, and the individual's usual attendance record.

National Standard (iii): RELATIONS WITH PUBLIC AND COLLEAGUES
Under this national standard, you will need to show, to the necessary standard, how you have achieved good relations with members of the public and with your colleagues. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Promoting equality, diversity and human rights in working practices
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Develop and maintain positive working relationships;
- Ensure that members of the public and your colleagues are treated fairly;
- Treat colleagues and members of the public with dignity and respect, including behaving in a way that demonstrates that you value difference and diversity in relation to gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, disability, age and nationality.

Contributing to your Fire and Rescue Service objectives, recognising the needs of all relevant communities
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- provide a service that is responsive and sympathetic and recognises the needs of all relevant communities

Working as part of a team
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Work co-operatively with team members and colleagues;
- Seek to ensure that team objectives and performance indicators are achieved;
- If you have management responsibility, supervise short and medium term objectives, develop plans, monitor work activities, and regularly assess the performance of teams and individuals

National Standard (iv): WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND ADJUST TO NEW CIRCUMSTANCES
Under this national standard, you will need to show how you have, to a high level of continual professional development, demonstrated a willingness to learn new skills and adjust to new circumstances. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Making best use of available technology
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Make best use of available technology in support of your role;
- Ensure correct operation and compliance with your Fire and Rescue Service policy and requirements.

Demonstrating an openness to change
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Are adaptable and have a positive attitude towards change;
- Are flexible and can adapt to new ways;
- Understand the need for, and co-operate with, change suggesting changes to existing systems.
- If you have management responsibility, actively promote and lead your team positively to take change forward.

**Note: Providing evidence against this list should not preclude an individual from raising concern about change through recognised channels.*

Remember, use only the space provided. Do not attach additional pages of evidence to the form.

Once you have completed the application form, sign and date the form and submit it to your appropriate line manager.

APPENDIX C

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PAYMENT SCHEME

APPLICATION FORM
Please complete this form clearly and legibly using black ink. You should complete this form in conjunction with the "Guidance Notes for Applicants".

Name:..

Role: ....

Employee Pay Number:..

Date at which you attained
competent level in your current role: ....

Date of enrolment:...

Note: Details of the criteria in respect of each national standard are contained in the *Guidance for Applicants* document.

CIRCULAR NJC/05/07 **22 February 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

1. *Circular NJC/3/07 advised authorities that agreement had been reached on the introduction of a Continual Professional Development (CPD) scheme subject to acceptance by the regulators of the respective pension schemes that CPD payments shall be pensionable and that whilst that confirmation was awaited authorities were encouraged to plan for a positive response.*

2. *Accordingly, a number of issues for clarification have since been raised:*

   a) *the positions of assessor and verifier – it is for the authority to determine the appropriate person in each case, and to advise employees accordingly;*

   b) *the application form – the application form is that attached to circular NJC/3/07;*

   c) *the inclusion of CPD payments in the calculation of overtime rates – overtime rates will not be affected by CPD payments;*

   d) *payments to emergency fire control staff – these* *employees will be treated in the same way as other uniformed employees i.e. a full-time member of staff will receive the full CPD payment, a part-time member of staff will receive a pro-rata payment;*

e) the guidance for applicants lists the national standards - there is an inconsistency between the bullet points contained in the preamble under 'Professional competence' and those later in the same document under the application and assessment process relating to 'Professional competence'. The latter are correct and a revised copy of the "CPD Guidance for applicants" which was attached as Appendix B to NJC Circular 03/07 is attached;

f) eligibility – an applicant will need to have completed the required period of service by 1st July each year in order to be eligible to apply. An applicant who will attain the service requirement between 1st March and 1st July may apply in the March just preceding the anniversary. Applications will only be accepted once a year, in March;

g) basis of the pro-rata calculation for retained duty system personnel – the comparison is based on hours actually worked compared to the 42 hours of a full-time employee, subject to the minimum 25% payment level as set out in the scheme.

3. As soon as the matter of pensionable status has been resolved, and agreement formally reached, authorities will be informed by circular.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER MATT WRACK
Joint Secretaries

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS
This guidance is designed to help you complete the application form for the continual professional development payment. In order to qualify for the payment, you will need to demonstrate continual professional development over and above that required at 'competent' level under each of the national standards.

High continual professional development is reached under each national standard by demonstrating that continual professional development against each of the criteria.
For each of the national standards you are required to provide evidence of how you have continually professional developed. Evidence, which should include specific examples where appropriate, will result from the acquisition of experience and knowledge. This may be acquired through day to day experience in the role, training courses, or a mixture of both.

You will be judged on the quality of the evidence not the length of the submission.

The national standards and their related criteria are as follows:

(i) **Professional competence**
- Effective organisation of work to meet the demands of your role
- Commitment to health and safety requirements
- Experience

(ii) **Commitment to the job**
- Commitment to achieving your Fire and Rescue Service's objectives
- Commitment to personal and professional development
- Commitment to achieving high levels of attendance

(iii) **Relations with the public and colleagues**
- Promoting equality, diversity and human rights in working practices
- Contributing to your Fire and Rescue Service's objectives, recognising the needs of all relevant communities
- Working as part of a team

(iv) **Willingness to learn and adjust to new circumstances**
- Making best use of available technology
- Demonstrating an openness to change

The Application Process
You will find attached to this guidance an application form for you to complete. Remember, the onus is on you to show how you have achieved continual professional development over and above that required at 'competent' under each of the national standards.

Care should be taken in completing this form to ensure fair and appropriate decisions are made. If you have any questions that are not covered in this guidance please talk to your line manager before submitting the application form.

For each national standard you are required to provide sufficient evidence to enable a fair assessment to be carried out. This does not necessarily mean that you must provide an example for every indicator under each standard.

Eligible employees may submit their applications by 1st March in the year in which they become eligible. Decisions will be notified by 1st June. To be eligible, applicants need to have served for five years following attainment of 'competent' level in your current role.

You are not required to prepare a portfolio of supporting evidence. Please do not attach additional pages to the form. Use only the space provided. If your line manager or the verifier requires additional supporting information, they will ask you for it.

From the second anniversary onwards the respective fire and rescue service will review and assess those in receipt of a Continual Professional Development payment to determine their on-going eligibility. Individuals will be notified of the outcome prior to 1 July each year.

The expectation is that non-renewal of the payment will be the exception.

The Assessment Process
A designated appropriate manager will assess your application. It will then be passed to a higher level manager who will act as a verifier for review and to determine whether or not payment should be made.

PERSONAL DETAILS
Please enter your name, role, employee pay number, and the date at which you attained 'competent' level in your current role.

National Standard (i): PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE
Under this national standard, you will need to demonstrate continual professional development and results appropriate for your role. Using only the box provided for your comments, set out clearly and concisely your achievements against the evidence for which managers and verifiers will generally be looking for. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Effective organisation of work to meet the demands of your role
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Make sure that all matters relating to the processing of information are carried out in a prompt, efficient manner and in accordance with policy and procedure.

Commitment to health and safety requirements
- A copy of your Fire and Rescue Service's health and safety requirements and risk assessment for your role may be obtained from your Fire and Rescue Service.

Experience
You should indicate the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding gained through experience, beyond that required for 'competence'.

National Standard (ii): COMMITMENT TO THE JOB
Under this national standard, you will need to show how you have, to the necessary standard, demonstrated commitment to your job in the role in which you have achieved competency and are currently in.

Using only the space provided, set out clearly and concisely how you have shown the sorts of achievements that assessors will be looking for. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Commitment to achieving your Fire and Rescue Service objectives
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Take personal responsibility for your actions;
- Are focused on achieving results;
- Demonstrate sound judgement;
- Identify, implement and monitor development activities to enhance your own performance.

Commitment to personal and professional development
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Keep yourself up to date with changes affecting your role;
- Assess your skills and identify potential personal development needs;
- Undertake continuous self-development activities;
- Obtain and utilise feedback from relevant people.

Commitment to achieving high levels of attendance
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Achieved a satisfactory level of attendance in accordance with local policy and/or targets. In making such a judgment Fire and Rescue Service's will wish to be mindful of any reasonable circumstance which may have impacted upon an individual's ability to achieve this, and the individual's usual attendance record.

National Standard (iii): RELATIONS WITH PUBLIC AND COLLEAGUES
Under this national standard, you will need to show, to the necessary standard, how you have achieved good relations with members of the public and with your colleagues. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Promoting equality, diversity and human rights in working practices
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Develop and maintain positive working relationships;
- Ensure that members of the public and your colleagues are treated fairly;
- Treat colleagues and members of the public with dignity and respect, including behaving in a way that demonstrates that you value difference and diversity in relation to gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, disability, age and nationality.

Contributing to your Fire and Rescue Service objectives, recognising the needs of all relevant communities
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- provide a service that is responsive and sympathetic and recognises the needs of all relevant communities

Working as part of a team
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Work co-operatively with team members and colleagues;
- Seek to ensure that team objectives and performance indicators are achieved;
- If you have management responsibility, supervise short and medium term objectives, develop plans, monitor work activities, and regularly assess the performance of teams and individuals

National Standard (iv): WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND ADJUST TO NEW CIRCUMSTANCES
Under this national standard, you will need to show how you have, to a high level of continual professional development, demonstrated a willingness to learn new skills and adjust to new circumstances. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Making best use of available technology
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Make best use of available technology in support of your role;

- Ensure correct operation and compliance with your Fire and Rescue Service policy and requirements.

Demonstrating an openness to change
You should indicate, *for example*, how you:
- Are adaptable and have a positive attitude towards change;
- Are flexible and can adapt to new ways;
- Understand the need for, and co-operate with, change suggesting changes to existing systems.
- If you have management responsibility, actively promote and lead your team positively to take change forward.

** Note: Providing evidence against this list should not preclude an individual from raising concern about change through recognised channels.*

Remember, use only the space provided. Do not attach additional pages of evidence to the form.

Once you have completed the application form, sign and date the form and submit it to your appropriate line manager.

National Standard (i) PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE
Summarise your achievements under each of the criteria in order to demonstrate your continual professional development in each area, using specific examples where appropriate:

Professional Competence
Assessor's comments on the summary provided by the applicant:

National Standard (ii) COMMITMENT TO THE JOB
Summarise your achievements under each of the criteria in order to demonstrate your continual professional development in each area, using specific examples where appropriate:

Commitment to the job
Assessor's comments on the summary provided by the applicant:

National Standard (iii) RELATIONS WITH PUBLIC AND COLLEAGUES
Summarise your achievements under each of the criteria in order to demonstrate your in each area, using s continual professional development specific examples where appropriate:

Relations with public and colleagues
Assessor's comments on the summary provided by the applicant:

National Standard (iv) WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND ADJUST TO NEW CIRCUMSTANCES
Summarise your achievements under the criteria in order to demonstrate your continual professional development in each area, using specific examples where appropriate:

Willingness to learn and adjust to new circumstances
Assessing officer's comments on the summary provided by the applicant:

I duly apply for the continual professional development payment

Signed...
(Applicant)

Date...

Assessor's Comments
The applicant has served for the minimum period required at the competent level for his/her current position

Yes ☐ No ☐

The summaries above are indicative of the applicant's performance. I confirm that the applicant has demonstrated sufficient continual professional development under

- Professional competence and results

  Yes ☐ No ☐

- Commitment to the job

  Yes ☐ No ☐

- Relations with the public and colleagues

  Yes ☐ No ☐

- Willingness to learn and adjust to new circumstances

  Yes ☐ No ☐

Delete as applicable:

I confirm that the applicant has demonstrated sufficient continual professional development and should be awarded a continual professional development payment.

or

I confirm that the applicant has not demonstrated sufficient continual professional development and should not be awarded a continual professional development payment.

Signed...

Role...

Date...

If your assessment indicates that the required level of high professional competence has not been achieved under one or more of the national standards, a separate sheet should be attached detailing the reasons why and areas for improvement.

Verifier's Comments
I have reviewed the Assessor's assessments

Yes ☐ No ☐

Based on the information provided, the applicant should receive the continual professional development payment

Yes ☐ No ☐

An applicant must have demonstrated high professional competence under each of the national standards to qualify for the payment.

Signed..

Role..

Date..

If the application is not approved, or if you have disagreed substantively with the assessment made by the assessor a separate sheet should be attached detailing the reasons why and, where appropriate, your comments on areas for improvement.

Discussions moved from the forum of the NJC to meetings with officials of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to discuss the issue of CPD pensionability of contributions made on long service pay (LSI) and the pensionability of CPD payments. This was because the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS), the New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) are all established by legal statute. Therefore, discussions were required with government before arrangements could be put in place to ensure that the new CPD payments would be pensionable.

An approach was made to Government pensions officials at the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) to ensure the payments would be pensionable. CLG officials raised concerns at this because of the fact that CPD payments may, in certain circumstances, be removed. This created a problem because of the final salary arrangements within the pension schemes. For example, under the FPS the pension is based on the best of the last three years of pensionable pay. This created the possibility that a member could pay contributions on CPD but not actually receive any benefit in terms of an increased pension. CLG officials reported that this concern only related to the FPS and NFPS. It did not relate to members of the LGPS (Control members) because that scheme already includes mechanisms for dealing with variations in pay.

The discussions were protracted. Following extensive lobbying by the FBU, Ministers agreed that the payments should be pensionable but that this would require amendments to the Firefighters Pension Schemes because of the problems identified. In recognition of the delay and the commitment of both sides to the agreement that had been reached in February 2007, the NJC on 15 June agreed that interim payments would be made to members who were paid LSI. This was reported in NJC Circular 09/07 (with clarification given in NJC Circular 13/07).

CIRCULAR NJC/09/07 **15 June 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

Continual Professional Development Scheme

1. *You will recall from circular NJC/3/07 that agreement was reached at the NJC meeting on 6 February 2007 on the introduction of a Continual Professional Development Scheme, subject to acceptance by the regulators of the respective pension schemes that Continual Professional Development payments shall be pensionable.*

2. *Communities and Local Government (CLG) advised the NJC that exceptionally on this occasion Ministers are prepared to agree that CPD payments should be pensionable under the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS), New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS) and the Local Government Pension scheme (LGPS). However, further consideration will need to be given to how to action the change.*

3. *The Fire Brigades Union indicated that they required time to consider the impact of the proposed new arrangements before committing to formal agreements on the introduction of the Continual Professional Development scheme.*

4. *Authorities were advised not to action the transitional payments contained in circular NJC/10/06 at that time. Those transitional payments had been agreed in recognition of the already delayed implementation date.*

5. *This further delay was considered by the National Joint Council at its meeting earlier today. As a gesture of goodwill, the Employers' Side proposed that a proportion of the first transitional payment, £100, should be paid in July (or as soon as administratively possible) to those currently in receipt of the long service increment. The remaining amounts (£65 and £206.25) will be paid as one payment of £271.25 as soon as formal agreement on the introduction of a CPD scheme has been reached.*

6. *This approach was agreed by the National Joint Council.*

7. *In accordance with the pro-rata arrangements contained in circular NJC/10/06, those who have become eligible for the long service increment since May of this year shall receive £82.50.*

8. *Further discussion is currently taking place between both sides of the NJC and CLG to resolve the issue of pensionability of CPD payments, and it is anticipated this matter will be resolved shortly. Authorities will be advised as soon as formal agreement on the introduction of the CPD scheme has been reached.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

CIRCULAR NJC/13/07 **18 June 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

CORRECTION TO CIRCULAR NJC/9/07
Paragraph 7 of circular NJC/09/07, issued on Friday 15 June 2007, is incorrect and should read:

7. *In accordance with the pro-rata arrangements contained in circular NJC/10/06, those who become eligible for the long service increment since May or June of this year shall receive £82.50 or £41.25 respectively.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

Following a series of further meetings between the Union, Employers and Government officials, were presented with proposals for addressing this issue.

It was proposed that CPD payments be pensionable by means of an Additional Pensions Benefit (APB). This was a new concept within the.FPS. The APB was not to be a separate pension. It was a part of the wider scheme and will be established under statute like the rest of the scheme. The APB would accumulate for all the time that a member receives CPD and would be reported on the Annual Pension Statement which all members of the schemes receive.

The Union had argued strongly with civil servants and directly with Ministers that this was extremely unfair to members who had been in receipt of LSI not to have their LSI recognised for pensionable purposes. As a result of the discussions CLG officials presented a proposal to introduce a further APB for members who had been in receipt of LSI. This would be based on the number of years that the employee had received LSI and would also include double accrual for years over 20 (as exists in the FPS).

After considering all factors, the Executive Council agreed that these proposals should go to members for consultation and a detailed "Firefighter special" was produced to assist this process.

The bulletin explained the proposals thus:

Additional Pension Benefits – how they will work
Under the proposed arrangements, pension contributions would be paid on CPD payments. This would include the employee and employer contributions as normal under the FPS or NFPS. The additional benefits would be paid with the rest of the pension and at the same time.

Pensionability of CPD would apply to all members of the pension schemes, there could be no election not to pay contributions on CPD payments.

Normal arrangements for commutation would apply to APB

The value of the APB would be determined at the end of each year for which CPD was received. Therefore the APB would accumulate as CPD was paid in each year.

The APB would also be increased in line with the Retail Price Index in accordance with usual pension rules.

Long Service Increment – another APB
As mentioned above, the FBU has highlighted the unfairness of the situation facing members who were in receipt of LSI but who may now retire after the payment has been phased out. The members who will benefit the most from the APB for CPD will be those who are able to accumulate the additional benefits for the longest time. This would obviously disadvantage those members who have been receiving LSI and paying pension contributions but who may have less opportunity to build up the APB for CPD.

Therefore, CLG has agreed a further Additional Pension Benefit which will take account of LSI. This will work in the following way:

A member who retires on or after 1October 2007 and had received LSI will receive an APB based on the following calculation:

$$\frac{A+(Bx2)}{60} \times \text{£}990$$

Where A = number of years pensionable service up to 30th June 2007 that exceeds 15 but is less than 20; and

B= the number of years pensionable service up to 30th June 2007 that exceeds 20 years but does not exceeds 30.

This APB is based on 60ths like the rest of the FPS and also includes double accrual for service above 20 years – as in the rest of the FPS.

Transitional Arrangements
We are aware that members may be concerned at the effect of the shift from the final salary arrangements for dealing with LSI to the new APB arrangements. Therefore, CLG proposals include protection arrangements.

Any member who retires on or before 1st October 2007 will be assumed to have received LSI for the previous year at the old rate of £990. You will note that this is to the advantage of members since LSI will have been completely removed from 30June 2007.

The FBU consultation confirmed that the membership, in consideration of all the facts, agreed that the pensionability proposals were acceptable. This was reflected at the Executive Council and subsequent NJC meeting on 28 September 2007 where the CPD agreement reached in February was fully ratified. This was expressed in NJC Circular 15/07:

CIRCULAR NJC/15/07 **28 September 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME
Background

2. *Circular NJC/3/07 advised authorities that agreement had been reached on the introduction of a Continual Professional Development (CPD) scheme subject to acceptance by the regulators of the respective pension schemes that CPD payments shall be pensionable and that whilst that confirmation was awaited authorities were encouraged to plan for a positive response.*

3. *Circular NCJ/5/07 updated authorities on the pension issue advising that Communities and Local Government (CLG) had informed the NJC that exceptionally on this occasion Ministers were prepared to agree that CPD payments should be pensionable under the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS), New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS) and the Local Government Pension scheme (LGPS). However, further consideration would need to be given to how to action the change.*

4. *The Fire Brigades Union indicated that they required time to consider the impact of the proposed new arrangements before committing to formal agreements on the introduction of the Continual Professional Development scheme.*

5. *In the interim, authorities were asked to release part of the transitional payment which had been detailed in circular NJC/10/06. That interim payment was £100 (or pro-rata, as appropriate).*

Formal agreement

6. *We write to advise you that at today's meeting of the NJC formal agreement was reached on introduction of the Continual Professional Development scheme with effect from 1 July 2007. Copies of the scheme, guidance, and application form are attached for ease of reference.*

Transitional payment

7. *In addition, further to paragraph 4 above, authorities should also now release the remainder of the full transitional payment, £271.25 (or pro-rata as identified in circular NJC/10/06, as appropriate). Where an individual's interim payment was £100 or less no further payment is required.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

Local arrangements were in many cases adopted locally on a transitional basis. The Executive Council noted during 2007 that many Brigade Managers in fire and rescue services felt that the CPD Scheme created an additional burden on them.

A4 Revised Allowances incl Car

There was a revision to car allowances in 2007 which were made known through NJC Circular 06/07

CIRCULAR NJC/06/07 **25 April 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

Revised car allowances

1. *The following revised allowances (Part E, paragraph 6 of the 6th Edition of the Scheme of Conditions of Service) apply with effect from 1st April 2007:*

	451-999cc	***1000-1199cc***	***1200-1450cc***
Essential Users			
Lump sum per annum	*£726*	*£819*	*£1,056*
Per mile up to 8500 miles	*32.0p*	*34.6p*	*43.4p*
Per mile over 8500 miles	*12.1p*	*12.1p*	*14.4p*
Casual Users			
Per mile up to 8500 miles	*40.5p*	*44.2p*	*55.8p*
Per mile over 8500 miles	*12.1p*	*12.1p*	*14.4p*
Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	*1.219p*	*1.244p*	*1.389p*

2. *Authorities are reminded that while, under the terms of Section E paragraph 6, the allowance payable shall be in accordance with such grading as the fire authority may approve, where an essential user who is conditioned to the flexible duty system actually uses a vehicle with an engine capacity in excess of 1199cc then the allowance payable shall be for the category 1200 to 1450cc.*

3. *Please ensure that all interested parties in your fire authorities (i.e. Finance departments) are aware of the new car allowances.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

A5 NJC Constitution Review

As a consequence of negotiations on the issue of Continual Professional Development Scheme and the extended period of payment of LSI in 2006-7, a revised Constitution of the NJC was agreed during 2007. NJC Circular was issued and explained that the revised Constitution was agreed in principle subject to satisfactory arrangements being put in place regarding pensionability of CPD and LSI payments. NJC Circular 04/07 was issued on the matter:

CIRCULAR NJC/04/07 **7 February 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

REVISED NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

1. *At yesterday's meeting of the National Joint Council (NJC) agreement was reached on a revised constitution for the National Joint Council which will take effect from the next meeting which is currently scheduled for 15 June 2007.*

2. *The main changes are:*
   - *a broadening of the responsibilities of the Independent Chair*
   - *a reduction in the number of representatives on each Side of the Council. The Employees' Side will reduce from twenty seven to fourteen and the Employers Side from thirty to fourteen.*
   - *the introduction of a Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB) with plenary powers to deal with issues relating to employees in Station Manager to Area Manager roles*
   - *the introduction of a mechanism for minority trade union representation. Exceptionally, on the introduction of these arrangements, the necessity for a minority union to reach the required threshold prior to recognition has been set aside. Membership of the Employees' Side will include a seat for the Retained Firefighters Union on the NJC and the Fire Officers Association on the MMNB from the date the revised constitution takes effect (reference paragraph 1 above). In both cases the independent audit will instead take place within three months of that date.*

3. *A copy of the revised constitution is **attached**.*

4. *It should be noted that agreement on the revised constitution is subject to a mutually satisfactory conclusion on the matter of the introduction of a Continual Professional Development scheme as set out in circular NJC/3/07.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL AND MIDDLE MANAGERS' NEGOTIATING BODY FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

Preamble

1. This document lays down the constitution of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (the NJC) and the Middle Managers' Negotiating Body (MMNB).

2. The NJC shall cover all uniformed employees of Fire and Rescue Services in the United Kingdom in the roles of Firefighter to Area Manager.

3. Neither the NJC nor MMNB shall reach agreement on any matter that also affects employees within the scope of the other body without first having referred that matter to the other body for consideration and received its conclusions.

4. The MMNB shall have plenary powers to deal with the pay and conditions of middle managers (who are defined as employees in the roles of Station Manager, Group Manager and Area Manager) within the framework of the NJC.

5. Agreements and/or decisions reached within either body do not have to be referred to the other for endorsement.

Functions

6. The function of the NJC and MMNB shall be to make arrangements to secure the largest measure of joint co-operation and agreement on conditions of service of those persons within its scope, and the settlement of differences between fire and rescue services and employees within their scope. It shall be permissible for the NJC and MMNB to take any appropriate action that falls within the foregoing definition.

   The term "conditions of service" shall be construed as including in particular:
   (i) roles, pay and allowances;
   (ii) hours of duty and leave;
   (iii) discipline arrangements;
   (iv) procedure for appeals against dismissal or disciplinary action (including dismissal on disciplinary grounds) other than questions of discipline affecting individuals;
   (v) welfare arrangements.

Independent Chair

7. There shall be an Independent Chair, who shall chair both the NJC and MMNB. The process of appointment of the Independent Chair will be agreed by the NJC. An Independent Chair shall be appointed to serve for a maximum term of three years, and may serve for a maximum of two terms.

8. The role of the Independent Chair shall be:
   - To ensure the effective and proper conduct of business, including making appropriate use of the Joint Secretaries. This will include ensuring proper communication between the NJC and MMNB.

- To consider with the Joint Secretaries whether issues should be considered in either the NJC or MMNB, or both.
- To report to the NJC or MMNB on agreements and/or decisions reached within the other body.
- To build consensus with a view to forging partnership.
- To play an active brokering role.
- To ensure there is an opportunity for minority voices to be heard and that such minority voices are briefed on developments.
- On behalf of the NJC and MMNB, to liaise with appropriate government departments and ministers, relaying positions and gaining feedback."
- To prepare an annual report (for approval by the NJC and MMNB) setting out the NJC's and MMNB's roles, activities and achievements.

9. The Independent Chair shall not have a vote.

Vice-Chair

10. Both the NJC and MMNB shall appoint a Vice-Chair annually from their respective memberships. The appointee shall alternate between the two sides. The Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Independent Chair at any meeting. In the absence of both the Independent Chair and Vice-Chair at any meeting, a Chair for that meeting shall be appointed from those members present.

Membership

11. The NJC shall consist of 28 members appointed by the representative bodies set out below:

Employers' representatives	
National Organisation of Employers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services	14
Employees' representatives	
Fire Brigades Union	13
Retained Firefighters Union	1

12. The MMNB shall consist of 28 members appointed by the representative bodies set out below:

Employers' representatives	
National Organisation of Employers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services	14
Employees' representatives	
Fire Brigades Union	13
Fire Officers Association	1

NOTE: The positions laid out in paragraphs 11 and 12 above are on establishment of the revised NJC and introduction of the MMNB. A subsequent count of minority trade union membership will ascertain the precise composition of both. This count will take place within three months of the introduction of this constitution. The process for the count will be agreed by the Joint Secretaries.

13. If any of the organisations referred to in paragraphs 11 or 12 above fails to appoint the number of representatives provided for by the constitution, such failure to appoint shall not invalidate any decisions reached.

14. In the event of any member of the NJC or MMNB being unable to attend any meeting, the organisation represented by that member shall be entitled to appoint another representative to attend as a substitute.

Changes in the composition of the Employees' Side

15. Any independent certified trade union represented on the NJC or MMNB, or any independent certificated trade union that is not represented, may initiate a review of the composition of the Employees' Side of either the NJC or MMNB. Following such a request the NJC will commission an independent audit of membership levels.

16. In order to gain recognition and a seat on the NJC or MMNB, any independent certified trade union must demonstrate, through an independent audit commissioned by the NJC, that it has in its membership at least one fourteenth of the number of employees covered by either the NJC or MMNB as appropriate.

17 In order to gain an additional seat, or to retain any seat, on the NJC or MMNB, a recognised trade union must demonstrate, through an independent audit commissioned by the NJC, that it has in its membership at least one fourteenth of the number of employees covered by either the NJC or MMNB as appropriate, in respect of each seat.

18. In the case of both the NJC and MMNB the total Employees' Side membership at any time shall not exceed 14.

19. The organisation initiating the review process shall meet all the relevant costs, including those of the independent audit.

20. No trade union can be the subject of a review within three years of it last being the subject of review.

Conduct of business

Committees

21. The NJC or MMNB may appoint from their own members such committees as they may consider necessary. Reports from such committees shall be submitted to the NJC and/or MMNB as appropriate.

Advisers

22. Either side of the NJC or MMNB may invite the attendance of any person whose special knowledge would be of assistance. Such persons would not have the power to vote.

Officers

23. Each side of the NJC and MMNB shall appoint a Secretary, who shall act as Joint Secretaries. The Employers' Side shall appoint the Employers' Side Secretary and the

Employees' Side shall appoint the Employees' Side Secretary. The Joint Secretaries may or may not be members of the NJC or MMNB. In the event that a Joint Secretary is a member, he or she shall have a vote. The Employers' Secretary shall also be appointed Treasurer to the NJC. The NJC may appoint an auditor.

Meetings

24. There shall be an annual meeting of the NJC and MMNB as soon as possible after 30th September each year. Ordinary meetings shall be held as often as may be necessary. The Independent Chair shall call a special meeting of the NJC and/or MMNB if so requested through the Joint Secretaries.

25. The requisition and notice summoning any special meeting shall state the nature of the business proposed to be transacted and no other matters shall be discussed. A special meeting shall take place within fourteen days after receipt of the requisition by the Independent Chair.

Voting

26. Voting on the NJC and MMNB shall be by show of hands or otherwise as determined. No resolution shall be regarded as carried unless it is approved by a majority of the members present on each side of the NJC or MMNB except where the resolution concerns an amendment to the constitution in which case the requirements of paragraph 33 below shall apply.

Quorum

27. The quorum of the NJC and MMNB (and any other committee established under the terms of paragraph 21 above) shall be a majority of the full representation on each Side. In the absence of a quorum the Independent Chair shall vacate the chair and the business then under consideration shall be the first business to be discussed either at the next ordinary meeting or, if the meeting was a special meeting, at a further special meeting to be held within fourteen days of the date of the first special meeting.

Notice of meetings

28. The notices of meetings of the NJC and MMNB shall provide full particulars of the business to be transacted and shall be sent to members at least seven days before the meeting. Any organisation represented on the NJC or MMNB shall be entitled to place items on the agenda for a meeting of that body.

Minutes

29. Within twenty-one days of any meeting of the NJC or MMNB (or any other committee established under the terms of paragraph 21 above) the Joint Secretaries shall send a copy of the minutes of the proceedings to each member of the relevant body, and these shall be ratified, subject to any amendment, at the next meeting of that body.

Settlement of differences

30. If the NJC or MMNB fails to reach agreement on any matter for which it has responsibility, that matter will be referred to ACAS for conciliation. Both sides will participate in the process of conciliation and act in good faith. Where conciliation fails to produce a settlement either side of the NJC may request arbitration through the services of ACAS. Following such a request, both sides shall fully participate. In such circumstances it follows that both sides have voluntarily agreed to take part in the arbitration process whenever it is invoked and have agreed in advance to be bound by the decision of the arbitrator.

31. In the event that either side has any doubt about whether or not the failure to agree relates to arbitrable issues, and this is not resolved through negotiation or conciliation, then the question of whether or not such issues are arbitrable, taking full account of all agreements between the sides will be put to an arbitrator provided by ACAS. The decision of the arbitrator on such an issue will be binding on both sides.

Finance

32. The expenses of the NJC and MMNB (including any other committee established under the terms of paragraph 21 above), but not any expenses incurred by members in attending meetings, shall be shared equally by the two sides.

Amendment to constitution

33. (i) This paragraph forms an integral part of the constitution and may itself be amended in accordance with the procedures set out in this paragraph.

(ii) Any proposal to amend this constitution must be circulated to members of the NJC at least three months before the meeting at which it is to be moved. No proposal to amend this constitution will be regarded as carried unless it has the support of at least two thirds of the members present and voting at the meeting at which it is moved.

Status

34. The status of this constitution is that of a collective agreement between representatives of fire and rescue authorities in the United Kingdom and representatives of the trade unions at paragraphs 11 and 12 above. As such it is intended to form a collective agreement as defined in Section 178 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

Satisfactory pensionability arrangements for CPD and LSI were subsequently made and as a consequence a revised Constitution was ratified at the NJC which took place on 28 September 2007 and was reported in NJC Circular 16/07. It is noteworthy that despite many years of the employers insisting that any change to the Constitution must include arrangements for representation of the RFU, the RFU declined the opportunity to take their seat at the NJC. Under the terms of the Constitution the RFU will not be able to apply for membership of the NJC for three years.

CIRCULAR NJC/16/07 **28 September 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

REVISED JOINT CONSTITUTION

1. *Circular NJC/4/07 advised authorities that agreement had been reached in principle on a revised constitution for the National Joint Council (NJC). However formal agreement was subject to a mutually satisfactory conclusion on the matter of the introduction of a Continual Professional Development (CPD) scheme.*

2. *We write to advise authorities that formal agreement to the revised constitution was agreed at today's NJC meeting with immediate effect. A copy of the revised constitution is attached for ease of reference.*

3. *The main changes are:*
   - *a broadening of the responsibilities of the Independent Chair*
   - *a reduction in the number of representatives on each Side of the Council. The Employees' Side will reduce from twenty seven to fourteen and the Employers Side from thirty to fourteen.*
   - *the introduction of a Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB) with plenary powers to deal with issues relating to employees in Station Manager to Area Manager roles*
   - *the introduction of a mechanism for minority trade union representation. Exceptionally, on the introduction of these arrangements, the necessity for a minority union to reach the required threshold prior to recognition has been set aside and an independent audit will instead take place within three months. (Following discussion with the fire service minority unions membership of the Employees' Side of the Middle Managers Negotiating Body will include a seat for the Fire Officers Association).*

4. *Today's meeting of the NJC was therefore held under the new constitution and was followed by the inaugural meeting of the Middle Managers Negotiating body (MMNB).*

5. *The meetings were chaired by Professor Monojit Chatterji, the newly appointed Independent Chair of both bodies. Professor Chatterji is a well established academic with an international profile and with significant public policy experience in the UK. He currently serves as an appointed member on the School Teachers Pay Review Body and the Scottish Solicitors Discipline Tribunal.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

On an interim basis a seat was allocated to the Fire Officers Association on the Middle Managers Negotiating Body which was formed with the revision to the Constitution. The retention of this seat, and the opportunity to gain further seats is subject to a count of the FOA membership holding the fire service roles of Station Manager to Area Manager inclusive. To retain a seat and/or to gain a further seat FOA will have to have in members in these roles which amount to one full fourteenth of the total number of posts in those roles in fire and rescue authorities. The count of FOA members according to this criteria is being undertaken by Popularis who were selected by both sides of the NJC. The outcome of this counting process will be known in 2008.

CIRCULAR NJC/17/07 **4 December 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

REVISED JOINT CONSTITUTION: INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF MEMBERSHIP LEVELS FOR THE FIRE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION (FOA).

1. *Authorities will be aware from NJC/16/07 that formal agreement to the revised constitution, which was agreed at the National Joint Council on the 28 September 2007, included the introduction of a mechanism for minority trade union representation on both the National Joint Council and the Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB).*

2. *Exceptionally, at the present time, the need to evidence the required threshold prior to recognition has been set aside in respect of the Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB) and the Fire Officers Association (FOA). Instead it was agreed that an independent audit would take place within three months of 28 September 2007.*

2. *The process for the independent audit has now been agreed by the Joint Secretaries and will be conducted by Popularis Ltd. To facilitate the process fire authorities must provide the independent scrutineer (Popularis) with the required data as detailed below.*

Background

3. *The NJC needs to determine the number of middle managers within the scope of the MMNB. These are defined as employees in the substantive roles of Station Manager, Group Manager and Area Manager. In order to ascertain the correct numbers of those employees the NJC requires each fire and rescue service to confirm details of substantive employees in each role. The information received from each fire and rescue service will determine the threshold levels for FOA to be entitled to one or more seats on the MMNB.*

4. *To this end a file is attached which all fire authorities must complete and return directly to the independent scrutineer. A similar file will be sent to FOA in order for them to undertake the same process. Once both completed files have been received by the independent scrutineer the two files will be compared in order to confirm matching data at the specified count date.*

Process

5. *The NJC has agreed that the official count date will be the **14th December 2007**, with returns back to the independent scrutineer no later than the **19th December 2007** at 10am. It is essential that these two dates are adhered to. Whilst the **14th December 2007** is the official count date Fire and Rescue services may find it easier to compile the data at any point up until the **14th December 2007**. However, should you take that approach an FRS must ensure that any necessary adjustments are made to the final file to reflect the accurate picture as at **14th December 2007** e.g. add permanent promotees or delete any leavers. There will be no extension to the deadline date of the **19th December 2007** at 10am.*

6. *An Excel file is attached which is the template to be used for the results. The information must be supplied in the order of the headings and no other fields must be added. The headings are as follows:*
   - *a. Title*
   - *b. Initials (Forename)*
   - *c. Surname*
   - *d-h. Address (one field per potential address line)*
   - *i. Postcode*
   - *j. Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)*
   - *k. Substantive Role**
   - *l. Confirmation that payment is made to FOA on behalf of the individual using check-off*
   - *m. The date that the last contribution was made to FOA.*

   ** Substantive Role: Only employees in the roles of Station Manager (SM), Group Manager (GM) and Area Manager (AM) are to be counted. <u>Temporary postholders at Station Manager level must not be included.</u>*

   The first three lines of the attached file have three dummy details inserted as examples.

7. *The independent scrutineer has requested that the file be sent back to them zipped and protected with a password. Please see below for more details about the password.*

   Each Fire and Rescue Service must send their completed file as follows:

   - *Email no later than 10am on the 19th December to: popularis@blueyonder.co.uk*
     (Please do not use this email address for any reason other than sending back the requested data. Any general queries about the process should be emailed to firequeries@lge.gov.uk)
   - *In the subject heading of the email to the independent scrutineer please type: **INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF MEMBERSHIP LEVELS FOR FOA (and add your Fire and Rescue Service in brackets)** and attach the completed zipped and password protected file. The covering email must include full contact details of the Fire and Rescue Service respondent but should not include the password.*
   - *The file's password must be forwarded to the scrutineer by fax - to fax number 0116 254 2258. On your fax please add the same title, **INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF MEMBERSHIP LEVELS FOR FOA (and add your Fire and Rescue Service in brackets)** and the password.*

8. *Thank you for your cooperation.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER MATT WRACK
Joint Secretaries

A6 Middle Managers' Negotiating Body (MMNB)

At the NJC meeting on 28 September 2007, and following the agreement on the revised Constitution, a meeting of the Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB) met for the first time.

The MMNB has 28 seats, with 14 on the Employers side, and 14 on the Employees side. The FBU has 13 seats, and FOA one seat, subject to an audit of FOA members in the employee "constituency" of the MMNB (Station Managers, Group Managers and Brigade Managers).

Following creation of the MMNB, the Union appointed the following representatives for 2007.

Brother Matt Wrack – Employees' Side Joint Secretary
Brother Mick Shaw – Chair of the Employees' Side
Brother Andy Dark
Brother Jack Ford
Brother Roddy Robertson
Brother Jim Barbour
Brother A McLean
Brother Mike Smith
Brother Dave Beverley
Brother Allan Guest
Brother Dave Cain
Brother Pan Poullais
Brother John Denvir

Brothers Bill Perrins and Ian Leahair attended meetings of the MMNB during 2007 as substitute members.

During 2007, the MMNB met on the following dates.

28 September 2007
13 December 2007

A7 Technical Advisory Panel

There were no items referred to the Technical Advisory Panel in 2007. However, as a result of the Professor Roy Lewis as Independent Chair wishing to vacate his position, the position of independent chair was advertised. After a joint selection process Professor John Gennard was appointed as the new Independent Chair of the Technical Advisory panel. An NJC Circular (01/07) was issued on the matter:

CIRCULAR NJC/01/07 **18 January 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL – APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXPERT

1. *We are writing to inform you that the NJC has appointed Professor John Gennard as the Independent Expert to Chair the Technical Advisory Panel. The appointment, which will be a three year appointment, will take place with immediate effect. (Section 4, Part A, Paragraphs 4-5 of the 6th Edition of the Scheme of Conditions of Service refers.)*

2. *John Gennard is presently Professor of Human Resource Management in the Department of Human Resource Management at the Strathclyde Business School at the University of Strathclyde. He has been a member of the ACAS panel of Arbitrators/Mediators for 25 Years. He has experience of arbitration and mediation in many industries including Electricity Supply, the Health Service, Local Authorities, Insurance, Printing, Further Education, Retail Distribution and Drinks manufacture.*

3. *He is currently Chairperson of the Arbitration Panel established to resolve differences between the Scottish Prison Service and its recognised unions. He has also acted as Independent Chair of Joint Management Employee Working Parties to reform collective bargaining arrangements, policies and procedures in a number of colleges and private organisations.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

A8 Death or Permanent Disablement arising from assault

In order to reflect changing legislation amendments were made to Section 7 of the Conditions of Service (Grey Book) at the NJC on 15th June 2007 which were reflected in NJC Circular 12/07.

CIRCULAR NJC/12/07 **15 June 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

DEATH OR PERMANENT DISABLEMENT ARISING FROM ASSAULT

1. *Section 7 of the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) contains a provision in respect of death or permanent disablement arising from assault.*

2. *The definition of 'dependents' contained in paragraph 9 requires updating as a consequence of the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003.*
3. *This matter was considered by the National Joint Council at its meeting today and a revised paragraph 9 agreed (changes shown in italics):*

   "9. Dependents' at paragraphs 6 and 7 above means:

   (1) A spouse or civil partner residing with the employee at the date of death or, if not residing, wholly or substantially supported by the employee.

   (2) A person who was living as the partner of ~~with~~ the deceased in the same household immediately prior to the date of death ~~as the husband or wife of the deceased~~

   (3) A child of the employee who has not attained the age of sixteen years at the time of death of the employed parent or guardian, or who has not attained the age of nineteen years and is following a course of full-time education, or is regarded as an apprentice as construed in the Firefighters Pension Scheme

   (4) Where they are wholly or substantially supported by the employee, a parent, brother or sister, or a son or daughter of an age in excess of the limits referred to in (3)

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

A9 Joint Protocol for Good Industrial Relations in the Fire and Rescue Service

At the meeting of the National Joint Council held on 15 June 2007, in recognition of problems being experienced within brigades, joint protocol was agreed to supplement the Local Negotiation and consultation procedures in Section 6 Part C of the Grey Book. It was agreed later in the year to present the Protocol at a Joint seminar in early 2008. An NJC Circular (08/07) was issued on the matter:

CIRCULAR NJC/08/07 **15 June 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

JOINT PROTOCOL FOR GOOD INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

1. *At its meeting earlier today, the National Joint Council agreed a protocol for good industrial relations in the fire and rescue service.*
2. *The NJC welcomes the valuable opportunity provided by the protocol to develop and improve upon industrial relations across the UK fire and rescue service.*
3. *As such both Sides expect all parties to adopt the principles and commitments contained therein, working together to ensure efficient and effective industrial relations.*
4. *A copy of the protocol is attached.*
5. *For clarity, this protocol is supplementary to the model consultation and negotiation procedures contained in Section 6 in the Scheme and Conditions of Service (Grey Book).*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

'WORKING TOGETHER'

A JOINT PROTOCOL FOR GOOD INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The National Joint Council (NJC) recognises that Fire and Rescue Service managers and trade union representatives must work together for the benefit of the service, its employees, and local communities. To this end the principles below will apply both at national and local level.

Principles

- Joint commitment to the success of the Organisation[1].
- Joint recognition of each others legitimate interests and responsibilities.
- Joint focus on the quality of working life
- Joint commitment to operating in a transparent manner
- Joint commitment to continuously improve industrial relations
- Joint commitment to reaching agreement within appropriate timescales
- Joint commitment to ongoing dialogue and exchange of views including face-to-face meetings
- Joint commitment to a 'no surprises' culture

In support of the above principles employer representatives[2] will:

- Engage trade union representatives early in consultation/negotiation (as appropriate) on issues which have workforce implications
- Share full and appropriate, and timely information e.g. on finance and employment matters to trade union representatives in order to enable effective consultation or negotiation to take place
- Take on board trade union views, providing full and frank feedback on how that process has influenced their subsequent position
- Put in place reasonable trade union facilities in accordance with statutory requirements and ACAS good practice guidance in order to support this inclusive approach

[1] The term "Organisation" refers to the NJC and/or local fire and rescue services, as appropriate

[2] The term "Employer representatives" refers to the Employers' Side of the NJC or local managers, as appropriate

Trade union representatives will:

- Take an active and constructive part in discussion at an early stage to facilitate reaching agreement within the appropriate timescale
- Provide a considered response to proposals, including alternative options, in accordance with a locally developed timescale or those contained in the national model procedures, as appropriate
- Share with managers relevant and appropriate information to assist discussions

All parties:

- Recognise their common interests and joint purpose in furthering the aims and objectives of the Organisation and in achieving reasonable solutions
- Will behave respectfully towards each other at all times
- Accept the need for joint consultation or negotiation in securing their objectives
- Will identify at the outset the appropriate timescale for discussion
- Respect the confidential nature of the, at times, sensitive information exchanged
- Actively work together to build trust and a mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities
- Ensure openness, honesty and transparency in communications
- Provide top level commitment to the principles outlined in this protocol
- Take a positive and constructive approach to industrial relations
- Commit to early discussion of emerging issues and to maintaining dialogue in order to ensure a 'no surprises' culture
- Commit to ensuring high quality outcomes
- Where appropriate, seek to agree public positions

Consultation and Negotiation

To assist all parties at local level the NJC has already agreed model consultation and negotiation procedures which are contained in the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) that promote joint solution seeking. Both procedures contain principles which all parties have agreed to adhere to. In the case of the consultation procedure parties at local level have agreed to identify and work within an appropriate timescale. In the case of the negotiation procedure timescales are set out which should be adhered to in order to ensure timely resolution. This is equally the case where alternative timescales have been jointly agreed at local level.

Both model procedures contain definitions of the circumstances in which they are to be used. In the case of consultation, matters shall be those that do not require collective agreement. In the case of negotiation, matters shall be those that do.

The simplest explanation of the difference between consultation and negotiation is that anything which is contractual and therefore needs the agreement of the individual employee or their trade union on their behalf is negotiation. Everything else is consultation.

The standard issues referred to in a person's contract are matters which require agreement to change and are therefore negotiable. Basically this covers remuneration, hours of work, leave entitlements and any other conditions of service. It may also cover local polices and procedures not specified within the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book), or NJC circulars, where they are within the individual's contract and the contract does not provide that the employer has the right to amend them from time to time without agreement. It may also include local practices that are not contained within an individual's contract but may be implied contractual terms. Everything else is consultation.

Both processes should be conducted with a view to reaching agreement and therefore should include an opportunity to consider alternative approaches to an issue. Where agreement cannot be reached both parties will consider further options but in doing so commit to taking unilateral action only as a means of last resort i.e. industrial action or imposition of change.

Both processes allow for joint agreement to external assistance should that prove necessary. Local parties are reminded of the benefit of such assistance and the joint commitment in the Grey Book to not unreasonably refuse such assistance. Such involvement must also be carried out in a timely manner with both parties committed to ensuring this is the case.

NJC assistance to local parties

The NJC Joint Secretaries clearly have a role in assisting dispute resolution at local level. Such issues need to be jointly referred, in writing, and the parties locally will need to demonstrate that consultation or negotiation processes have been exhausted at local level. The joint letter shall:

- Be agreed and signed by both local parties
- Contain a joint summary of the issue on which agreement has not been reached, evidence of discussion to date including the original proposal and any amendment made as a result of joint discussion at local level.
- Contain a concise statement from each party summarising their respective position.*

*This does not preclude each party subsequently providing unilateral briefings to their own Joint Secretary.
When requested to assist the Joint Secretaries will expect their respective parties to:

- Commit fully and with good intent to the process, maintaining an open mind, and whenever possible both parties present should have the authority to reach agreement.
- Ensure they are available for meetings, if and when required
- Respect the confidential nature of matters under discussion through the Joint Secretaries process

The NJC can also provide specific assistance in the form of the Technical Advisory Panel and the Resolution Advisory Panel, as appropriate. Both processes are contained in the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book). Where a matter is referred through either process all parties shall commit fully and with good intent to the process, ensuring they maintain an open mind, are available for meetings, and whenever possible both parties present should have the authority to reach an agreement.

Conclusion
All of the principles and commitments above are intended to encourage and support a joint approach to maintaining and improving upon good industrial relations within the fire and rescue service as a whole.

It is recognised that all parties have their part to play in ensuring that outcome is achieved.

CIRCULAR NJC/18/07 **13 December 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

WORKING TOGETHER: BETTER INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS FOR A BETTER FIRE SERVICE: 17 January 2008

1. *Authorities will be aware from NJC/08/07 that the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services agreed a protocol for good industrial relations in the fire and rescue service earlier in the year. A copy of the protocol is attached for ease of reference as Appendix A.*

2. *To acknowledge the importance of the protocol and to further encourage all parties to do all they can to build upon the protocol at local level, the National Joint Council will be holding a seminar in Central London on 17 January 2008 for representatives from fire and rescue services across the UK, including elected members, senior managers and trade union representatives.*

3. *The seminar will explore the background to the joint protocol; its purpose and what it is expected to achieve; as well as promote the benefits to the fire service and its employees to reduce the number of disputes at local level.*

4. *Whilst the final programme is still to be confirmed we are pleased that the key note speakers at the event will include Parmjit Dhanda MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State), Brendan Barber (General Secretary of the TUC), Sarah Messenger (Employers' Side Secretary of the NJC) and Matt Wrack (Employees' Side Secretary of the NJC). Invitations to participate in the event have also been extended to Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland Ministers with responsibility for fire service issues. The event will be chaired by the new Independent Chair of the National Joint Council, Professor Monojit Chatterji.*

5. *A provisional programme is attached at Appendix B.*

6. *Places at the event are limited therefore invitations are restricted as follows:*

   - *Employers' Side*
     Three management delegates per fire and rescue service/authority. Whilst this is most likely to be the Chair, Chief Fire Officer and Director of Human Resources a fire and rescue service may wish to consider instead inclusion of the individual responsible on a day to day basis for industrial relations matter. Fire and Rescue Service Management representatives should return the attached booking form to the Employers' Secretariat (at the Finance department address on the booking form) no later than 11 January 2008 with the appropriate booking fee.

   - *Employees' Side*
     175 places have been allocated to the Employees' Side. Potential delegates for both the Fire Brigades Union and the Fire Officers Association should email the Employees' Side Secretary no later than 11 January 2008 at office@fbu.org.uk putting Industrial Relations Seminar *in the title of the email to confirm their wish to attend.*

7. *In order that the UK fire service in general, and individual fire and rescue services, gain maximum benefit from this event it is important that each fire and rescue service is represented by both management and trade unions.*

8. *If you have any questions about this event, please email firequeries@lge.gov.uk – putting* Industrial Relations Seminar *in the title of your email.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

Working Together: Better Industrial Relations for a better Fire Service

17 January 2008
Provisional Programme

1.30pm	Registration
2.00pm	Seminar begins and is introduced by NJC's Independent Chair: Professor Monojit Chatterji
2.05pm	Address by Parmjit Dhanda MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State)
2.25pm	Address by Brendan Barber (General Secretary of the Trades Uion Congress)
2.45pm	Parmjit Dhanda and Brendan Barber – Question & Answer Session
3.00pm	Break for Refreshments
3.20pm	Joint address by Sarah Messenger (Employers' Side Secretary of the NJC) and Matt Wrack (Employees' Side Secretary of the NJC and General Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union)
4.00pm	Panel Q & A: questions to the panel – Professor Monojit Chatterji, Cllr Les Byrom (Employers' Side Chair) Mick Shaw (Vice-Chair of the NJC), Matt Wrack and Sarah Messenger
4.30pm	Seminar closes

Venue: Lecture Hall, Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, Westminster, London

A10 Protected Pay Points

The 2003 Pay and Conditions Agreement included pay protection points for those at Station Officer, Fire Control Officer, and Principal Fire Control Officer levels with a review to take place by July 2007.

The FBU position on the issue at negotiations was to give service length pay protection (included pay increases indexed to the pay rise for all members)for the affected individuals until they left their role or were promoted. The employers position was that whilst a pay rise would be applied in 2007 this should be followed by a pay rise in the following year followed by alignment to the assimilated pay points. Agreement could not be reached on the matter at the NJC on 15th June and it was agreed that the pay award would be applied for 2007 to be followed by further discussion to attempt to reach agreement on the matter. NJC Circular 10/07 was then issued.

CIRCULAR NJC/10/07 **15 June 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

PROTECTED PAY POINTS

1. *The 2003 Pay and Conditions Agreement introduced a competency related pay structure. As a consequence it was necessary to transfer employees from the pre-existing rank structure to the new role structure.*

2. *In most cases the pay assimilation from one to the other was straight-forward. However it did include protected pay points at Station Officer, Fire Control Officer, and Principal Fire Control Officer levels.*

3. *A number of the protected pay points are no longer relevant as employees on those points have subsequently moved through the scale and are now on the highest point.*

4. *The remaining points were subject to review by 1 July 2007:*

Station Officer	*Point L*
Fire Control Officer	*Point L*
Principal Fire Control Officer	*Point P*

5. *Whilst overall agreement on the outcome of the review was not reached at today's NJC meeting, members accepted that both Sides' proposals to resolve this matter suggested that salary levels should not be affected for 2007, other than to apply the annual pay award for 2007. This was agreed.*

6. *Starting immediately consideration will now be given to the position that will apply from 2008 onwards.*

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER *MATT WRACK*
Joint Secretaries

As a result of the failure to reach agreement through Joint Secretaries it was agreed to seek the assistance of ACAS in resolving the matter. An ACAS conciliation meeting was arranged for early 2008.

A11 RAP

During 2007 there were no referrals to the Resolution Advisory Panel.

B1 Introduction – responsibility of ministry

During 2007 the responsibility for the Fire and Rescue Service continued to lay with the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Practitioners' Forum and Business and Continuity Forum continued to meet during the year. The Union was represented on the Practitioners' Forum by the General Secretary, The TUC nominee on the Business and Continuity Forum is the FBU Assistant General Secretary Andy Dark.

B2 Arson Control Forum

The FBU continues to be represented on the Arson Control Forum. The FBU representative in 2007 was Allan Guest, Chair of the Officers National Committee.

B3 Building Research Establishment (BRE)

Building Research Establishment (BRE) – Research Committees

Fires in Enclosed Car Parks
The FBU is represented on this steering group by Russell Troth.

Fire Performance of Escape Stairs – Lead BRE Official – Tom Lennon
The FBU is represented on the steering group by Allan Guest who replaced Glyn Evans during 2007.

Emergency use of lifts or escalators for evacuation and Fire and Rescue Service operations
The FBU is represented on the steering group by Allan Guest who replaced Glyn Evans during 2007.

Residential Sprinkler installation practice to maximise functionality and to prevent possible fire penetration
The FBU was represented on this steering group by Phil Bowe.

FSH/21 – Fire Reaction and Fire Testing
Andy Dark was covering this Committee and its sub committees; this work has now been passed to Allan Guest.

B4 B.S.I.

Whilst there may not have been convened meetings, the FBU is represented on the following fire safety related BSI Committees as shown below. During 2007 Glyn Evans represented the FBU on a number of these committees until his retirement in May. Where the Committees have not met for some time the nominated person for notification for the recall of the committee is the Assistant General Secretary.

FSH/14 Fire Precautions in Buildings
The FBU representative is Bro. Allan Guest

FSH/14/-/-/1 Revise BS 5588-8:1999
The FBU representative is Bro. Allan Guest

FSH/14/-/-/2 Review DD 9999
The FBU representative is Bro. Allan Guest

FSH/14/1 Precautions Against Fire – Residential (and amendments)
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

FSH/14/2 Fire Precautions on Lifts
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

FSH/14/21 Code of Practice for Means of Escape
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

FSH/14/22 Code of Practice for Construction
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

FSH/14/23 Code of Practice of Fire Service Facilities
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

FSH/14/24 Code of Practice for Fire Safety Management
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

FSH/18 Fixed Fire Fighting Systems
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

FSH/18/11 Hose Reel Systems
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

FSH/21 Reaction to Fire Tests
The FBU representative is Bro. Allan Guest

FSH/21/7 Large & Intermediate Scale Tests
The FBU representative is Bro. Allan Guest

FSH/22/7 Test Procedures for Partitions and Walls
The FBU representative is Bro. Allan Guest

FSH/24 Fire Safety Engineering
The FBU representative is Bro. Allan Guest

FSH/24/6 Human Factors
The FBU representative is Bro. Allan Guest

Z/-/-/654 Fire Mailing List
The FBU representative is Bro. Andy Dark

B5 Centre of Excellence Sounding Board

The Union continued to be represented on the Centre of Excellence Sounding Board by John McGhee, National Officer until October 2007 when Sean Starbuck, National Officer took over this responsibility.

The Sounding Board who report directly to the Practitioners Forum (PF), worked throughout the year to create a consultation document, which they hoped all 'stakeholders' would engage with. The aim of this consultation was to address:

- The need for a Centre of Excellence
- The Vision of a Centre of Excellence
- What would a Centre of Excellence do and how would it deliver
- How would the Centre of Excellence be governed and where would it be located
- How would a Centre of Excellence be funded.

B6 Comprehensive Spending Review

The union produced a detailed submission, Funding the Fire Service of the Future, to the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review 07. CSR07 set out 5 major challenges:

- demographic and socio economic change, including a rise in the old age dependency ratio and rising expectations of public services;
- intensification of cross border economic competition, and a change in the balance of the world economy;
- innovation and technical diffusion, which will transform the way people live, and open up new possibilities for public services;
- continued global uncertainty with ongoing threats of international terrorism and conflicts;
- increasing pressures on natural resources and global climate.

In our submission we said the Fire and Rescue Service has a role in responding to all of these challenges. The first three have a direct impact on risk patterns at a local level. The fourth challenge is the driving force behind New Dimensions. The Service already has a major job in dealing with the natural global changes and will play an increasingly influential role in sustaining the environment – both of which are the subject of the fifth challenge.

Central to our submission was that the UK fire and rescue service is facing unprecedented challenges while maintaining a first class public service to the public. This is in the midst of ever increasing statutory responsibilities, expectations and demands placed on it by natural and man-made emergencies.

The work being undertaken by the fire and rescue service is expanding and this needs to be addressed in this round of the Comprehensive Spending Review. The fire and rescue service is the key responder to a wide range of emergencies and the FBU feels it is critical for the public's high degree of confidence in the service to be maintained and built upon.

While the number of some types of fires is dropping, the range of emergencies being attended is expanding and the scale of some of those emergencies is growing. We also made clear our concerns that firefighter safety was being put at risk by inadequate training.

We set out the minimum we would like to see from the 3-year Spending Review:

- an immediate end to cuts in personnel at a fire authority level;
- a cash injection of between £60 million and £100 million– over and above any general settlement – to be distributed fairly between fire authorities in recognition of the additional pressures and substantial cost increases they are now facing as a result of the changing weather patterns we are seeing already and to address the increased and on-going threats we are facing. This would work out at an average of between £1 million to £1.5 million for each fire and rescue authority
- a proper review of the medium to long-term impact of climate change on the fire service and the long-term requirements of the cost of preparedness for major terrorist incidents;
- Inject substantial amounts of fresh funding to aid recruitment to the retained duty system. There is a major shortage of these frontline firefighters and addressing this with appropriate funding should be a priority.

This was later followed up by a submission to the consultation on the Fire Service Provisional Grant Settlement CSR07 which set out Government fire service funding until the end of the 2011 financial year. There was a meeting with DCLG Minister John Healey MP and the civil servants responsible for fire service funding.

In the written submission and at the meeting the union set out our key concern that the levels of funding for some fire authorities could be catastrophic. The findings of a funding trend analysis carried out for the FBU by the Institute of Public Finance found that national Government's proportion of fire service funding has fallen from 80% to 70% since 1997.

In terms of the priorities set by local councillors, fire service funding had fallen from approximately 3% of all council spending in 1997 to approximately 2% in 2007.There is also a very strong perception among FBU members that those fire authorities which can set their own council tax pre-cept have consistently set increases lower than the pre-cept set by corresponding police authorities. Over time this has undoubtedly deprived fire authorities of significant sums of money.

Greater demands have been placed on the fire and rescue service, particularly with regard to providing a significant regional and national resilience capacity rather than being focussed only on providing a localised emergency response. The full revenue costs of this heavy burden have not been met, while we acknowledged that capital expenditure has been significant.

The service has developed into an all-round rescue service which extends well beyond fire. The service is, however, operating considerably under strength and there are shortages of personnel in many areas.

The number of wholetime firefighters in England has dropped from 32,033 in 1997 to 30,774 in 2006. And while the number of firefighters working retained duty has slightly increased, there remains a UK-wide shortfall of between 3,000 and 5,000 personnel.

There has been a significant increase in police and paramedic numbers, the other two services which would have to respond to major emergencies. The fire and rescue service is the only blue light service singled out for cuts to frontline personnel since 9/11.

We made clear that if the Government is under the impression that all is well in the fire service then they must be disabused of it immediately. The service is at full stretch now and has faced significant cuts in frontline personnel while expanding its role.

While fire deaths continue to fall in line with the established 30-year trend, firefighter deaths have hit a 30-year high. And five out of the last six years have been the worst on record for commercial and business losses through fire.

Further cuts will undermine the service's ability to respond to major incidents, and increase risk to the public, firefighters, property and the natural environment.

In terms of funding, it would also be absurd to suggest that every decision of Government has been wrong and every decision of the fire service correct or vice versa. But we also made clear our great disappointment at the outcomes of CSR07 for many FRAs and make clear our submission as part of the consultation was not our definitive or final response.

The submission, Funding the Fire Service of the Future, and the response to the consultation on the Provisional Grant Settlement were sent to chief officers, and the chairs of fire authorities and their finance departments.

B7 Corporate Manslaughter

Pre Corporate Manslaughter Act there existed, and still exists, the offence of manslaughter through gross negligence. The difficulty with this was identifying an individual defendant in an organisation, who was 'the controlling mind' and played the major part in a decision which led to a person's death. This was always difficult in large organisations such as fire authorities.

The rationale behind this new legislation was an attempt to hold employers liable, without the necessity of identifying the one individual with the "controlling mind" and to hold them to account for deaths at work due to gross negligence.

The new Act creates the offence of 'Corporate Manslaughter' which can only be brought against a company, not an individual. An individual can still only be sued under the existing common law (common law means not actual statute but comes about through legal precedent – decisions of judges).

The Act is a step forward. In particular it introduces the concept of corporate probation allowing the courts to supervise the health and safety of employers guilty of corporate manslaughter. However, there are numerous shortcomings, for example directors are still not accountable for breaches in its company's Health and Safety as part of their legal duties and there is no penalty of imprisonment. Compare with white collar crime where custodial sentences are available as a form of punishment (bear in mind a "company" cannot be imprisoned, only an individual can).

There is a section providing an emergency services exemption. This applies to the way in which fire authorities respond to emergency calls but does not cover employees or volunteers. So if a fire authority was grossly negligent in the way it dealt with an incident and this led to deaths, it could only be charged in respect of the deaths of firefighters (including volunteer firefighters), not in relation to deaths of members of the public.

As regards co-responding that exemption does not apply to medical treatment or decisions to provide or not provide medical treatment. It does apply to decisions about priorities. So gross negligence regarding a co-responding call or in relation to decisions to attend/not attend where there is a co-responding scheme would be corporate manslaughter by the fire authority. But decisions to prioritise one call over another could not result in a charge even if there is gross negligence.

There is also an exemption as regards allocation of public resources which fire authorities would try to invoke where firefighter fatalities arose at an incident due to cutbacks or failure to provide adequate emergency cover. It will be for the Courts to interpret how much they will allow public authorities to rely on this exemption

Therefore the new law is a starting point but needs to go further.

Specifically with a view to amending the current law to allow directors and other individuals within a company or public authority, who have various legal duties as a result of their roles, to be held accountable where a death occurs as a result of the gross negligence of the company/authority through their inadequate health and safety policies; and for there to be provision for custodial penalties for those individuals found guilty.

B8 Fire and Rescue Sector Vocational Standards Group (FRSVSG)

The FRSVSG is the only group in the UK which has a strategic role in the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and work based qualifications for the Fire and Rescue Sector, which includes Local Authority Fire & Rescue Services. Following the settlement of the 2002 pay claim, new role maps were agreed and included in the NJC Scheme of Conditions of Service. The role maps agreed were created using NOS available at that time. During 2007 there were proposals for Control Operators and Crew Managers National Occupational Standards. The Union consulted the CSNC and Regions on these proposals.

Following this consultation the Executive Council agreed that the work of the FRSVSG impacted on IPDS and NJC negotiations and that it should establish a group to coordinate this work. At the June Executive Council meeting a group consisting of;

- President
- General Secretary / Assistant General Secretary
- National Officer responsible for IPDS
- 2 Executive Council Members
- 1 Representative from ONC (which could be the EC member)
- 1 Representative from CSNC (which could be the EC member)
- 1 Representative from NRC (which could be the EC member)

This group is looking at all issues relating to workforce development.

A sub-group of the FRSVSG looking at a framework of vocational qualifications was established. The remit of this group was to look at what existing vocational qualifications are available to the Fire Sector and a process for looking at what future vocational qualifications could be supported and included on an approved framework list. The FBU took up a seat on the steering group looking at the criteria for inclusion on the framework list.

B9 Fire Safety

The FBU continues to be represented at a number of key forums dealing with fire safety and continues to campaign on key issues such as sprinkler provision and fire safer cigarettes.

B10 IPDS

The IPDS Project Board continued its work throughout 2007 and John McGhee National Officer represented the Union until October 2007 when Sean Starbuck National Officer took over this role.

The Project Board discussed many issues within the FRS relating to IPDS. Work carried on in relation to the application of IPDS for RDS staff. Tam Mitchell, Executive Council Member for Retained, took a seat at the group looking at IPDS for Retained Duty Systems. A questionnaire was sent to all FRA's on the 4th January 2007 by DCLG which was linked to Operational Assessment work. Considerable time was taken discussing the issue of updating role maps which the Union continually pointed out was the responsibility of the NJC.

Issues such as Personal Development Records, Incident Command Qualifications, Operational Assurance, and National Firefighter Selection, were dealt with by the Project Board throughout the year and the Executive Council received reports of the Board meetings.

The project Board has been considering an IPDS code of practice document. The agreed code of practice document will be available to all FRAs on line.

The final IPDS project Board meeting took place on 11th December 2007 and a transitional group will now manage issues that the Board dealt with until the Centre Of Excellence is established in 2009.

B11 Practitioners' Forum

The Practitioners' Forum met on five occasions during 2007. The union was represented by the General Secretary. In addition, Brother Trevor Shanahan attended on one occasion in order to introduce a paper on the FBU Skills for Life Strategy Document.

The Forum continued to operate primarily through various Task and Finish Groups and various officials of the FBU attended these meetings during the year.

Major issues discussed at the Practitioners' Forum during 2007 included:

- 10 year vision for Fire and Rescue Authorities
- National Firefighter Selection
- Centre of Excellence
- Buncefield Recommendations
- Retained Review Task and Finish Group
- Fire Gateway
- Skills for Life
- Equality and Diversity Draft Strategy

During the year the union also submitted a series of papers to the Forum for discussion and action. These were:

- Skills for Life
- Automatic Distress Signal units
- Retained duty systems – Establishments
- Review of the Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations 2005 and all regulations associated with the transportation of explosives.

Discussion around these and other papers highlighted an area of concern which was raised on several occasions by the union as well as by other members of the Forum. There is growing concern at the processes within the Fire and Rescue service for the issuing of operational guidance or for addressing concerns around other major issues (e.g. Buncefield). The union has questioned whether the Practitioners Forum is the best and most effective way to address such matters. This debate has continued into the discussion around the proposed Centre of Excellence and whether this proposal, with suitable safeguards, could provide a better way to address such issues.

B12 IRMPs

The FBU continues to be represented at the IRMP Steering Group Committee. The FBU continues to press the case for coherent and robust IRMP planning processes within fire and rescue services.

B13 Fire and Rescue Statistics User Group

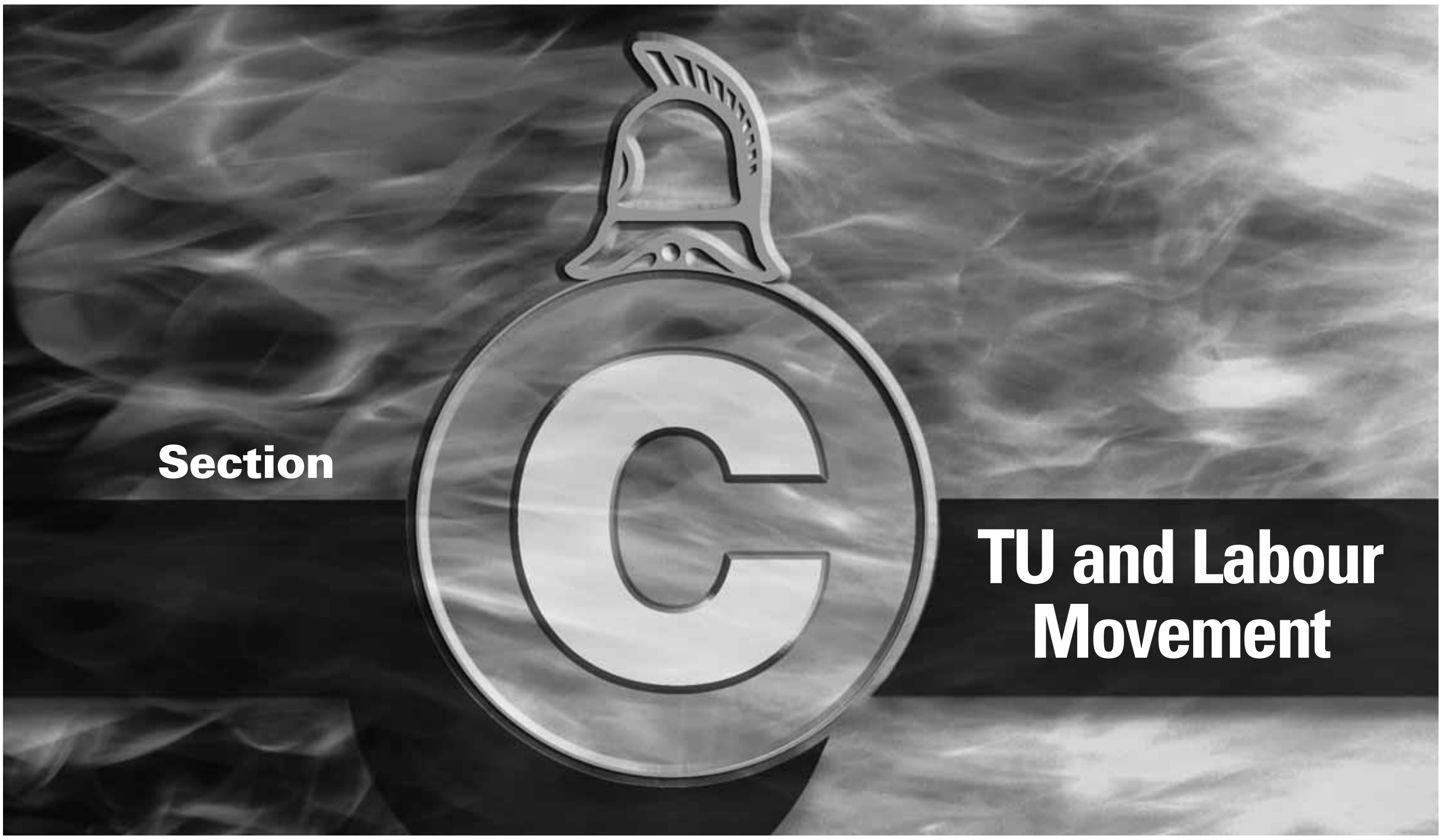
The FBU continues to be represented at the Fire and Rescue Statistics User Group. The FBU representatives in 2007 were, Glyn Evans FBU Fire Safety Adviser until his retirement when he was replaced by Dave Beverley, Secretary of the Officers National Committee.

B14 National Framework

The FBU was represented at meetings throughout the summer and autumn to discuss the content of the draft

National Framework document 2008-11 at meetings convened by CLG at their offices in London.

The draft National Framework was subsequently published in November 2007 for consultation.



C1 Introduction

The FBU remained very active in the Trade Union and Labour movement representing members both domestically and internationally in a number of forums during the year. The focus for our international work has been reviewed by the International Sub Committee and our resources targeted to initiatives where we can raise issues directly related to the fire and public services, and those where we can help others in need of assistance and support.

Delegates attended a wide variety of conferences including the TUC, Welsh TUC, STUC and ICTU in addition to international conferences.

Several campaigns have been supported by the FBU including those initiated or supported by the TUC such as the protection of public services from privatisation, the threat to public service pensions and the promotion of fire safe cigarettes.

We have seen a rise again this year in our parliamentary work and the representation of FBU members' interests within Parliament through parliamentary questions, lobbying and MP's briefings.

The Executive Council wish to record their thanks to the FBU Parliamentary Group for their support and assistance in 2007.

It is also most pleasing to record the re-election of the General Secretary onto the TUC General Council in 2007 at a time when some General Secretaries were voted off the General Council much to our disappointment.

C2 Affiliations

During 2007 the FBU maintained or established affiliations to the following organisations:

- Action for Southern Africa
- Amnesty International
- Anti-Slavery International
- Broken Rainbow LGBT Domestic Violence Service (UK)
- Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
- Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom
- Cuba Solidarity Campaign
- Dalit Solidarity Network (UK)
- Daycare Trust
- Defend Council Housing
- Disability Alliance
- European Federation of Public Service Unions
- Fabian Society
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Justice For Colombia
- Labour Against The War
- Labour Representation Committee
- Labour Research Department
- Liberty
- National Assembly Against Racism
- National Assembly of Women
- National Pensioners Convention
- NHS Support Federation
- One World Action
- Palestine Solidarity Campaign
- Public Services International
- STUC
- Searchlight
- Stamp Out Poverty
- Stop The War Coalition

- Trade Union Friends of Palestine
- Trades Union Congress
- TUC For Peace & Nuclear Disarmament
- Unite Against Fascism
- United Campaign
- United Campaign to Repeal Anti Trade Union Laws
- Venezuela Information Centre
- War On Want
- Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust

In addition to these the union made several donations to the labour movement and international campaigns and organisations, frequently to initiatives supported by work within regions, sections and the International Committee.

C3 IER

The Institute of Employment Rights which was established in February 1989 is an independent organisation acting as a focal point for the spread of new ideas in the field of labour law. In 1994 the Institute achieved charity status and the FBU continues to support the IER who have organised many courses and seminars attended by officials in 2007

The IER have gathered together an experienced and highly regarded team of lawyers, trade union officials and academics who together produce and advise on legal opinion both by the organisation of seminars and through the production of publications, several of which have been circulated to officials as appropriate.

The FBU and IER have built on our close working and continue to share a stand at the TUC each year which benefits both the IER and the FBU.

IER courses and seminars are well attended by members and recent seminars particularly in areas of Discrimination, Pensions and European Law have been well attended.

C4 International

The Executive Council's International Committee continued to meet throughout the year, having an overview of the union's international relations and setting priorities. The international work is divided into two broad areas: industrial matters, concerning relations with firefighter and other trade unions in other countries; and solidarity work, supporting movements campaigning for a fairer world in line with the FBU's policies and principles.

On industrial matters, the union continued to maintain relations with trade unions in the European Union representing firefighters, through the Firefighters' Network of the European Public Sector Unions organisation (EPSU). We also held a meeting in the UK with representatives from firefighter unions in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, where we discussed the possibility of arranging an international firefighters' conference in 2008. Discussions continue on that initiative. In addition we sent a delegation to the Centennial Congress of the Public Sector International trade union confederation (PSI) in Vienna.

On solidarity work, the Executive Council has agreed that, whilst encouraging officials to continue to support campaigns in which they have been involved, such as in Iraq and Palestine, as a relatively small union it makes sense to prioritise our activities in order to have the most impact. The region of the world where there is the most progressive developments in terms of challenging the neo-liberal Washington Consensus of privatisation and cuts in public services, is in Latin America and Cuba and that it is in campaigns from that part of the world that we will concentrate our efforts. The speaker from the Venezuelan trade union confederation at our 2007 Annual Conference received an enthusiastic response and we have agreed to try and work closely with the solidarity campaigns for that country in the coming year.

C5 Parliamentary Group

The FBU Parliamentary Group has grown in its second year to have a membership of over 40 Labour MPs, representing constituencies across all regions of England, and in Scotland and Wales.

The Group meets approximately every six to eight weeks while Parliament is sitting and has meetings in Portcullis House Westminster.

In the period covered by this report the group met on
12th June 2007,
18th July 2007,
14th November 2007,
11th December 2007, and
29th January 2008.

In June 2007, Gordon Brown took over from Tony Blair as Prime Minister and, in the subsequent Cabinet reshuffle, Angela Smith was replaced by Parmjit Dhanda as the Fire Services Minister.

The new Fire Services Minister, Parmjit Dhanda MP attended the Group meeting on 14th November 2007 to discuss the deaths of our members in Warwickshire, ill-health pensions, regional control centres, the new Centre of Excellence and the floods that occurred over the summer recess.

Throughout the year, the Group has reported on its activities to the FBU Executive, and supplied quarterly reports of the Group's work in Parliament. John McDonnell MP, FBU Parliamentary Group Secretary, was also due to address the

FBU Annual Conference in May 2007, but was unable due to the Labour Party leadership campaign.

Over the course of the year, written briefings have been distributed to MPs on the following issues:

- Appeal Court ruling on Firefighters and 999 calls
- CPD and Long Service Increment
- Fire Control Centres
- Firefighter Pensions
- Fire station cleaners
- Flooding incidents
- Racism in Fire Authorities
- Response Times
- Sprinkler systems in schools
- Urban Search and Rescue Teams

On 26th April 2007 over fifty FBU members attended a political education seminar in the House of Commons to learn more about the work of Parliament and of the FBU Parliamentary Group.

In addition John Mc Donnell has addressed meetings and rallies in support of FBU members and also spoke at our National School in November 2007 in Sheffield.

Within Parliament the Group tabled around one hundred written parliamentary questions in 2007/08 on a range of issues, including:

- Buncefield Oil Depot fire
- Centre of Excellence
- DCLG guidance to Fire Authorities
- FireControl Project
- Firefighter vacancies / understaffing
- FireLink Project
- Flooding
- Housing and key workers
- Insured fire losses
- Response times
- Sprinkler systems in schools
- Storage of explosives
- Use of consultants in DCLG

CAMPAIGNS

FireControl Project
One of the major campaigns, on which the Group has been campaigning and lobbying in Parliament, has been on the FireControl Project.

Our report into the FireControl Project by the Institute for Public Finance was circulated to all MPs. The report highlighted a number of safety and financial concerns about the project and following its publication the Group tabled EDM 805 ‘FireControl Project’ and wrote to all MPs requesting their support. The EDM called for an “independent assessment of the DCLG's final business case for the FireControl Project before any major decisions are made”. This EDM was supported by over 130 MPs.

Throughout the year, the Group has also tabled a series of written questions highlighting concerns about the staffing levels, call-handling capacity and the timetable for establishing regional control centres. This exposed a proposed 40% cut in the number of call-handling staff under regionalisation.

Following the decision at the end of 2007 of the Scottish Executive not to press ahead with the regionalisation of fire control centres in Scotland, in 2008 the Group will be campaigning to reverse the regionalisation project in England and Wales, and continue to highlight concerns about cost overruns, capacity and TUPE.

FireLink Project
The Group has also tabled a number of written questions to assist members and officials on various aspects of the FireLink Project, which replaces the radio communication system currently used by the Fire Service.

Over the course of the year, the Group has tabled a series of questions relating to the contractors, costs and health concerns relating to the project and its coordination with the FireControl Project.

Firefighter Pensions
In the period covered by this report the group has campaigned on two specific aspects of the Firefighter Pension Scheme

- ill-health pensions and
- pension arrangements for those retained under a second contract.

On the latter the Group has supported the union’s awareness campaign, to highlight concerns about the impact on firefighters injured while working under their second contract, and has tabled written parliamentary questions to the Department.

Towards the end of 2007, the Group was made aware of cases in which firefighters retired on ill-health grounds had had their pension payments stopped on the grounds that they could perform other duties, but with no available jobs thus leaving them without a pension or work.

The Group supported EDM 436 ‘Firefighters Pension Scheme’ which has gained the support of over fifty MPs. In January 2008, the Minister made a speech in Parliament announcing the establishment of a working party to look at the arrangements. The Group has also written to the Minister asking for a moratorium on further reassessments until after the working party has reported.

New Centre of Excellence / Guidance
In 2007, the Group tabled a number of written questions on currently valid guidance issued by the Department to Fire Authorities – following concerns expressed that there was no clear auditing of currently valid guidance.

The Group is also organising a meeting in Parliament with involvement from the FBU and DCLG on the development of best practice, and is aiming for this to take place in late spring / early summer 2008. This will involve debate about the functions of the proposed new Centre of Excellence.

Attacks on Firefighters
The Group also supported a private member's bill to toughen the law on obstructing emergency workers attending 999 incidents. The Bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament in 2006 and became law in 2007.

However, the issue of attacks on firefighters has not gone away, and the Group has continued to work with Head Office, Government and local MPs and Fire Authorities to highlight concerns. In 2007, the Group supported EDM 2075 'Attacks on Firefighters' which welcomed the introduction of the Emergency Workers (Obstruction) Act 2006 and highlighted a spate of attacks in the Halifax area.

Fire Statistics
To assist in the campaigns against cuts to local fire services through IRMPs, and to help the union refine its campaigning strategy, the Group has tabled more than fifty written parliamentary questions in the past year to garner statistics on various aspects of the work of firefighters.

The questions have been tabled by Group members including Celia Barlow, Michael Clapham, Andrew Dismore, David Drew, Kelvin Hopkins and John McDonnell and have covered topics including the number of firefighters and other emergency service workers, the number of different types of fire, fire deaths and response times.

The Executive Council would like to record their thanks to the Parliamentary Group for all their efforts in the past year much of which takes place away from the public gaze but is vital in the success we have achieved in Westminster for the benefit of all members.

C6 ICTU

The weather in the West of Ireland is often described as changeable and it did indeed fluctuate between heavy rain and very heavy rain, when between 3rd and 6th July 2007, more than 800 delegates, representing almost 1 million trade unionists on the island of Ireland, met in a bleak and wet Bundoran, Co Donegal for the Biennial Delegates Conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

A Delegation from Region 2 and FBU President Mick Shaw attended to represent the FBU.

The BDC considers issues relevant to workers in both Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland but of particular significance to FBU members in Region 2 was the Northern Ireland Debate on Wednesday morning opened by Peter Bunting, AGS of ICTU.

Peter called on the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive to by-pass the British Government's opt-out from the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, saying that it is simply unacceptable for workers in Northern Ireland to be denied the same protection as workers in the Republic of Ireland. He stated that "Here is a proposal for the Assemblies of Northern Ireland and Wales and the Parliament of Scotland. If Gordon Brown won't allow the Charter to enter through a vote at Westminster, let our local and accountable democracies act as the back door. Let our Assemblies vote for every dot and comma of the Charter, including and especially Article 28: "Workers have the right to take collective action to defend their interests, including strike action."

The Northern Ireland session was also addressed by Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness representing the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly, the first time a political figure of his status from Stormont ever addressed an ICTU conference in the Republic of Ireland.

Mr McGuinness pledged to work with all aspects of civil and political society to help build "a society which celebrates our diversity and is determined to provide a better future for all of our people."

"You as trade unionists have a major role to play", Mr McGuinness told the delegates alongside "all those who will help build our infrastructure and our economy."

The conference also addressed issues around the 'All Island Economy', energy and climate change.

Two key motions on Palestine from Derry and Belfast Trades Councils, on which the FBU is represented, were debated and received widespread support from delegates.

Conference concluded on Friday morning with an address by Patricia McKeown who has succeeded Peter McLoone as President.

C7 STUC 2007

The Congress was held at the Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow on 16th to 18th April 2007.

The FBU Delegation was:
- Mick Shaw: President
- Roddy Robertson: Scottish Regional Chair
- Ken Ross: Scottish Regional Secretary
- Gavin Barrie: Scottish Regional Treasurer
- John Docherty: Scottish Regional Official
- John Duffy: Tayside Brigade Chair
- Linda Shanahan: Fife Brigade Secretary

FBU Motions, which were carried, were on the subjects of Review of the Scottish Fire Services and Scottish Parliament Cross Party Sprinkler Forum. A third Motion on Lebanon was made part of a Composite Motion on the Middle East, which was also carried.

The Scottish Region held a Reception on the evening of the

17th April, which was very well attended.

As the Congress was being held a few weeks prior to the Scottish Parliament and Local Government Elections, it proved to be an excellent opportunity for officials to meet with numerous politicians.

The Scottish Region also sponsored a fringe meeting held by the Scotland Stop the War Coalition, which was chaired by Ken Ross, FBU Scottish Regional Secretary. The panel consisted of the Presidents of the PCS and the RMT, the Deputy Regional Secretary of T&G and Lynsey Germain, of the UK Stop the War Coalition. The meeting attracted almost 100 delegates and was the most successful fringe meeting of the Congress week.

Sister Linda Shanahan was re- elected to the General Council.

C8 TUC 2007

The 139th Annual Congress was held from the 10th – 13th September 2007 in Brighton.

The FBU's delegation was:

Matt Wrack
Mick Shaw
Alan McLean
Micky Nicholas
Tam McFarlane
Dona Feltham
Roddy Robertson

Our resolutions were:

FBU Motion – Venezuela

Congress congratulates the Venezuelan government on their achievements in using the country's resources for the benefit of the majority of its people.

The massive improvements which have been achieved, particularly in the fields of education, health care and land reform have the overwhelming support of the Venezuelan people.

Congress particularly welcomes the advances for workers and trade unionists including:

I. The announcement of the re-nationalisation of all privatised utilities,

II. The increase in the level of the minimum wage,

III. The announcement of a progressive reduction of the working week,

IV. The setting up of Workers' Councils in factories and workplaces.

Congress deplores the attempts of the US administration to meddle in the internal affairs of the Venezuelan people and to attempt to undermine these initiatives. Congress notes and supports the decision of the Venezuelan government not to renew the licence for private TV station RCTV which supported the military coup against the democratically elected government.

Congress resolves to:

a. Ensure information on the positive work of the Venezuelan government and the achievements it has made for the people of Venezuela is circulated widely;

b. Encourage affiliates to deliver support and assistance to independent trade union organisations in Venezuela; and

c. Encourage affiliates to consider twinning arrangements and other methods for promoting solidarity with Venezuelan trade unions.

An amendment from the Mineworkers Union was accepted

Paragraph 1, line 1 after 'Congress' insert: 'reaffirms its 2005 motion on Venezuela and"

In Sub-paragraph b), after Venezuela insert: "namely those organised under the umbrella of the UNT"

FBU Motion – Fires in high rise dwellings

Congress notes the findings of the Coroner's Inquest into the fatal fire at Harrow Court, Stevenage on 2nd February 2005 that claimed the lives of a resident and two Firefighters.

Congress notes the successes of the fire and rescue service in increasing public awareness of the dangers of fire and the need for home safety measures. However, this tragedy also highlights the particular danger, to both residents and to firefighters, of fires occurring in high rise buildings even where smoke detection systems are installed. Despite the progress in preventative community safety initiatives, Congress recognises that fires and other emergencies will continue to occur. When they do, the public and firefighters deserve the most effective emergency response possible. Therefore, community safety activities must be developed alongside the maintenance of an effective emergency intervention strategy and the training and equipment that support it.

Congress calls for Fire Services and other public authorities to work together with trade unions and tenants and residents groups to ensure:

I. Public awareness of the risks of using tea lights without appropriate holders;

II. Firefighters are provided with adequate opportunities for familiarisation visits to all high rise buildings;

III. Firefighters are provided with suitable realistic training for incidents in such premises;

IV. Systems to allow the rapid reporting of and repair to damaged dry rising mains;

V. Hard wired smoke alarm systems are provided wherever possible;

VI. Planning to ensure that adequate numbers of firefighters and fire engines are mobilised to fires in high rise buildings.

In addition to these resolutions an amendment from the FBU to a Unison motion on affordable housing was accepted by Unison, and a motion on childcare from the TUC Women's Conference was on the agenda. This motion originated from the FBU National Women's Committee.

Whilst the childcare motion was ultimately unsuccessful it did create a considerable debate on the matter of childcare and highlights the effectiveness of the role played by the FBU women's section in the Trade Union movement.

The FBU held a fringe meeting at Congress 2007 on deaths in high rise buildings and of the dangers of tea light candles.

There was also FBU involvement in several other fringe meetings including those of the POA, Hands off Venezuela, Cuba Solidarity, Defend Council Housing and War on Want. To promote the issues currently facing us we also shared an exhibition stand with the Institute of Employment Rights. The Executive Council wishes to thank Region 11 and 12 officials and members for their assistance in staffing the stand, Geoff Martin for his assistance in the campaign on deaths in high rise buildings and the fringe meeting, and all visiting officials throughout Congress for their input.

Full details of the congress including the verbatim report on FBU officials' contributions can be found at www.tuc.org.uk

C9 TUC Black Workers Conference 2007

The TUC Black Workers Conference 2007 was held in Bristol from April 20th – 22nd, and the theme was a commemorative conference to the Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans.

The 8 FBU delegates were joined by the newly elected President, Bro Mick Shaw, attending his first major event as the FBU President.

The FBU delegates were: Michael Nicholas; Samantha Samuels; Carl St Paul; Warren Simpson; Leroy Phillpotts; Dalton Powell; Patsy Griffiths; Garrett Brooks; and Brian Amos.

The FBU motion was on the Trade in Africans, and the legacy that has been left. Our motion called for the TUC through its affiliated Trade Unions to lobby the government to ensure the national curriculum is more reflective of the struggles and positive contribution of black people.

This motion was passed and chosen to be the Black TUC Conference motion to TUC Congress. This was the first time we in the FBU have had a motion taken to the TUC by the Black Workers Conference and which best encapsulated the feelings of all black workers. The motion went on to be moved by the B&EMM EC Member Michael Nicholas at Congress in Brighton and was carried live by both major TV channels.

We made many contacts at this Conference, and the contacts that stand out most are the members that we met at the Black LGBT fringe meeting that members of the FBU delegation attended. We were able to hear first hand the experiences of black LGBT members, which brought home to us some of the failures to address their issues by not just the mainstream trade union movement but by many black organised groups.

We left that meeting pledging to assist in as many ways as we can to raise the profile of organisations such as UK Black Pride, and to work with them to assist in representing our own black LGBT members.

There were some outstanding contributions at this conference, and in the vote of thanks Patsy Griffiths and Khi Rafe were highlighted for their memorable speeches.

The whole conference was moved by their contributions, so much in fact that we invited Khi to speak at the B&EMM School in 2007.

Congratulations to Michael Nicholas who was re-elected as the FBU representative on the TUC Race Relations Committee for another 12 months.

SCOTTISH BLACK TUC CONFERENCE 2007

The Scottish Black TUC Conference 2007 took place on 20th and 21st October 2007 in Perth, Scotland.

The FBU had 3 delegates attend – Warren Simpson; Leroy Phillpotts; and Alan Chau.

The FBU had 2 motions at this conference.

1. Calling on the Scottish Government to encourage Scottish Fire and Rescue Services to research and adopt best practice in positive action initiatives of the British Fire and Rescue Service;
2. Called on the Scottish Trade Union Movement to lobby the Scottish government to hold a commemorative event on the abolition of the trade in enslaved Africans.

C10 TUC LGBT Conference 2007

The conference was attended by 206 delegates from 31 affiliated unions, 13 observers and 60 visitors.

Eight delegates from the FBU attended and they were Stewart Brown, Patrick Carberry, Yannick Dubois, Peter Wilcox, Norm Perry, Kevin Gutherson, Patsy Griffith, and Alli Burrows.

The Chair of the TUC Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee, Maria Exall addressed the Conference on Thursday morning.

The Conference was addressed by Brendan Barber, General

Secretary of the TUC on Thursday morning followed by Angela Eagle MP.

Sir Trevor Phillips, Chair, Commission for Equality and Human Rights and Gareth Henry, Co-Chair of J-Flag, addressed the Conference on the Thursday afternoon.

On the final day of conference Barry Fitzpatrick, addressed delegates on the findings of the Sexual Orientation and Religion or Belief (SORB) project. The Conference was then addressed by Alison Shepherd, TUC President

The following resolutions were carried

- Creating a Positive Duty on Public Bodies
- LGBT Public Duty to Promote
- Breaches of Legislation
- Equality Legislation
- CEHR and LGBT issues
- EMERGENCY MOTION 2: STRENGTHENING THE FRAMEWORK FOR FAIRNESS
- LGBT Liberation
- Religion, Homophobia and Transphobia
- Trans Memorial Ribbon
- Census 2011
- Monitoring
- Monitoring sexuality in the Workplace
- Organising in the Gay Community
- Sharing Best Practice
- LGBT Portrayal in Broadcasting
- Education
- Promoting LGBT equality in the World Trade Union Movement
- Iraq
- Securing UN Resolution to Protect Human Rights of LGBT People Internationally
- Supporting LGBT Parents and Carers
- EMERGENCY MOTION 1 EASTERN BLOCK PRIDE EVENTS
- EMERGENCY MOTION 3 ATTACKS ON PRIDE MARCHES

The FBU Executive Council member representing G&L members was voted on to the LGBT/TUC committee for 2007/8, and gained the highest vote among delegates.

The Fire Brigades Union motion: Religious Intolerance to the 'LGBT Community', was moved by Fire Brigades' Union and seconded by University and College Union and was accepted by conference after some debate.

C11 Wales TUC 2007

The Wales TUC Annual Conference was held from the 23rd – 25th May 2007 at the North Wales Conference Centre, Llandudno.

The Fire Brigades Union delegation consisted of:

Grant Mayos-Regional Secretary
Chris Howells- Regional Official
Roger Curran-Brigade Chair, Mid and West Wales

Mike Smith-Executive Council Member Wales attended the morning session day one as an observer.

The FBU were unfortunately not re-elected onto the Wales TUC General Council this year.

There were no resolutions submitted to conference by FBU Wales.

Thompsons Solicitor Vaughan Gethin was elected as Wales TUC Vice President.

C12 Womens' TUC 2007

14th – 16th March
Scarborough

The FBU delegation stayed at the Mount Hotel Scarborough

The FBU delegation was:

Ruth Winters
Vicky Knight (NWC EC Member)
Kerry Baigent (NWC Secretary)
Dona Feltham (NWC Chair)
Sian Griffiths (NWC region 10)
Patsy Griffiths (G and L region 6)
Sue Offland (CSNC Secretary)

The following resolutions were passed by Conference. Women in Zimbabwe was the substantive motion and Childcare was our emergency motion.

WOMEN IN ZIMBABWE

Conference welcomes the TUC's long standing relations with the trade union movement in Zimbabwe, particularly the most informative visit from Tabitha Khumalo to Congress 2006.

We now recognise that there is much support and assistance required from affiliates to assist women in Zimbabwe, millions of whom, due to financial and political constraints, are without safe affordable sanitary products.

The lack of this most basic requirement leads, via improvised sanitary protection, to an increase in vaginal infections, infertility and depression. Drug shortages mean that treatment is either unaffordable or unavailable and domestic violence is increasing due to a lack of understanding and knowledge regarding the difference between STI's and vaginal infections.

The situation for Zimbabwean women is at crisis point.

Conference calls upon the TUC and its affiliates to:

i) write to the Zimbabwe Government via the Zimbabwe High Commission;

ii) lobby the UK Government to support the campaign;

iii) keep pressure on the TUC to take all possible steps to achieve the campaign's objectives;

iv) support the ACTSA campaign;

v) send donations to the sanitary appeal; and

vi) download and distribute "Dignity.Period!" information.

1. Childcare – FBU emergency motion
Conference deplores the decision of the General Council, reported to the TUC Womens Committee on the 19th January 2007, not to expand the current childcare provisions for conferences and events run by the TUC. We are appalled that this decision has been taken despite the overwhelming endorsement by delegates to the TUC Women's Conference 2006 to expand childcare provision.

The TUC Women's Committee have repeatedly made it clear that inadequate, inappropriate and unaffordable childcare is a huge barrier to parents and carers and in particular, to women's involvement in the trade union and labour movement.

We believe that childcare provision for conference hours solely, is certainly not adequate for delegates wishing to expand their knowledge and experience at any conference, e.g. fringe events or organised social events such as the International Women's Day rally this year, or simply to network and debate outside of session times.

Conference further deplores the General Councils decision which has based its conclusion not to expand childcare provision on the lack of commitment or response from affiliates during the recent childcare consultation. This Conference believes that the TUC should be a 'Leader' of best practice, not solely the provider of the 'average' of its affiliates.

Ruth Winters spoke at the Latin America fringe meeting.

Vicky Knight got re-elected onto the TUC Women's Committee

RDS Pensions – Update
The Employment Tribunal for final determination in this case (subject to appeal) was set from 12 to 16 November 2007 in Croydon, South London. Paul Woolstenholmes, Tam Mitchell and Sean Starbuck met with Richard Arthur (Thompsons) on 17th October 2007 to discuss any last minute issues prior to its commencement. The two outstanding issues were, firstly whether RDS firefighters do the same or broadly similar work as their whole-time colleagues and secondly whether there is a justified reason why there is a difference in treatment of RDS firefighters in relation to the exclusion from access to the FPS, additional pay for additional responsibilities and sick pay.

The legal team representing the union were Robin Allen QC, Martin Seaward, and Thompsons Solicitors.

FBU members and officials from regions 11 and 12 gave evidence showing that there was very little difference between the amount of non-operational duty work undertaken by whole-time firefighters and RDS firefighters.

Richard Arthur (Thompsons) gave a report back to the union in which he praised all the witnesses' evidence, in both content and presentation, and the commitment they had shown in this long running issue.

The Employment Tribunal overran the expected allotted time and three further days, 7th – 9th January 2008 were scheduled. On these days the Tribunal will hear the closing submissions. A decision from the Employment Tribunal is expected circa late March 2008.

Justice for Firefighter Pensions Campaign
On 4th September 2006 the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) issued circular (FPSC 11/2006). This circular, *guidance on the definition of 'regular firefighter'*, was challenged by the FBU at the Firefighters Pension Committee (FPC) held on 17th January 2007.

On 11th July 2007, following medical appeals on the issue of injury awards under the terms of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS), three retired FBU members were informed by the Fire Authority in London (LFEPA) that their pensions would cease. The three had already been awarded ill-health pensions and registered an appeal, to the level of disability awarded, as is their right under the Pension Scheme. The Board of Medical Referees, which hears appeals, concluded that the individuals were capable of performing some of the duties within the firefighter rolemap and should not therefore receive a pension. As a result of this, LFEPA concluded that they could no longer pay the ill-health pension and ceased pension payments in August 2007. This created a situation whereby the three retired members had no pension and had no job to return to.

Despite written protests from the FBU and representations made to the Firefighters' Pension Committee (FPC) the situation remained unchanged. The FBU, on the advice of Thompsons Solicitors, decided to challenge the decision by LEFPA by means of a judicial review.

On 20th September 2007 a circular (HOC20070510MW) was issued explaining the attack on the ill-health pension awards.

CIRCULAR: 2007HOC0510MW **20 September 2007**

TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

ILL-HEALTH RETIREMENT UNDER THE FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEME

A disgraceful attack on all FBU members
This circular is to draw attention to an extremely serious situation which has implications for the pension rights of all members.

In July three retired members were informed by the Fire Authority in London (LFEPA) that their pensions would cease.

This decision follows medical appeals on the issue of injury awards by the three under the terms of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). They had already been awarded ill-health pensions and registered an appeal as is their right under the Pension Scheme. The Board of Medical Referees which hears appeals concluded that the individuals were capable of performing some of the duties within the Firefighter Role Map and should not therefore receive a pension. As a result of this, LFEPA has concluded that they can no longer pay the ill-health pension. The three retired members were informed that their pensions would cease in August. That has now happened.

This has created an unprecedented situation where three members have been retired from service – by a decision of the Fire Authority. They have now had their pension stopped and are now without work and without a pension.

This is an utterly disgraceful way to treat former employees of the Fire and Rescue Service and I have already made our views known to LFEPA. The Executive Council discussed the issue at a meeting this week.

Steps are already underway to challenge the decision by means of a judicial review of the decision made by LFEPA.

Implications of this case – a threat to all
The decision of the Board of Medical Referees in this case was based upon guidance provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) in relation to ill-health retirements under the FPS.

This guidance follows changes to the Scheme which re-defined the definition of a Firefighter. The aim of this change – when introduced – was to allow more flexibility and to allow the possibility of re-deployment in cases where a member could be found other suitable work within the Service but could not continue in an operational role.

*The initial guidance from ODPM (**FSC 30/2004**) included the following phrase:*

> *If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevant and the person may be retired with an ill-health award.*

*Subsequently, this guidance has been amended in **FPS Circular 11/2006** (4th September 2006) and the key phrase above has been removed.*

The two versions of ODPM/CLG guidance in relation to redeployment/retirement are included below. I have highlighted the important phrases.

2004 Guidance
*Eligibility for full membership of the FPS is limited to regular firefighters only. The definition of "regular firefighter" includes a requirement to engage in firefighting. This remains a term of eligibility for joining the FPS. However, the definition has been amended to allow a firefighter who subsequently becomes permanently disabled for firefighting while remaining fit for other related duties to continue as a member of the FPS. This is on condition that there has been no break in service. Consequently, if a FRA is of the view that the retention of a firefighter would be of value to the service, redeployment to other duties, as appropriate to the role of a firefighter, should be considered and would be allowable under FPS rules. **If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevant and the person may be retired with an ill-health award.***

2006 Guidance
*Eligibility for full membership of the FPS is limited to regular firefighters only. The definition of "regular firefighter" includes a requirement to engage in firefighting and to perform other duties as appropriate to his role as a firefighter (other than, or in addition to, engaging in firefighting). **The test in assessing whether a regular firefighter ought to retire on the grounds that he is permanently disabled under Rule A15 is whether he is permanently disabled for firefighting and for performing other duties appropriate to the role.***

This situation now threatens all FPS members

Recent CLG advice issued to IQMP's
CLG have recently issued advice to the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioners appointed under the Scheme (FPSC 8/2007, 5 September 2007 – Appendix C). This includes the following section (my emphasis):

1. *A firefighter is permanently disabled if he/she is medically unfit to carry out all the duties expected of him/her as listed in the role map for his/her role (rank). **Provided the member can carry out <u>one</u> of the duties of the role he/she cannot be permanently unfit.** The decision about permanent disablement will be specific to the role of the firefighter, so it is important for the IQMP to be familiar with the different requirements of the various roles within the Fire and Rescue Service*

This advice applies the same logic as the advice already issued to the Boards of Referees. However, since this is now issued to IQMP's, it will apply at the point at which retirement is considered rather than simply in cases where an appeal is made. Therefore, unless this approach is challenged, it will rapidly affect large number of members who would have previously been medically retired.

Conclusion
The situation facing these members has arisen as a result of the revision of the guidance issued by CLG and the use of this guidance by the Board of Medical Referees. We are aware that

as a result of the 2004 changes in particular, and of the introduction of a stricter regime in various forms, ill-health and injury retirements have become far more rare in the past few years as some members have been redeployed to lighter duties within their Role Maps. The potential result of this change is that ill-health and injury retirements will become extremely unlikely, in fact almost impossible. Members unfit for duty will face being dismissed on grounds of capability rather than being redeployed – including members seriously injured on duty.

The Executive Council has discussed this case in the past few days and has agreed a campaign which will involve legal and political challenges to the decisions of both CLG and LFEPA. All members are urged to give urgent consideration to the issues raised and a further circular will outline the possibilities of an industrial response from the Union to this disgraceful attack on our pension rights.

Best wishes

Yours fraternally,

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

The decision made by the Board of Medical Referees in these cases was based upon new guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) in September 2006, which redefined the definition of a 'firefighter' removing a key phrase from the 2004 guidance to Independent Qualified Medical Practitioners (IQMPs). The removal of the phrase;

> *'If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevant and the person may be retired with an ill-health award'*

in the 2006 guidance and the further advice given by CLG to IQMPs in September 2007;

> *'A firefighter is permanently disabled if he/she is medically unfit to carry out all the duties expected of him/her as listed in the role map for his/her role (rank).* ***Provided the member can carry out one of the duties of the role he/she cannot be permanently unfit.*** *The decision about permanent disablement will be specific to the role of the firefighter, so it is important for the IQMP to be familiar with the different requirements of the various roles within the Fire and Rescue Service'*

would make the chances of ill-health and injury retirements almost impossible and the possibility of being faced with a capability dismissal a reality.

On 24th September 2007 Matt Wrack wrote to the Minister for Fire, Parmjit Dhanda, and the Minister for State, John Healey, outlining a 'number of very significant concerns following a recent pensions case relating to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme'. The letter included the chain of events to date and included the document – Ill-Health Retirement-Chronology of ODPM/CLG Misrepresentations.

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24 September 2007

Mr P S Dhanda MP – Minister for Fire
Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Dear Parmjit

As you will be aware the Fire Brigades Union has a number of very significant concerns regarding a recent pensions case related to the Firefighters Pension Scheme.

In July three retired members of the FBU were informed by the Fire Authority in London (LFEPA) that their pensions would cease.

This decision follows medical appeals on the issue of injury awards by the three under the terms of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). They had already been awarded ill-health pensions and registered an appeal as is their right under the Pension Scheme. The Board of Medical Referees which hears appeals concluded that the individuals were capable of performing some of the duties within the Firefighter Role Map and should not therefore receive a pension. As a result of this, LFEPA has concluded that they can no longer pay the ill-health pension. The three retired members were informed that their pensions would cease in August. That has now happened.

This has created an unprecedented situation where three members have been retired from service – by a decision of the Fire Authority. They have now had their pension stopped and are now without work and without a pension. I am sure you will understand that the Union cannot accept that this is an appropriate way to treat former Firefighters. I am sure you will appreciate the level of anger which this decision has caused among FBU members.

CLG Guidance on ill-health retirements
The decision of the Board of Medical Referees in this case was based upon guidance provided by CLG in relation to ill-health retirements under the FPS. For your assistance I have attached an appendix containing a chronology relating to these issues.

This guidance follows changes to the Scheme which altered the definition of a Firefighter. The aim of this change – when introduced – was to allow more flexibility and to allow the possibility of re-deployment in cases where a member could be found other suitable work within the Service but could not continue in an operational role.

*The initial guidance from ODPM (**FSC 30/2004**) included the following phrase:*

> *If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevant and the person may be retired with an ill-health award.*

Subsequently, this guidance has been amended in FPS Circular 11/2006 (4th September 2006) and the key phrase above has been removed.

Extracts from the two versions of ODPM/CLG guidance in relation to redeployment/retirement are included below (my emphasis).

2004 Guidance
Eligibility for full membership of the FPS is limited to regular firefighters only. The definition of "regular firefighter" includes a requirement to engage in firefighting. This remains a term of eligibility for joining the FPS. However, the definition has been amended to allow a firefighter who subsequently becomes permanently disabled for firefighting while remaining fit for other related duties to continue as a member of the FPS. This is on condition that there has been no break in service. Consequently, if a FRA is of the view that the retention of a firefighter would be of value to the service, redeployment to other duties, as appropriate to the role of a firefighter, should be considered and would be allowable under FPS rules. **If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevant and the person may be retired with an ill-health award.**

2006 Guidance
Eligibility for full membership of the FPS is limited to regular firefighters only. The definition of "regular firefighter" includes a requirement to engage in firefighting and to perform other duties as appropriate to his role as a firefighter (other than, or in addition to, engaging in firefighting). **The test in assessing whether a regular firefighter ought to retire on the grounds that he is permanently disabled under Rule A15 is whether he is permanently disabled for firefighting and for performing other duties appropriate to the role.**

Recent CLG advice issued to IQMP's
It is clear from the extracts above that CLG have re-written the guidance to the detriment of members of the Pension Scheme and in a clear departure from the position outlined in briefings given to Parliament at the time the Scheme was amended.

CLG have recently issued advice to the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioners appointed under the Scheme (FPSC 8/2007, 5 September 2007). The effect of this circular will be to apply this same logic to all cases where a medical retirement would be considered. This advice includes the following section (my emphasis):

3.16 A firefighter is permanently disabled if he/she is medically unfit to carry out all the duties expected of him/her as listed in the role map for his/her role (rank). **Provided the member can carry out one of the duties of the role he/she cannot be permanently unfit.** The decision about permanent disablement will be specific to the role of the firefighter, so it is important for the IQMP to be familiar with the different requirements of the various roles within the Fire and Rescue Service.

It is difficult to imagine circumstances in which an individual could not perform **one** of the duties of the role. The effect of this guidance will therefore be to end ill-health retirement under the FPS and NFPS. That was clearly not the intent of the changes made to the Statutory Instrument in 2004.

The aim of the original change to the Scheme was to allow greater flexibility into the Scheme by allowing re-deployment to non-operational duties if this was appropriate. However, under the new guidance a pension will not be paid even if no such job exists. The effect of these changes will be to place Firefighters in limbo. They will not be able to continue in their profession due to ill-health. They will not be entitled to a pension. They will also not be guaranteed any employment since there are few, if any, such (non-operational) jobs in existence within the Fire and Rescue Service.

I hope that this explains the concerns of the FBU in relation to this matter and I am sure that you will now appreciate the level of anger which has been created by this situation. Members who have paid a very high level of contribution (11%) to allow for the possibility of early retirement due to ill-health are now facing a future of poverty as a result of guidance issued by CLG.

I know that this was not the intention when Parliament agreed the changes to the Scheme in 2004. This matter could be resolved relatively easily by a revision of the CLG guidance and a return to the position which existed immediately following the change in 2004.

I am sure you appreciate the urgency of this situation and I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this matter with you at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

John Healey MP
Peter Betts
Martin Hill
Terry Crossley

ILL HEALTH RETIREMENT – CHRONOLOGY OF ODPM/CLG MISREPRESENTATIONS

4 May 1999
Lockwood/McCalman Judgment in the High Court confirming that members permanently unfit for operational duties who are re-deployed to non-operational duties are thereby retired on grounds of ill health and entitled to an ill health pension (and an injury award if due to service). Based largely on the definition of 'regular firefighter' which determines those who can join and remain in the scheme.

9 May 2000
PSC(00)3 issued by Home Office to members of the Pensions

Sub-Committee (PSC) and others listed. To be discussed at PSC on 4th October 2000.

The following key questions are identified:-

(i) The definition of "regular firefighter" so that it includes whole and part-time firefighters. The scope of the definition in the 1992 Pension Scheme Order was limited by the decision of the High Court in the cases of Lockwood and McCalman. It is for consideration whether any amended definition should provide for entry to the Pension Scheme only for those appointed "on terms under which he/she is or may be required to engage in firefighting" but thereafter should permit retention of the services of a firefighter on non-operational duties at the discretion of the Chief Fire Officer (ie. to restore the position to what it was assumed to be before the Lockwood/McCalman decisions). Amendment to Rule A4 may be appropriate as an alternative to amendment to the Schedule 1 definition to allow a person originally appointed on a firefighter contract but who may no longer be called upon to perform such duties.

Recommendation 19 of the report "Fit for Duty? Seeking a Healthier fire service" deals also with the need to remove the global requirement for operational fitness and substitute a role-related medical requirement.

30 June 2000
Lockwood/McCalman Judgment in the Court of Appeal refusing the appeal and upholding the High Court Judgment.

17 July 2003
ODPM issues FSC 9/2003 opening consultation on a number of amendments to the FPS including an amendment to the definition of 'regular firefighter'.

The introduction confirmed the proposals included:

> *A change in the definition of firefighter allowing people to remain in the pension scheme if they undertake roles other than fire fighting. At present, a firefighter must be fit to engage in fire fighting to stay in the scheme. This has been a barrier to the retention of those firefighters who are able to offer other skills to the service after an earlier career involving fire fighting. This change will not affect a firefighter's conditions of service; the aim is not to retain people who are unfit for all operational duties. It is designed to enable an employer to continue to draw on the experience of trained firefighters, who may no longer undertake fire fighting duties and enable firefighters to stay in the scheme and receive the benefits that it offers.*

The proposal was consistent with this:

> *Definition of "regular firefighter" – To amend the definition or "Regular Firefighter` to include: wholetime and part-time regular firefighters; and persons performing roles appropriate to their ranks, which may no longer include engaging in firefighting, so that they may continue as members of the FPS.*

30 September 2003
Consultation ends

Early 2004
Fire Service Circular 14/2004. Date not specified on the circular but it is clear from the contents that it pre-dates June 2004.

This is the ODPM response to the consultation attaching a final draft and explanatory note. Consistent with the 2003 consultation, the explanatory note refers to the changes to the FPS including:

A change in the definition of firefighter allowing people to remain in the pension scheme if they undertake roles other than fire fighting. At present, a firefighter no longer engaged in full operational duties is unable to remain in the scheme.

28 July 2004
Statutory Instrument making the amendment laid before Parliament. The explanatory memorandum includes:

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

7. Policy background

7.1 Changes to the Firemen's Pension Scheme (the "FPS") are needed to meet commitments made in the White Paper "Our Fire and Rescue Service" (Cm 5808) in relation to ill-health retirement. These changes are as follows:

> *To broaden the definition of "firefighter" to allow a firefighter, who is no longer fit enough to engage in operational duties, to remain in the FPS rather than be retired with an ill-health pension. Such firefighters could be deployed on a range of other duties, including community safety. The current definition is one of the causes of the high level of ill-health retirements amongst firefighters.*

7.4 All amendments have been the subject of consultation in accordance with section 26(6) of the Fire Services Act 1947. In addition, regular updates have been given to scheme members and information has been posted on the ODPM website.

8. Impact

8.2 The impact on the public sector is that it will increase the flexibility available to fire and rescue authorities to employ regular firefighters on part-time duties, and allow them to retain in service staff who, whilst not fit for operational duties, are capable of doing other appropriate work. There are potential savings in costs as the amendments will help fire and rescue services improve their management of ill-health retirements and will enable also the retention of trained and experienced staff who wish to work part-time rather than whole-time.

July/September 2004
Fire Service Circular 30/2004. Undated but the contents confirm this was issued after 28 July 2004 and before 13 September 2004. The circular includes:

The Firemen's Pension Scheme (Amendment) Order 2004 was laid before Parliament on 28th July and will come in to force on 13th September 2004. This circular provides background, details of the amendments and advice and guidance on implementation which will need to be actioned by Fire and Rescue Authorities and their human resources and pension scheme administrators .

The key changes include:

A change in the definition of firefighter allowing members who are unfit for operational firefighting duties to remain in the pension scheme if they undertake roles other than fighting fires provided there is no break in continuity of appointment. At present, a firefighter who is permanently disabled for firefighting must be retired and the Fire and Rescue Authority(FRA) have no discretion to refuse to do so. This amendment comes into effect on 13 September 2004. It is our view that this change cannot be applied to scheme members who have retired before that date (i.e. whose pensions are already vested). It should also help FRAs make any "reasonable adjustment" required by the DDA.

This amends the definition of "regular firefighter" in the Glossary of Expressions so that it can mean a whole-time or part-time member of a brigade, but would exclude a retained or volunteer member. This amendment also allows a regular firefighter who is appointed on terms under which he or she is, or may be, required to engage in firefighting to remain eligible for the FPS if disablement means that the person can no longer undertake operational duties but would still be fit, and is required, to undertake other duties of his/her role.(There is a provision that there should not be a break in continuity of appointment.)

(a) Amendment to the definition of "regular firefighter" (Schedule 1, Part 1)

Eligibility for full membership of the FPS is limited to regular firefighters only. The definition of "regular firefighter" includes a requirement to engage in firefighting. This remains a term of eligibility for joining the FPS. However, the definition has been amended to allow a firefighter who subsequently becomes permanently disabled for firefighting while remaining fit for other related duties to continue as a member of the FPS. This is on condition that there has been no break in service. Consequently if a FRA are of the view that the retention of a firefighter would be of value to the service, redeployment to other duties, as appropriate to the role of a firefighter, should be considered and would be allowable under FPS rules. If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevent and the person may be retired with an ill-health award.

4 September 2006
Firefighters Pension Scheme Circular 11/2006 was issued providing:

The Firemen's Pension Scheme (Amendment) Order 2004

1. *Guidance in section (a) Annex B of Fire and Rescue Service Circular 30-2004 sets out the consequence of the amendment to the definition of "regular firefighter" in Schedule 1, Part 1 (Glossary of expressions) of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). Since the guidance was issued, the Fire and Rescue Service have responded positively to the requirement for fitness for other related duties in addition to engaging in firefighting to be considered when assessing whether a person is permanently unfit under Rule A10 and accordingly, over the last 12 months, we have revised the guidance which we have been giving to fire and rescue authorities when asked about the consequences of the amendment.*

2. *In the circumstances, we are amending the guidance set out in the circular and the following paragraph, which more accurately reflects the provisions of the FPS, should be substituted:-*

   "(a) Amendment to the definition of "regular firefighter" (Schedule 1, Part 1) Eligibility for full membership of the FPS is limited to regular firefighters only. The definition of "regular firefighter" includes a requirement to engage in firefighting and to perform other duties as appropriate to his role as a firefighter (other than, or in addition to, engaging in firefighting). The test in assessing whether a regular firefighter ought to retire on the grounds that he is permanently disabled under Rule A15 is whether he is permanently disabled for firefighting and for performing other duties appropriate to the role."

This was a complete and highly significant change of position. On this basis, no member can receive an ill health or injury pension unless they are so disabled that they can do none of the duties within their role map, whether a job restricted to those duties is provided or not. Given that duties within the role maps include wholly sedentary work, such as desk duties, a seriously disabled firefighter will be denied an ill health/injury pension because he/she can undertake desk duties which are not, in fact made available. Ill health pensions, including injury awards for those injured on duty, will be very rarely available on this new test, if at all.

17 January 2007
At the Firefighters Pension Committee, DCLG are challenged on Circular 11/2006. The response of the Chairman, for DCLG was:

The Chairman said that the guidance given in circular 11/2006 clarified DCLG's view of the pension scheme. It could not be an interpretation of the Scheme. The decision of whether or not to retire a member on an ill-health pension remained with the FRA. The question of whether a member, who does not qualify for ill-health retirement, can be dismissed if no suitable job is available was an employment matter and not for the pension schemes.

September 2007
Guidance for Independent Qualified Medical Practitioners (IQMPs) providing an opinion on permanent disability, fitness for regular work, qualifying injury and degree of disablement.

When the IQMP finds that although the firefighter is permanently disabled for operational firefighting duties but is capable of other duties within his/her role, the FRA will need to *consider redeployment. Whether or not a job is available for the member is not a matter for the pension scheme and should not be taken into account by the IQMP when reaching his opinion.*

A firefighter is permanently disabled if he/she is medically unfit to carry out all the duties expected of him/her as listed in the role map for his/her role (rank). Provided the member can carry out one of the duties of the role he/she cannot be permanently unfit. The decision about permanent disablement will be specific to the role of the firefighter, so it is important for the IQMP to be familiar with the different requirements of the various roles within the Fire and Rescue Service.

SUMMARY
It is clear that throughout the process concerning the amendment, the explanation given by ODPM was that it was to allow Fire Authorities to retain firefighters on non-operational roles as they could then remain within the Pension Scheme. If the 2006 Circular now represents the true position then, in fact, the effect of the amendment was to make it virtually impossible for any firefighter to receive an ill health or injury pension, whether the disablement is due to Fire Service duties or otherwise.

If that is the case, then ODPM did not openly explain such a highly significant change in the consultation process and subsequently. Instead they actively misled consultees (including FBU) during the consultation process as well as stakeholders after the consultation (including FBU). They also misled Parliament when laying the Statutory Instrument which amended the Scheme.

On 4th October Matt Wrack wrote to all Chief Fire Officers highlighting the FBU concerns re the attack on ill-health retirements and asking that CFOs pressed CLG to return to the position of the 2004 guidance. The letter explained that any alternative compensation scheme, outside of the FPS would be inappropriate and have an adverse affect on employees and employers alike.

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4 October 2007

Chief Fire Officer
Fire & Rescue Service HQ

Dear

ILL-HEALTH RETIREMENT UNDER THE FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEMES
In July three retired members of the FBU were informed by the Fire Authority in London (LFEPA) that their pensions would cease.

This decision follows medical appeals on the issue of injury awards by the three under the terms of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). They had already been awarded ill-health pensions and registered an appeal as is their right under the Pension Scheme. The Board of Medical Referees which hears appeals did not answer the questions on which the appeals had been lodged, but instead concluded that the individuals were capable of performing ***some*** *of the duties within the Firefighter Role Map and should not therefore receive a pension at all. As a result of this, LFEPA (following its own legal advice) has concluded that they can no longer pay the ill-health pension. The three retired members were informed that their pensions would cease in August. That has now happened.*

This has created an unprecedented situation where three members have been retired from service – by a decision of the Fire Authority – yet have now had their pension stopped and are subsequently without either a job or a pension.

CLG Guidance on ill-health retirements
The decision of the Board of Medical Referees in this case was based upon guidance provided by CLG in relation to ill-health retirements under the FPS.

This guidance follows changes to the Scheme which altered the definition of a Firefighter. The aim of this change – when introduced – was to allow more flexibility and to allow the possibility of re-deployment in cases where a member could be found other suitable work within the Service but could not continue in an operational role.

*The initial guidance from ODPM (****FSC 30/2004****) included the following phrase:*

> *If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevant and the person may be retired with an ill-health award.*

Subsequently, this guidance has been amended in ***FPS Circular 11/2006*** *(4th September 2006) and the key phrase above has been removed.*

I include extracts from the two versions of ODPM/CLG guidance in relation to redeployment/retirement below (my emphasis):

2004 Guidance
Eligibility for full membership of the FPS is limited to regular firefighters only. The definition of "regular firefighter" includes a requirement to engage in firefighting. This remains a term of eligibility for joining the FPS. However, the definition has been amended to allow a firefighter who subsequently becomes permanently disabled for firefighting while remaining fit for other related duties to continue as a member of the FPS. This is on condition that there has been no break in service. Consequently, if a FRA is of the view that the retention of a firefighter would be of value to the service, redeployment to other duties, as appropriate to the role of a firefighter, should be considered and would be allowable under FPS rules. ***If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevant and the person may be retired with an ill-health award.***

2006 Guidance
Eligibility for full membership of the FPS is limited to regular firefighters only. The definition of "regular firefighter" includes a requirement to engage in firefighting and to perform other duties as appropriate to his role as a firefighter (other than, or

in addition to, engaging in firefighting). ***The test in assessing whether a regular firefighter ought to retire on the grounds that he is permanently disabled under Rule A15 is whether he is permanently disabled for firefighting and for performing other duties appropriate to the role.***

Recent CLG advice issued to IQMP's
It is clear from the extracts above that CLG have re-written the guidance to the detriment of members of the Pension Scheme and in a clear departure from the position outlined in briefings given to Parliament at the time the scheme was amended.

CLG have recently issued advice to the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioners appointed under the Scheme (FPSC 8/2007, 5 September 2007). The effect of this circular will be to apply this same logic to all cases where a medical retirement would be considered. This advice includes the following section (my emphasis):

*3.17 A firefighter is permanently disabled if he/she is medically unfit to carry out **all** the duties expected of him/her as listed in the role map for his/her role (rank). **Provided the member can carry out one of the duties of the role he/she cannot be permanently unfit.** The decision about permanent disablement will be specific to the role of the firefighter, so it is important for the IQMP to be familiar with the different requirements of the various roles within the Fire and Rescue Service.*

It is difficult to imagine circumstances in which an individual could not perform one of the duties of the role. The effect of this guidance will therefore be to effectively end ill-health retirement under the FPS and NFPS. That was clearly not the intent of the changes made to the Statutory Instrument in 2004.

The aim of the original change to the Scheme was to allow greater flexibility into the Scheme by allowing re-deployment to non-operational duties if this was appropriate. However, under the new guidance a pension will not be paid even if no such job exists. The effect of these changes will be to place Firefighters in limbo. They will not be able to continue in their profession due to ill-health. They will not be entitled to a pension. They will also not be guaranteed any employment since there are few, if any, such (non-operational) jobs in existence within the Fire and Rescue Service.

Views of Stakeholders
I am sure you will appreciate the concerns of the FBU over this matter and the anger of Firefighters. Members of the FPS pay a contribution which is considerably higher than that in similar schemes precisely to take account of earlier retirement due to age or ill-health.

I therefore seek your support in pressing CLG, and the relevant authorities within the devolved administrations, to amend the guidance issued and return to the position of 2004 i.e. to return to the guidance issued at the time the change to the Scheme was actually made.
If you are willing to support us in this, I would ask that you write to CLG making your views known and that you copy us into the correspondence.

Alternative arrangements
I am also concerned to hear that plans are already afoot to suggest alternative arrangements for Scheme members caught up by this new position. The Firefighters' Pensions Committee was recently informed that CFOA intend to produce proposals for an alternative form of compensation which would lie outside the Pension Scheme.

Such a measure would be entirely inappropriate and would do nothing to assist members of the Pension Scheme caught up by the CLG guidance. It would inevitably be worse than any payments under the Pension Scheme and would be likely to adversely affect both employees and employers by introducing new and additional costs to both sides.

Finally, the FBU cannot accept that employees of the Fire and Rescue Service who are unable to work in the Service because of a medical condition should be sacked and left without a job or a pension when they have done nothing wrong. Quite simply, it is completely unjust and inequitable. It is also completely different to the position of members in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

I ask for your support in this issue and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

The union launched the 'JUSTICE FOR FIREFIGHTER PENSIONS' campaign and the message from the FBU was that the simple solution is a return to the 2004 guidance giving FRAs the flexibility to retire or redeploy firefighters who are being considered for an ill-health retirement.

The Executive Council agreed to financially assist the three London firefighters and agreed a campaign to challenge the decision of CLG legally, politically and industrially. On 11th October the following all members circular was issued;

CIRCULAR: 2007HOC0565MW **11 October 2007**

TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/ Sister,

Ill Health retirement under the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
*All members should by now be aware of the concerns the union has raised about the attack on our pension rights as a result of Government guidance on ill-health retirements. The details have been covered in my recent circular (**2007HOC0510MW**) **and the effects on individuals have been reported in detail in the October 2007** issue of*

Firefighter magazine. In addition brigade secretaries have been provided with further information to assist in briefing branch officials. Information on this issue will now be placed on a special section on the union's website.

I have recently written to the Government Ministers responsible for the Fire and Rescue Service and for fire service pensions outlining our concerns and pointing out that this matter could be resolved easily by a return to the guidance on pensions issued by the department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) in 2004. The same points have been raised in recent meetings with government officials from CLG. I have also written to all Chief Fire Officers outlining our concerns and seeking support for the union's position on this issue.

It is unfortunate and entirely avoidable that the service has once again come to the point where we may be forced to consider industrial action. However, the FBU cannot sit by and allow retired members or members facing retirement to have their pension rights stolen. We cannot allow members to be sacked for being physically incapable of doing their job. Therefore the Executive Council is asking all branches to consider the model resolution attached to this circular.

Best wishes,

Yours fraternally,

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

Resolution on Ill-health retirements within the Firefighters Pension Schemes
"The Fire Brigades Union condemns the decision to cease the payment of pension to three retired members of the FBU following a medical appeal. This act has placed these individuals in the position of being without a job and without a pension.

"This decision results from guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in relation to the Firefighters Pensions Schemes which differs from that provided in 2004. This newer guidance means that members will not be retired if they are deemed able to fulfill any part of the duties within the role map – even if such a job does not exist. This will ultimately lead to large numbers of Firefighters being placed in the position of being unable to work because of ill-health or injury but unable to receive a pension. This is completely unacceptable.

"These pension schemes are designed to take account of the physical demands of work in the Fire and Rescue Service and as a result members of the scheme pay a contribution higher than is paid in most other similar schemes. Yet the new advice from the government will mean that it will become impossible to actually receive a medical retirement in virtually any circumstances.

"We call upon the Executive Council to prevail upon the Ministers within CLG to ensure that the current advice is amended in line with that originally provided in 2004. This should be a relatively simple step to take. If this is not done, we call upon the Executive Council to initiate a political campaign aimed at highlighting this disgrace and an industrial campaign aimed at bringing such an amendment into being.

At a meeting in Birmingham on 22nd November 2007 FBU officials listened to the legal argument the FBU was progressing and a personal viewpoint was given by Martin Marrion (one of the 3 affected retired firefighters from London). On 22nd November the following all members circular (HOC20070709MW) was issued

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CIRCULAR: 2007HOC0709MW **22 November 2007**

TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

JUSTICE FOR FIREFIGHTER PENSIONS – UPDATE
Officials from every Brigade, Region and Section of the Union met today in Birmingham to discuss our campaign to win justice and to defend the pension rights of our members. The meeting heard that work is underway throughout the UK to ensure that every single member of the FBU is informed and consulted on the issues involved. Many Brigade Committees have already met to discuss the matter and have concluded that national strike action may be the only way to resolve this dispute.

Senior managers around the UK are increasingly realising that the warnings made by the FBU are proving to be correct and that the guidance on ill-health pensions issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) will effectively mean the ending of ill-health pensions in the Fire and Rescue Service. We have stated from the start that this is unacceptable. I am pleased to be able to report that others within the Service are increasingly coming to share this view.

Since the launch of this campaign we have written to every Chief Fire Officer seeking support. I am pleased to report that a number have expressed concern at the CLG guidance and broad support for the stance taken by the Union. Likewise, a number of Fire Service politicians have raised their concerns with CLG and with the Minister, John Healey.

The FBU has been able to meet with CLG officials as well as directly with the Ministers involved. At these meetings we have outlined our position and expressed the anger that has been provoked among FBU members. The Union's Parliamentary Group was also recently able to hold a meeting with Fire Minister Parmjit Dhanda where the concerns about this issue were raised once again. Nobody in Government can *now be in any doubt about how seriously this matter is being taken. Neither can Government claim not to be aware that this anger is likely to lead towards industrial conflict in the Service unless this matter can be resolved.*

I am pleased to be able to report that CLG Minister, John Healey has written to us in response. He has informed me that: "I have asked for an examination to be made of the current arrangements, including the implications for Firefighters and employers. This will, of course, take into account the points that the FBU have made". We shall now continue to press that this examination leads to the right conclusion i.e. that the pension rights of our members are restored. It has always been our view that this matter could be resolved relatively easily.

Officials throughout the Union are working hard to ensure that the concerns and views of the FBU are heard and considered. In a number of areas this has led to significant progress being made. There are clear opportunities for developing this side of the campaign. It has been our experience so far that once the issues are explained properly the arguments of CLG officials are easily dealt with.

The Executive Council will consider this matter within the next couple of weeks. Brigade Officials will be able to report further information so that Branches can be kept fully informed. Information is regularly being posted on the Union's website where a special page devoted to this campaign has been established. This includes press and television coverage on the issue.

Further information is being issued advising members on how the matter can be raised with MPs. We are also asking all Branches to meet to discuss this matter, including the possible need for industrial action.

This is a crucial campaign and it is one in which every member can play a part.

Please give your support in this fight for justice.

Best wishes,

Yours fraternally,

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

CLG had also indicated that individuals who had been retired on ill-health within the last 10 years may be reviewed. Following this Matt Wrack sent an 'All Out of Trade Members' circular (2007HOC0584MW) on 28th November 2007 highlighting issues which could affect many retired members and asking them to lobby their MPs.

CIRCULAR 2007HOC0584MW **28 November 2007**

TO: ALL OUT OF TRADE MEMBERS

Dear Brother / Sister,

ILL HEALTH PENSION RETIREMENTS UPDATE

Over the last few weeks we have been contacted by several Out Of Trade members who are concerned over any potential changes to their ill-health pension entitlements. This has followed the disgraceful treatment of three Out Of Trade members in London. The purpose of this circular is to update you of the situation and to inform you of the action currently being taken by The Fire Brigades Union.

Potted history

In recent months the Communities and Local Government Department (CLG) have issued new guidance to the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioners (IQMPs) which differs significantly from the guidance issued in 2004. This new guidance means that to be permanently disabled and therefore eligible for an ill-health pension the individual must be unable to perform any duty within their role.

The 2004 Guidance contained the following within the advice.

> ***'If the FRA cannot offer other employment, fitness to perform other duties would not be relevant and the person may be retired with an ill-health award'.***

Subsequently, in 2006 this guidance was amended and this sentence has been removed. It is difficult to imagine circumstances in which an individual could not perform one of the duties of the Firefighter's role. The effect of this guidance will therefore be to end ill-health retirement under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) and the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme (NFPS).

The aim of the 2004 guidance was to allow greater flexibility into the schemes by allowing redeployment to non-operational duties if this was appropriate. However, under the new guidance an ill-health pension will not be paid ***even if no such job exists****. The effect of these changes will be to place firefighters in limbo. They will not be able to continue in their profession due to ill-health. They will not be entitled to an ill-health pension.*

In July three retired members of the FBU were informed by the Fire Authority in London (LFEPA) that their pensions would cease. This decision followed medical appeals on the issue of injury awards by the three under the terms of the FPS. They had already been awarded an ill-health pension and registered an appeal as is their right under the Pension Scheme. The Board of Medical Referees who hear appeals concluded that the individuals were capable of performing some of the duties within the Firefighter Role Map and should not therefore receive a pension.
As a result of this, LFEPA has concluded that they can no longer pay the ill-health pension. The three retired members were informed that their pensions would cease in August. That has now happened.

This has created an unprecedented situation where three members have been retired from service. They have now had their pension stopped and are now without work and without a pension. I am sure you will understand that the Fire Brigades Union cannot accept that this is an appropriate way to treat retired firefighters and you will appreciate the level of anger which this decision has caused among our members.

What could this mean to you?

Any firefighter who has retired on ill-health within the last 10 years could be reviewed using the 2006 guidance; this has already been raised as a possibility. Under the 2006 guidance it is a strong possibility that many firefighters currently in receipt of an ill-health pension could be dealt with in the same way as the three former London firefighters. This could mean the cessation of pension payments with no offer of alternative employment.

Relatively easy resolution

The Executive Council unanimously supported a resolution condemning the decision to cease the payment of pension to the three retired members and to ensure a return to the 2004 guidance. If this position is not achieved the FBU will embark upon a political and industrial campaign aimed at securing their objectives.

What can you do?

Branches across the UK are considering a resolution condemning the decision to cease the payment of pension to the three retirees, leaving them without a pension or a job and to ensure that ministers within CLG amend the current advice in line with the 2004 guidance. (The full resolution along with all updates on this, and other issues, can be found on The Fire Brigades Union website www.fbu.org.uk)

Senior officials have written to and are speaking with ministers from CLG in the hope of achieving our objective. Our campaign is already having an impact on others within the Fire and Rescue Service and I would ask that you consider adding your support. Please consider raising this issue with your M.P., with local councillors, your local Chief Fire Officer and with the Chair of your local Fire and Rescue Authority. It would be helpful if copies of any letters you send could be sent to our National Office, Sean Starbuck either by post or by email (sean.starbuck@fbu.org.uk).

Updates will be posted on the Fire Brigades Union website.

Yours in Unity,

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

At the FPC on 20th November 2007 CFOA spoke to a paper they had presented as a late addition to the agenda. This paper was very unhelpful as it suggested alternative options to the current ill-health retirement scheme primarily highlighting a compensation scheme consisting of a one off payment of up to 104 weeks pay with the remaining pension being deferred. The paper also suggested that the IQMP used a modicum of reasonableness when considering if an individual was permanently disabled taking into consideration the possibility of other employment within the FRA.

The FBU had prepared a paper in response to the CFOA position and were successful also getting it on the agenda as a late item. After a debate on both papers other stakeholders including CFOA and APFO said that they supported a return to the 2004 guidance. Unhelpfully RFU stated that they did not yet have a position on the issue. The representative for the Association of Local Authority Medical Advisors (ALAMA) explained that their role was to make a decision based entirely on medical issues and that they had no remit to consider re deployment when taking this decision.

An injunction hearing, brought by the FBU on behalf of the three retired London firefighters, was scheduled for 28th November 2007. Lawyers acting for CLG withdrew one of the three arguments therefore conceding the case. This meant that the three members would have their pensions restored. This was reported to all members in a circular (HOC20070729MW).

CIRCULAR: 2007HOC0729MW **30 November 2007**

TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

JUSTICE FOR FIREFIGHTER PENSIONS – ROUND ONE TO THE FBU

I am very pleased to be able to report that we have won an important victory in our campaign for justice in relation to ill-health pensions. The matter remains far from resolved, but our arguments so far have been vindicated.

You will recall that three retired members had their pension stopped following an appeal regarding ill-health. With FBU support, the three have begun the process for a judicial review of the decision to terminate the pension. The legal case was based broadly around three issues:

1. *That the three had not been told in advance that their appeal hearings would include an issue that could result in their pensions being stopped and that therefore the process breached natural justice.*
2. *That the Board of Referees exceeded their powers in considering an issue which was not submitted to them.*
3. *That the guidance from CLG in relation to ill-health pensions does not reflect the requirements of the pension scheme.*

We have been informed that in relation to the first point, the lawyers for the CLG and the Board of Referees have withdrawn their argument, i.e. conceded our case. This will mean that the three members directly affected at this stage will win this part of their case and that their pensions should *now be restored. This marks significant progress and fully vindicates the stance taken by the three members and the FBU on this issue. The stance taken on this issue by the CLG, the Board of Referees and LFEPA has been shown to have been incorrect.*

However, it is important to note that this does not end the case. Even the three members concerned may still face the same issue again depending upon other decisions. Most importantly, the guidance issued by CLG remains in place at this time. It is the CLG guidance which fundamentally causes the problem. We are aware of other cases (which have been reported previously) where members are facing similar problems as a result of the guidance. We are also aware that a significant number of Fire and Rescue Authorities have similar cases which have not yet been dealt with. It remains our view that the CLG guidance will effectively end ill-health retirements in the service.

We are therefore committed to continue our campaign around this issue. This shall involve, as before, exploring every legal and political avenue and shall include the call for an industrial response if necessary.

We have already made considerable progress legally. We are also ensuring that our case is raised everywhere in the Fire and Rescue Service and at the highest levels of Government.

I wish to congratulate all members who have taken the time to make contact with the Member of Parliament. I can assure you that this lobbying is ensuring that the issue remains in the spotlight for Ministers. I urge all members to take a couple of minutes to e-mail or write to your M.P. Advice on this can be obtained through the FBU website (www.fbu.org.uk) and of course, from your local FBU officials.

Finally, I must stress that whilst we have ensured the restoration of the pensions for the three members, the threat to all members of the service and retired firefighters remains. Please do your bit to support this campaign for justice.

Best wishes,

Yours fraternally,

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

This was a battle won but the war on the guidance amendments still needs to be fought. The hearing date for the judicial review has been set for 6th and 7th March 2008. On 3rd December 2007 Matt Wrack again wrote to the Minister for State, John Healey, explaining that the problem was becoming more widespread and attaching a newspaper clipping detailing a case of a retained firefighter from Nottinghamshire, who after being attacked at work and seriously injured was likely to be sacked as a result of the CLG guidance. The letter mentioned the outcome of the scheduled injunction of the 28th November 2007 and that the FBU were still seeking a remedy to the full legal issue.

Communication to members past and present formed a major part of the Justice For Firefighter Pension campaign and this was addressed by making full use of the FBU website (a special campaign page was designed accessed through www.fbu.org.uk), all members circulars, out of trade members circulars, four pension e-bulletins and publications including a firefighter pensions special. Lobbying of MPs was very important and generic email messages were available on the FBU website as well as briefing notes for officials and councillors. An early day motion (EDM436 Firefighters Pension Scheme) was submitted by Mr. Graham Stuart on 28th November 2007.

In view of the continuing lack of progress by CLG on the issue, at a meeting of the Executive Council in December 2007, it was agreed that a series of meetings would take place during the early months of 2008 to prepare the officials and members for any industrial action that may be required to progress this issue. It was further agreed that consideration would be given to a lobby of Parliament and a national demonstration to bring public attention to the issue.

Secondary Contracts

As a result of issues raised at Conference 2007 the FBU became aware that some members were undertaking secondary contracts, which in some cases could adversely affect pension benefits in the event of injury. This issue was pursued at a number of meetings with CLG, where the FBU had their concerns confirmed. As a result of this confirmation members were made aware of the issue in circular (HOC20070305MW) in June 2007.

CIRCULAR:2007HOC0305MW **6 June 2007**

TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

SECONDARY CONTRACTS

The FBU Annual Conference in Southport recently discussed the issue of secondary contracts within the Fire and Rescue Service and the possible impact these contracts may have on the terms and conditions of members and on the pension and compensation rights normally due to our members and their families.

We are aware that in various Authorities members are being encouraged to undertake a variety of additional duties under secondary contracts of employment. Having researched the issue in detail, the purpose of this circular is to warn of the potential dangers in doing so.

Additional duties can be undertaken under the main contract of employment and provided the tasks undertaken are within the role-map of a Firefighter there are no problems associated with the Firefighters' Pension Schemes or the Firefighters'

Compensation Scheme. If they are undertaken under a secondary contract however, the contract may not be covered by the Firefighters' Compensation Scheme with the result that members and their families will not be properly compensated if someone is killed or seriously injured:

- *If you are not required to fight fires under the secondary contract (for instance, where the contract is as a driver trainer) you will not be covered by the Firefighters' Compensation Scheme. Normally, if you are injured or killed on duty, you and your family qualify for an injury award and a lump sum compensation payment of up to five times the pay of a competent firefighter.* ***That will not apply in such cases.***
- *Even if the contract can involve fighting fires (for instance, a secondary contract to perform USAR duties), any injury award will be based only on your earnings and length of service under the secondary contract. Your earnings under the secondary contract might be the same but if you have only worked for a few months or years under that contract your injury award will be significantly less than you might think.*

You should not underestimate the consequences. By way of example, a member who has a "slight" disablement and who has 25 years' service is guaranteed, broadly speaking, an income of 60% of his or her pensionable earnings (minus 75% of any other pension he or she receives). If he or she has less than five years' service the guarantee level is only 15%.

Whole-time Firefighters working under a second contract as a Retained Firefighter may have a similar problem.

- *If your Retained contract started before 6 April 2006, and if you are injured performing your Retained duties, then any injury award will be based on the earnings of an equivalent whole-time Firefighter and the number of years you have worked as a Retained Firefighter.*
- *If your contract started on or after 6 April 2006, however, the injury award will be based on your Retained service. That is not the number of years that you have worked as a Retained Firefighter: each year worked counts as a fraction of a year, the fraction being calculated by comparing your Retained earnings with the earnings of an equivalent Wholetime Firefighter.*

Some Fire and Rescue Authorities are attempting to solve these problems by guaranteeing to make up any injury award either by taking out insurance or by guaranteeing to do so out of their own resources. ***Such insurance arrangements and guarantees are unlawful and should not be relied upon.***

If you are a member of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme or the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme you will also be entitled to an ill-health pension. This is not dependant on being on duty when you are injured and will not be affected by any secondary contract you hold.

Conclusion

The issues outlined above are cause for considerable concern. The Union has already discussed our concerns with Pension officials of the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) and will be raising the issue as a matter of urgency at the next meeting of the Firefighters Pensions Committee. The issue of secondary contracts will also be raised with the Fire Service Employers as appropriate.

We are aware of a number of cases where members have been seriously misinformed about these issues by Fire and Rescue Authorities. Members are advised to consider these points when considering any proposals from Employers regarding secondary contracts.

Further advice will be issued to local FBU officials and such officials will therefore be in the best position to provide advice to individual members in each case. Any members who may be affected by the issues outlined are strongly urged to make contact with local officials.

Best wishes,

Yours fraternally,

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

By the end of June 2007 FBU Head Office had received a number of reports from officials stating that Chief Fire Officers were saying that the circular of 6th June 2007 was inaccurate. In response to these claims a further circular (HOH20070370MW) was issued in July 2007

HOC20070370MW **2nd July 2007**

TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister,

On 6th June 2007 I issued Circular 2007HOC0305MW in which I brought to members' attention the problems posed to members who have secondary contracts in the event of them sustaining an injury whilst performing duties under the terms of a second contract.

It has been brought to my attention that chief fire officers in some brigades are informing FBU members that the circular was inaccurate. This circular is to confirm that Circular 2007HOC0305MW is entirely accurate. The senior civil servant who chairs the Firefighters' Pensions Committee on behalf of CLG (the Administrator of the firefighters' pension schemes) confirmed at the most recent meeting of that committee on the 20th June 2007 that our circular was entirely correct. Stakeholders represented on the Firefighters Pensions Committee who were present included the FBU, CFOA, LGA, APFO, the Scottish Public Pensions Agency and the Government Actuaries Department.

I have today written to the representative of CFOA who was *present at the meeting in the following terms:*

> *"On 6 June 2007 I issued a circular to all FBU members informing them of serious potential problems relating to secondary contracts. In particular it alerted our members to the fact that pension and compensation entitlements under a second contract may be different to those under the primary contract. I attach a copy of that circular for your information and use. I have been informed by a number of our officials that senior managers within some fire and rescue services are informing our members that the information we have circulated is incorrect.*
>
> *You will recall the discussion regarding the issue of pensions and secondary contracts at the Firefighters Pensions Committee held on 20 June. During that discussion, Martin Hill was clear that the information contained within FBU Circular 2007HOC0305MW was entirely accurate.*
>
> *In order to ensure that all operational members employed within the UK fire and rescue service are not misinformed by their managers, can you assure me that the facts as confirmed by CLG have been circulated by CFOA to all chief officers and senior managers in the UK, through CFOA and the three associations in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland."*

Further, I have put measures in place for Brigade Secretaries in those fire and rescue services where secondary contracts are offered to operational personnel to write to the Chief Fire Officer on this matter.

Yours fraternally,

M. Wrack

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

On the 14th August 2007 CLG issued circular FPSC 6/2007 which confirmed that the FBU's interpretation and advice were accurate and gave advice to FRAs on the implications for compensation scheme benefits arising from different contractual arrangements.

Age discrimination and the Firefighters Pension Scheme
During 2007 members became aware that a firm of solicitors (Laytons) were canvassing for support to progress a case of potential age discrimination. The potential discrimination surrounds firefighters who joined the service aged between 18 and 20 years old and their claim that as they are unable to retire with a full pension before age 50 years old they have to pay up to 32 years contributions to receive a pension based on 30 years service. The Executive Council discussed this issue and is monitoring the situation but at present feel that the benefits in progressing any such action may be far outweighed by detrimental changes this may lead to.

The management committee of the Accident and Injury Fund comprised of:

Vice President – Alan McLean
National Officer for AIF – Paul Woolstenholmes

Executive Council members – January to September 2007:

Dave Whatton – Region 7
Mick Shaw – Region10
Tam Mitchell – NRC
Stewart Brown – G&L

Executive Council members – September to December 2007:

Roddy Robertson – Region 1
Dave Whatton – Region 7
Keith Handscomb – Region 9
Pete Miller – Region 12

The Accident and Injury Fund department urges all Officials at Brigade and Branch level to ensure that members adhere to the rules of the Fund, with particular attention to time limits required for submitting claims.

Accident and Injury Fund

Summary for the year ended 31 December 2007

REGION		ON DUTY	OFF DUTY	DEATH	REOPENED CLAIMS	DEATH OF A DEPENDANT	TOTAL AMOUNT	TOTAL CLAIMS	CONTRI-BUTIONS
1	No. of Claims	4		5		4	£186,768.60	13	£59,889.93
	Amount Paid	£4,950.20		£160,197.80		£21,620.60			
2	No. of Claims	5	1	4		2	£167,078.02	12	£33,751.81
	Amount Paid	£5,982.60	£1,389.42	£148,959.40		£10,746.60			
3	No. of Claims	4		6		1	£188,268.64	11	£43,311.74
	Amount Paid	£12,792.94		£170,166.10		£5,309.60			
4	No. of Claims	4		3		2	£122,262.16	9	£44,572.74
	Amount Paid	£10,342.56		£101,173.00		£10,746.60			
5	No. of Claims		1	3		6	£98,981.90	10	£132,182.13
	Amount Paid		£3,009.00	£63,860.50		£32,112.40			
6	No. of Claims	5		4		2	£144,051.97	11	£81,435.99
	Amount Paid	£9,928.37		£123,377.00		£10,746.60			
7	No. of Claims	3	1	4		3	£93,325.60	11	£95,506.18
	Amount Paid	£2,531.10	£1,150.50	£73,715.20		£15,928.80			
8	No. of Claims	2	2	2		1	£81,311.56	7	£91,224.92
	Amount Paid	£7,611.00	£4,675.76	£63,715.20		£5,309.60			
9	No. of Claims	6	1	2		4	£76,972.34	13	£88,477.53
	Amount Paid	£17,320.56	£627.48	£36,857.60		£22,166.70			
10	No. of Claims	13	3	3		6	£234,831.08	25	£174,601.16
	Amount Paid	£25,342.36	£10,941.22	£166,562.50		£31,985.00			
11	No. of Claims		1	1		1	£20,988.90	3	£85,056.17
	Amount Paid		£1,646.10	£14,033.20		£5,309.60			
12	No. of Claims	3				3	£20,144.90	6	£65,090.97
	Amount Paid	£4,088.70				£16,056.20			
13	No. of Claims	4	1	1		2	£49,686.12	8	£88,940.17
	Amount Paid	£7,886.40	£894.62	£26,548.00		£14,357.10			
TOTAL NO. OF CLAIMS		**53**	**11**	**38**	**0**	**37**		**139**	
Total Amount		**£108,776.79**	**£24334.10**	**£1,149,165.50**	**£0.00**	**£202,395.40**	**£1,484,671.79**		**£1,084,209.28**

Last year the union secured nearly £7.8m in compensation for members injured at and away from work – a 73% increase on previous years.

Co-responding

In a key challenge by the FBU to the employers' attempts to change national contracts of employment without negotiation, the Union succeeded in upholding the High Court decision which prevented two fire authorities from forcing firefighters to answer 999 medical emergencies.

Nottingham and Lincolnshire Brigades had sought to compel wholetime members to "co-respond" in breach of FBU policy and without additional payment. The brigades claimed, among other things, that the right to assign additional duties such as co-responding had been agreed in the settlement which resolved the national dispute.

The High Court had ruled in 2006 that co-responding was not a contractual requirement under the Grey Book. The employers took out an appeal against that decision but their appeal was unanimously rejected by the Court of Appeal in February 2007.

Meanwhile the Liverpool Employment Tribunal found unanimously that 12 former Merseyside members had been lawfully expelled from the FBU as a result of co-responding. The Employment Appeals Tribunal upheld the decision.

Pensions

Retained firefighter pensions

Following the union's magnificent victory in the House of Lords, the case returned to the employment tribunal in Croydon. The union is using part-time workers regulations to argue for backdated access to the firefighters pension scheme and sick pay and increased pay for additional responsibilities proportionate to whole-timers' entitlements for retained members.

The issue is whether the tribunal accepts that the work of whole-time and retained firefighters is the same, or broadly similar and whether the employers and the Secretary of State can justify the existing discrimination.

Final submissions were heard in January and the tribunal's judgment is expected by Easter.

Ill-health pensions

Thompsons' London office, with full FBU involvement at regional and national level, have been acting for 3 former London firefighters each of whom appealed against the decision of the fire authority that the injuries which had caused them to retire were not due to service injuries (or in one case were not wholly due to service).

The Board of Medical Referees found in each case that regardless of the causation of their injuries, the firefighters were not entitled to pensions because they were not permanently unfit. Whilst the board agreed that the three firefighters were permanently unfit for operational firefighting duties, they were still able to carry out at least one of the duties contained in their role maps and therefore, following the guidance provided by the Department of Communities and Local Government, are not entitled to be regarded as permanently unfit under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

In April and May 2007, we brought applications for judicial review in each of the cases and both the DCLG and LFEPA entered defences against those applications.

LFEPA later withdrew their defence and took up an explicitly neutral stance, stating that they wished the court to offer guidance on the correct interpretation of the FPS. However, LFEPA in August 2007 ceased to pay the firefighters their pensions and it was necessary to issue a further judicial review application directly against LFEPA.

An injunction application was lodged against LFEPA in November 2007 and, following a hearing at the High Court, LFEPA agreed to reinstate the firefighters' pensions pending the outcome of the full judicial review application.

DCLG have now conceded that, on one of the grounds we advanced, namely the natural justice ground that the claimant should at least have been informed that their pensions were at risk before they went through with their appeal hearings, the claimants are bound to win.

However, there are two outstanding further grounds. The first is our contention that it was not open to the board to reconsider the question of permanent unfitness which had already been decided by the independent qualified medical practitioner in the claimants' favour. Secondly and most importantly, is our contention that the guidance provided by DCLG is incorrect and that the correct test for a firefighter's permanent unfitness is not whether he or she is capable of carrying out any of the duties prescribed in his or her role map. The matter will now progress to a full judicial review application on 06 and 07 March 2008.

Health and Safety

Deaths at work
Members have been represented at police interviews following the fire last November at Atherstone on Stour, Warwickshire, in which four firefighters, John Averis, Ian Reid, Ashley Stephens and Darren Yates-Badley, lost their lives. There will continue to be considerable legal input as the investigation and inevitable legal proceedings are pursued.

In February 2005 Jeff Wornham and Michael Miller died in an attempt to rescue trapped residents at 85 Harrow Court, Stevenage, Hertfordshire.

It is believed that Jeff and Michael on hearing screams, entered the premises without water and were the victims of a flashover or backdraft. The FBU and its legal team concluded that a lack of training led to the tragedy.

The FBU's investigations were severely hampered by the fire service which resulted in a new national protocol being proposed by the union for the way in which investigations are conducted and the co-operation expected. After a 12-day inquest in February 2007, the coroner wrote to the Department of Communities and Local Government setting out his recommendations and those of interested parties. The recommendations are being reviewed.

The union's solicitors Thompsons are acting for ten firefighters who were injured after the explosion at a fireworks factory at Marlie Farm, East Sussex, in December 2006 in which FBU member Brian Wembridge and another colleague lost their lives.

Thompsons will provide full legal support for Brian's family and for the FBU at the coroner's inquest and are liasing closely with the FBU's investigation team. Legal representation has also been provided for members interviewed by the police and HSE.

Personal injury

A Greater Manchester sub-officer praised the "patience and concern" of the union and Thompsons after he was awarded £50,000 in an out of court settlement. The member, who had acted up as a station officer, injured his knee while attending a fire at a school. The union successfully argued that he would have been promoted if it were not for the accident.

A Cheshire firefighter who was suffering from major back problems applied for ill health retirement, but was threatened with dismissal on the grounds of capability instead. Management backed down in the face of High Court proceedings taken by the union and he retired due to ill health.

A retired Merseyside firefighter who injured his back when he fell on a pavement damaged by a JCB digger, received £1,900. The case illustrates the benefit of the union's legal services to retired members.

The union secured an out-of court settlement of £13,000 for a Staffordshire firefighter on the retained duty system. He had suffered an injury to his back during a line rescue course.

A member burned his feet when he trod on an ember while attending a house fire in Staffordshire. He was awarded £1,500 compensation because the brigade had breached the regulations by issuing unsuitable boots.

A firefighter based at Burton on Trent sustained back injuries while carrying out a 132 ladder drill with three colleagues. The union argued that the incident happened because of a lack of training, but the matter was intensely contested by management and it proceeded to a three-day trial to which 9 lay witnesses were called. The judge awarded the claimant £10,000 in damages.

Management was found to have been negligent after a firefighter based at Castleford in Yorkshire slipped in a pool of water at the fire station and broke his ankle. Damages were agreed at £3,500.

The union secured a settlement of £2,750 for a firefighter who popped a cartilage while acting the role of a victim in sea rescue training at Mumbles near Swansea.

A firefighter and his wife who both sustained whiplash injuries in a road accident in south Wales received £6,500 and £4,800 respectively.

A settlement of £45,000 was achieved for an FBU member in south Wales who injured his back in an assault by a fellow crew member.

Another firefighter in south Wales received £4,000 after he fractured his hand attempting to use a defective rotary hammer drill while undertaking DIY tasks. There had been a nationwide recall of the product.

An Essex firefighter suffered brain damage after he was assaulted by a night club doorman. The legal issues were fought out by the union at the Court of Appeal and the member received substantial damages.

Neil Storey, who was a firefighter based at Peterlee, County Durham, injured his back as he caught a child who came flying head first out of the rear of an appliance on a school visit. He was awarded £25,000 compensation in an out of court settlement.

There have been many other settlements, some substantial, which members preferred to remain entirely confidential.

G1 Industrial Disputes

Despite a number of permissions being sought from and agreed by the Executive Council for permission to ballot during the year, the matters which were the causes of the disputes in a number of brigades were resolved. As a consequence there were no industrial disputes in 2007.

G2 B&EMM Committee Report

Michael Nicholas was successfully re-elected to the position of B&EMM Executive Council Member.

Samantha Samuels was successfully elected to position of B&EMM National Secretary Dec 2007

1. B&EMM National Committee members

B&EMM EC Member	Michael Nicholas Elected 2006
B&EMM National Secretary	Carl St Paul Elected 2003
B&EMM National Chair	Samantha Samuels Elected 2004 B&EMM National Secretary Elect (Took up position in Dec 07)
Region 1	Vacant
Strathclyde	Alan Chau (Acting)
Region 2	Vacant
Region 3	Vacant
Region 4	Vacant
South Yorkshire	Mark Brown (Acting)
Region 5	Vacant
Cheshire	Michael Ackah
Region 6	Dalton Powell
Nottinghamshire	Dalton Powell
Leicestershire	Ronnie Stanley
Derbyshire	Mark Ferron
Region 7	Warren Simpson
West Midlands	Pardeep Raw
Warwickshire	Donny Clarke
Staffordshire	Dave Pazir
Region 8	Brian Amos
Region 9	Vacant
Bedfordshire	Victor Liburd
Hertfordshire	Stella James
Suffolk	Glen Saunders
Cambridgeshire	Ben Fawcitt
Region 10	Garrett Brooks
London	Les Bowman
Region 11	Vacant
Kent	Carole Brown
Region 12	Andre Fernandez (Acting)
Berkshire	Andre Fernandez
Buckinghamshire	John Williams
Region 13	Leroy Phillpotts

The members of the B&EMM National Committee have depleted considerably over the last few years, and we have had reps stand down from regions 1, 5, 6, and 9. We are actively supporting a number of individuals in order to achieve better representation throughout the 13 regions we cover. Although we have increased representation at Brigade level it is clear that we have a considerable amount of positive actions to take in order to achieve 100% representation across the whole of the 13 regions and 58 Fire and Rescue Services, which is our aim. Since the last report we have 4 further B&EMM Brigade Reps.

2. Schools and Seminars held with B&EMM

Equality Impact Assessment Update
In October 2006 straight after the B&EMM School the FBU held an Equality Impact Assessment seminar for all of their Brigade and Regional officials.

This was identified by all equality sections within the FBU as an essential educational need. B&EMM led on this seminar, and provided guidance and advice on Race Equality Legislation, Race Equality Schemes, and Equality Impact assessment.

B&EMM School
The B&EMM School takes place at Wortley Hall near Sheffield every October (Black History Month). The School has evolved from a ‘gathering’ which started in 1995 which was organized by FBU Head Office, to an educational School organised every year by the B&EMM National Committee.

B&EMM School 2007
B&EMM School 2007 took place from 12th – 14th October 2007. The School was attended by 55 students from across 15 different Brigades. We also had 11 guests attend which included the FBU General Secretary and President; 3 members of London Fire Brigade; Professor Gus John; Sue Evans Fire Service College; Zita Holbourne from PCS; Paul Obinna; and our Honorary B&EMM Member Frank Bailey.

The Theme of the B&EMM School this year was ‘200 years on…’ This was to commemorate the 200 year anniversary since the abolition of the British trade in enslaved Africans.

Students were invited on a journey to discover the past, and to explore how the legacy of our past now has a bearing on the present state of our communities, and then to look into your future within the Fire and Rescue Service and how you can make a difference through your own personal development.

The B&EMM National Committee organised the School, and drew on the last 12 months of activities to produce a school that was informative empowering and thought provoking.

Guest Speakers that joined us included Professor Gus John, who was the first black Director of Education in a UK local Authority and who is a community activist against gun crime in Manchester; and Khi Rafe who is a UNISON activist and a founder member of UK Black Pride (which is a supportive and awareness raising organisation about LGBT Black issues), and Paul Obinna who is a cultural engagement specialist.

We had 3 workshops which were attended by all which focused on the past, and the future. Our first workshop focused on the Legacy of the enslavement of Africans and how this impacts on our society and communities today. For our future workshop we were joined by Sue Evans from the IPDS Hub at the Fire Service College who gave us an overview of the promotions process and procedures.

On the Friday evening we had a very unique performance at our school which is called ‘Cracking the Whip’. This was an educational and entertaining theatre production which was performed in July and August in a derelict church in Knightsbridge. This is performed by a newly formed theatre company with professional directors who are also ex-offenders. This empowering performance was one of the many highlights that made our B&EMM School a very special and appropriate commemorative event.

At our B&EMM School we have incorporated a women’s Breakfast into our activities. This was first done at our School in 2006, and has become a permanent feature. Black and Ethnic Minority women are in a complete minority in the Fire and Rescue Service, and we hope to hole future specific events to target our women and encourage them to become more involved in the Fire and Rescue Service and the Trade Union movement.

Khi Rafe our second guest speaker gave us an insight into the contributions and sacrifices that black women had made in their struggle for freedom from enslavement. This session was at times painful to hear but essential information and education for all those at our school.

One of the most important elements of our school is the networking. This year we welcomed over **15 first time attendees to our B&EMM School** which in itself is an achievement. We are very proud of what those who attend this school have been able to achieve over the last 13 years, and we are determined to continue developing our school each year to meet the ever changing needs of our B&EMM members.

We took time to have a regional activity so that regional representatives could become familiar with those who attended from their regions and encourage their participation in future FBU activities. We also have a closed session at our school to allow members to express their confidential concerns and issues in a comfortable environment.

Our Sunday morning was opened with some powerful poetry from Zita Holbourne, a black woman and trade union activist from PCS. The appreciation from those who heard the melody of her poetry was clear.

This year we established the Frank Bailey Merit Award.

The award was established in this commemorative year to express our need and desire to look back in order to learn the lessons of the past, and utilise these in the future. It was presented by Frank to Carl St Paul, who was the first B&EMM National Secretary and co founder of B&EMM.

The crèche at B&EMM School was small this year with only 4 children attending. This by no means negated their contribution. The children were entertained and educated by Anansi who came to tell them stories and to assist them in their presentation to the B&EMM School which they gave on Sunday morning. Another highlight of the weekend where our children showed off their acting talents with a short play about 'not playing with fireworks' that they performed for the School… we were all so proud of them.

Our final speaker of the Sunday was Paul Obinna who is a cultural engagement specialist. He did not disappoint. He had the school enthralled for nearly 2 hours with his presence and knowledge.

We would like to thank all those who made this school happen. It was indeed a fitting tribute to our ancestors.

Next B&EMM School takes place 10th – 12th October 2008 Wortley Hall Sheffield.

3. Report on Events and Conference Seminars attended by B&EMM

November 2006
Representative from the B&EMM National Committee met with the CRE in our ongoing partnership with them to try to force Fire and Rescue Services to comply with the Race Relation Amendment Act, through establishing and implementing Race Equality Schemes (Which should have been done in 2002. We were able to inform the CRE about our assessments of 5 Fire and Rescue Authorities including West Midlands; Cheshire; Merseyside; Cambridgeshire; and Essex. The outcome of this partnership was that Brigades received Minded Letters, and Compliance letters from the CRE, and were forced to revise their Race plans, produce their race plans, and consult with B&EMM during this process. All Fire and Rescue Authorities now have Race Equality Schemes because of B&EMM's intervention. We were also proud to be highlighted in the CRE's recent final report which stated that the B&EMM and CRE partnership should be the example of best practice which should be used throughout the public sector.

B&EMM attended a Fire Service College Conference on leadership where the B&EMM National Secretary made a contribution.

B&EMM held their AGM on 20th November 2006.

December 2006
B&EMM sent a delegate to the Trans-national Diversity Conference at the Fire Service College.

January 2007
B&EMM have been involved locally with the establishment of a local TUC Black Forum in Birmingham, which is the only one of its kind. They meet regularly to discuss local worker issues and concerns and have held surgeries to assist local black workers to resolve workplace issues.

February 2007
B&EMM sent 3 delegates to the Unite Against Fascism Annual Meeting on 17th February. We were able to get information on local campaigns against the BNP that B&EMM members could get involved with.

The B&EMM National Committee have representatives on all of the major National Committees with the FBU, where we can ensure that Black and Ethnic Minority issues are raised. This included the FBU National Health and Safety Committee; The National Fairness at Work Committee; The National Education Committee; The Final Appeals Committee.

March 2007
The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have been working on an equality and diversity strategy for the Fire and Rescue Service. B&EMM through the FBU have been involved in this consultation from the beginning, and we have attended all meetings with the DCLG. We have been able to make recommendations for improvement and one of the ideas that came out of this strategy was the Equality and Diversity Awards. Ludwig Ramsey received an award for his activities whilst on the B&EMM National Committee.

It is essential that B&EMM do not stand alone in their efforts to represent BME views throughout the Fire and Rescue Service. We network as much as possible, and we share information with other BME networks in all different sectors. We attended the 'Networks' Conference in London where they celebrated the contributions of Black and Ethnic Minority staff in Government departments.

The FBU undertook to train their officials in Equalities on 20th – 22nd March in Wales. B&EMM sent a member of the committee on this training where we were able to network with Fairness at Work Officials from all over the country and update ourselves on equality legislation.

B&EMM Representatives met with Hertfordshire Chief Fire Officer on the 28th and were able to discuss how best the Brigade and B&EMM could work together in the future. We are also working with Hertfordshire to establish their own Race Equality Scheme, as they were part of the County Councils Scheme.

April 2007
One of the B&EMM priorities identified was the need for Black Women to meet and network. Since the 2006

School B&EMM have been in discussions with the Association of Black Professionals; DCLG; UNISON; West Midlands Fire Brigade; and London Fire Brigade, to assist in organising a networking event for black women in the Fire and Rescue Service. This event would include non uniformed black women. We hope to organise this event to coincide with Black History Month in October 2008.

The B&EMM National Committee sent a representative to the National Women's School on 13th – 15th April.

In April each year there is a Black Workers TUC Conference where BME workers from all trade unions unite to discuss our concerns about our workplaces and our communities. At this years Conference B&EMM had 8 delegates attend, and our representative on the TUC Race Relations Committee – Michael Nicholas was re-elected to the committee for another 12 months. The Conference this year was held in Bristol, and was a commemorative conference to the Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans. We were able to make many contacts at this Conference and we were also able to establish links with UK Black Pride, an LGBT group that we had at the B&EMM School 2007. We were also pleased to be joined by the newly elected FBU President Michael Shaw for 2 days of this Conference.

The FBU motion that B&EMM moved was on the Trade in Africans, and the legacy that has been left. Our motion called for the TUC through its affiliated trade unions to lobby the government to ensure the national curriculum is more reflective of the struggles and positive contribution of black people. This motion was passed and chosen to be the Black TUC Conference motion to TUC Congress later on in the year. This is a first for the FBU.

B&EMM attended the Descendants Annual Charity Ball, and sent 5 delegates to this event, which took place in Birmingham.

B&EMM met with the Chief Fire Officer of Suffolk and his team. We were able to assist Suffolk in the establishment of their own Race Equality Scheme. This is an ongoing partnership, as Suffolk come under the County Council Scheme at present.

May 2007

FBU Annual Conference
Annual Conference took place in Southport from 8th – 11th May and B&EMM representatives spoke in a number of key debates.

Dalton Powell Region 6 Representative spoke for the first time at FBU Annual Conference and gave a competent speech calling for the FBU to produce a victimisation strategy for those who are victimised by the BNP or other Far Right groups, whilst they are carrying out their TUC activities. The General Secretary spoke to reiterate the Executives Council's commitment to developing a strategy.

Warren Simpson spoke on the Race Equality issues motion which was given qualified support from the Executive Council, which was qualified by the need for Brigades to be included in this process.

The FBU had guests attending from Australia New Zealand and the USA and a speaker from Australia. These all form part of a coalition of what we see as developed countries who can get together and share good practice and experience. It is important to B&EMM those developing countries do not miss out on relationships such as those which can be so helpful in assisting with developing Fire and Rescue Service needs – continents such as Africa and Asia would be a start.

B&EMM's motions to conference were on –
- FBU establish a Race Equality Scheme;
- FBU produce equality league tables;
- FBU establish a strategy for those victimised by the Far Right because of their Trade Union activities.

These were all carried.

June 2007
B&EMM assisted with a number of African Caribbean Leukaemia Trust clinics with London Fire Brigade. This is an ongoing partnership which we hope to roll out across all Brigades with good representation of BME communities. This should include areas such as Birmingham; Avon etc.

After the events at Annual Conference it was important to hold an after conference meeting in Region 6. Although Region 6 holds regular meetings, this one was an important one to establish that the working relationships within Nottingham particularly need to be challenged and reviewed. There is to be a meeting with the relevant Region 6 Officials to try to resolve this.

B&EMM Executive met on 18th June in London, and the National Committee met on 20th June. At this meeting we invited Michael Shaw the President of the FBU to address our meeting.

July 2007
B&EMM sent a delegation to the South Yorkshire Festival, and we were also able to meet with South Yorkshire Officials to discuss B&EMM Representation. This event was a themed event where they commemorated the Abolition of the British trade in enslaved Africans.

B&EMM did not attend the Rise Festival this year.

B&EMM held their first meeting to establish the framework for the FBU Race Equality Scheme.

The FBU held their first meeting on FBU Recruitment in London on 19th July. B&EMM were represented, and we were informed that the FBU will be carrying out an internal recruitment drive. This was started through the organisation of FBU recruitment packs. B&EMM produced a leaflet for this pack, and to date although the packs have gone to Regions and Brigades, the B&EMM leaflet has not been produced or included in the pack. B&EMM have raised this at the highest levels of the FBU, but this is yet to be resolved.

August 2007
B&EMM made a submission to FBU to support the UK Black Pride event. The FBU donated £200 to this event on your behalf.

Reverend Jessie Jackson the well known civil rights leader embarked on a UK Equanomics Tour and went to all major BME cities including London, Birmingham, Nottingham and Bristol. B&EMM attended this event and will be considering affiliation in the future.

B&EMM have been informed about allegations of Racism against the Publican at the 'Black Bear.

The FBU have written to the Fire Service College and Professional Footballers Association (Publican is a former professional footballer). There should be an all members circular out soon to inform all FBU members about the situation.

September 2007
At TUC Congress on September 10th the B&EMM FBU motion from the Black Workers TUC was moved by Michael Nicholas.

B&EMM sent 2 delegates to the CFOA Equality Conference in Loughborough.

B&EMM met with the Chief Fire Officer of Derbyshire on 25th. There was an issue raised with Derbyshire which involved an article in a local Derbyshire newspaper which alluded to the Fire and Rescue Service supporting a BNP Festival. B&EMM were informed about this and took immediate action through lobbying and a letter to the Chief Fire Officer. This led to this meeting.

October 2007
After the B&EMM School 2007 the B&EMM National Committee sent one delegate to the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender School which takes place at Wortley Hall in Sheffield on the weekend following our B&EMM School.

The Black Workers TUC Scottish Conference took place on 20th and 21st October in Perth. Three delegates attended this Conference from B&EMM.

The TUC held a Commemorative event on the 26th October at TUC Congress House called 'Work in Freedom'.

B&EMM sent a delegation to the United Friends and Family march in Trafalgar Square. This march seems to get bigger each year, and this is not due mainly to the improvement in support for the organisation but due to the sheer growth in number of people being killed in police custody; mental health facilities and in prisons. Next year 2008 will be the 10th anniversary of this march and we will be trying to get a large delegation from B&EMM and the FBU to attend.

FBU National School took place from the 29th October until 2nd November. This was attended by one B&EMM Official and 1 B&EMM Member. This was a disappointing turnout for B&EMM and we hope to improve on this for next year. National School is an important school for B&EMM members to attend if they wish to become more involved in the trade union movement.

G3 B&EMM AGM 2007

The AGM of Black & Ethnic Minority Members representatives met on 19th November 2007 at Wortley Hall.

Delegates:
Region 4: Mark Brown
Region 6: Dalton Powell, Mark Ferron
Region 7: Warren Simpson, Donny Clarke
Region 8: Brian Amos
Region 10: Garrett Brooks, Les Bowman, Delroy Bryant
Region 12: Ludwig Ramsey
Region 13: Leroy Philpotts, John James

Officials:
Executive Council Member – Michael Nicholas
National Secretary – Carl St Paul
National Chair – Samantha Samuels

Observers:
Region 5: Carl Petch, Paul Greaves
Region 9: Victor Liburd

A minutes silence was held in remembrance to the four firefighters who were killed on 2nd November in Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The following Resolutions were carried:

SLAVE TRADE COMMEMORATION
A campaigning group called Memorial 07 have acquired a space for, and been granted permission in Hyde Park for a permanent memorial to the enslavement of African people. They need to raise a substantial amount of money to commission and maintain a suitable memorial.

The Brent MP, Dawn Butler, launched a campaign in April 2007 to acknowledge the bicentennial of the Slave Trade Abolition Act by having an official day in commemoration of the enslavement of African people.

This conference calls upon the Executive Council to:

- Donate a sizeable donation to the permanent memorial in Hyde Park in consultation with the B&EMM National Committee.

- Research and distribute information about Memorial 07 and encourage regions to support plans for the permanent monument in commemoration of the slave trade abolition.
- Support and encourage regions to join the campaign for an official day to commemorate the abolition of African enslavement.
- Continue FBU support for the Anti-Slavery movement that continues to campaign against modern slavery.

NATIONAL POSITIVE ACTION STRATEGY
This B&EMM Annual General Meeting calls upon the Fire Brigades Union to enter into negotiations at National Joint Council level in regards to a national positive action strategy. This would ensure best practice with the sharing of ideas, resources and more importantly personnel, especially where particular brigades have a low number of B&EMM members. This strategy should allow B&EMM members in a brigade to have paid time off in order to support positive action activities in another Brigade.

LEGAL ETHNICITY MONITORING
This B&EMM Annual General Meeting calls for all enquiries, requests and applications to Thompsons Solicitors to be monitored by ethnicity.

This to include all requests that are not granted, and the reason for these not being granted.

This information will then be collated annually, and included in the Fire Brigades Union Annual Report to conference each year.

This information to be published no later than Fire Brigades Union Annual Conference 2008.

INTERNATIONAL LINKS
B&EMM are proud of our Unions' historical reputation in campaigning for, and supporting international causes. From the Spanish civil war to the Anti apartheid campaign, our union has been in forefront of the trade union movements international commitments and long may that continue.

In the last 3 years we have revived our European firefighters solidarity and our common links with the IAAF. It is important that within the globalised world we now live and work in that these links are strengthened.

The International Association of Black Professional Firefighters (IABPFF) has been campaigning for equal representation of black people in the American Fire Service and for better community fire safety in black communities since the early 1970's. Their desire for a more diverse fire service has much in common with some of our B&EMM objectives.

Their work programmes and activities have led to many black people not only joining fire services, but progressing their careers to the highest levels within that service. Their community campaigning has led to much improved fire safety within the diverse American communities. Although not a trade union, much of the work they do has a trade union ethos – campaigning, lobbying, solidarity and networking for equality and improvement.

This conference calls upon the Executive Council, on behalf of B&EMM, to make formal links with the organisation as we believe there is much to be learnt from each other in order to progress the aims of black people in a global Fire Service.

B&EMM SUPPORT
This B&EMM Annual General Meeting calls on the Fire Brigades Union Annual Conference to reiterate their support for the FBU B&EMM section.

This support needs to be translated into the strengthening of assistance and support from Regional and Brigade Officials in identifying and supporting activists who have shown the willingness to represent B&EMM at a local Brigade level and a Regional level.

This AGM therefore calls upon FBU Head Office, in consultation with B&EMM Officials, producing an action plan that assists Brigade and Regional Officials in organising local B&EMM activities.

B&EMM DATABASE
The B&EMM membership is now into 4 figures. Much work has gone into ensuring the B&EMM database is as accurate as possible. Despite this we still have members on the database who are not B&EMM.

Consequently B&EMM information, magazines and in some cases ballot forms have been sent to home addresses of members in error.

This conference requests that Head Office consults with Brigade Membership Secretaries and the B&EMM National Committee to minimise the inaccuracies in the database. This needs to be carried out with the greatest expediency.

CPD PAYMENTS
This AGM calls upon the Fire Brigades Union to ensure that all relevant stakeholders and Fire Authorities carry out a race equality impact assessment on all aspects of Continual Professional Development payments in line with current race relations legislation.

The bucket collection from the AGM raised £150 towards the Warwickshire Fire Fighters fund.

No motions were defeated.

G4 CRAG

In September 2004 the Executive Council established the Control Regionalisation Advisory Group.
CRAG collate and distribute information to members, officials, the public and politicians on the dangers posed by the ill

conceived idea that call management and command; and control and mobilisation to and of incidents can be best handled by the regionalisation of these functions.

The Group consists of members of the EC and Regional Officials supported by the Research Department. The group meets regularly with the President and General Secretary assisting.

The members of the Group are

Dean Mills	National Officer
Sharon Riley	CSNC EC Member
Sue Offland	CSNC Secretary
Mark Simmons	Region 11
John Drake	Region 13
Jack Ford	ONC EC Member
Duncan Milligan	Head Office

CRAG oversees the fight against the regionalisation of controls on several fronts.

The group identified the huge costs of the project both in terms of set up and on going costings despite the difficulty in ascertaining accurate and consistent figures from local and central government.

The cost of the project has risen sharply and far exceeds any predictions at its inception. The predicted savings by government have yet to be proven and it is highly likely that the overall project will result in no savings at all.

The practical operation and safety of the system has been highlighted and the group have raised its concerns at each opportunity and in all arenas including direct meetings with government ministers and officials.

The political arguments have been made and reiterated and the Executive Council note that many local politicians and principle fire officers have become slowly more vocal publicly, having held these views from the outset privately, against the concept.

It is very pleasing to note the position taken in Scotland when considering the most effective service delivery, efficient use of finances, and best way to protect members and the public is to enhance the current arrangements and networking of controls rather than demolish them and establish regional controls. The Executive Council notes the tremendous work done by officials in Scotland and CRAG in working to achieve the position taken by the Scottish Executive.

Regions continue to pool information and resources and CRAG have distributed these materials widely and produced information for all members on a regular basis. Officials from Regions 6, 11 and 13 have attended CRAG meetings and the Tri-Regional meetings under CRAG which has proved to be beneficial to the campaign.

The legal implications of the plans have been carefully monitored and the assistance of Thompsons in dealing with many issues and assessing the impact on members and the public has been very helpful both for service delivery and the impact on our members. The impact on Firefighters is also being carefully reviewed as the impact of any changes directly effects all firefighters not solely firefighters (control).

The campaign against these dangerous plans continues with further seminars and training for officials planned for this year and briefings of other trade unions in the UK and internationally are made on a regular basis to update them.

The Executive Council continues to fully support CRAG in their aims and objectives and wish to record their thanks to those officials who have and continue to serve on the group.

G5 CSNC Report

The Control Staff National Committee has seen its workload increase as we continue to represent the interests of members.

Certainly the majority of time is spent making the political argument against RCCs. We have been working closely with our Parliamentary Group and National Officer to ensure that the debate on Regional Control Centres is had whenever possible and it is brought to the forefront of the political arena.

We oppose the project on many grounds: resilience, safety, public service, accountability and not least of all costs. Far closer to home perhaps for members is the uncertainty over their own futures and this is why we have developed a ‘twin track’ approach. We have to be at the table to find out what is proposed and to protect our member’s interests. As this is a National Project being delivered regionally it means we are working closely with Regional Officials and CRAG to ensure consistency in our approach and to ensure that the FBUs’ objectives are met.

Retention is another huge problem in our Controls. At a time when Trade Union leave is an issue for all FBU officials, firefighters (control) find it difficult to get time off for leave at present due to crewing shortages and lack of experienced Operators. Temporary and short term contracts are becoming the norm and our skills base is being eroded which is directly affecting the safety of operational crews on the fire ground and at incidents. It is an area which has been neglected by the CLG and the employing Fire Authorities to a very large degree.

There are important changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme which will come into effect this year. We have been involved in trade union side negotiations on the proposals and are still pushing the CLG actuaries for comparisons between the LGPS and the NFPS in order that we can give members the ability to make an informed choice.

CSNC officials have attended training and educational seminars to increase their ability to assist all members where required from discipline cases to ADAE investigations.

The CSNC wish to formally record their thanks to all Region 1 and Head Office officials for ensuring that jobs have been saved in Scotland and the public will be provided a better service than that which is still being forced upon members and the public in England.

G6 CSNC AGM

The AGM of Control Staff Members representatives met on the 19th November 2007 at Wortley Hall.

Delegate:

Region 1: Libby Logan
Region 1: Lynn Oliver
Region 1: Stephen Reid
Region 3: Mandy Buchannan
Region 3: Jean Westwood
Region 3: Alex Smith
Region 4: William Sunderland
Region 4: Graham Dixon
Region 5: Kathryn Smith
Region 5: Nigel Dean
Region 6: Brenda Sturgess
Region 6: Paul Taylor
Region 6: Phil Poole
Region 7: Ian Titley
Region 7: Rosemarie Jones
Region 9: Sharon Thorndyke
Region 9: Lesley Morris
Region 11: Carole Brown
Region 11: Alison Stott
Region 12: Paul Watts
Region 13: Chas Cripps
Region 13: Andy Hiscox
Region 13: Kelly Vincent

Officials:

Executive Council Member – Sharon Riley
National Secretary – Sue Offland
National Chair – John Whitaker

No observers (spare delegates places taken up by observers)

The following Resolutions were carried:

NJC CONDITIONS REGIONAL CONTROLS

This Annual General Meeting demands that if Regional Control Centres are to be implemented that all uniformed members employed in these Control Centres are contracted under National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service, Sixth Edition 2004.

REGION 7

EMERGENCY FIRE CONTROL STAFF – STATUS

This Annual General Meeting confirms the current status of the Emergency Fire Control staff as members of their respective Fire and Rescue Services and their continuance as a uniformed part of the EF&RS conditioned to the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire & Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service, Sixth Edition.

This AGM demands that any attempt to change this status, without agreement, is met with a ballot for industrial action up to and including strike action.

REGION 5

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This Annual General Meeting demands the Executive Council safeguards all our terms and conditions as per NJC Grey Book for FF/Control staff that may relocate to a Regional Control Centre in the future.

REGION 3

CONTROL STAFF RETENTION

This Control Annual General Meeting calls upon the Fire Brigades Union to negotiate a national agreement on retention of Control staff. Such an agreement should not compromise their rights under TUPE.

This should be a fair and equitable system for all Fire Control Staff which will help with the staffing shortages as it can take up to 2 years to train competent staff.

REGION 6

PENSIONS

This Annual General Meeting demands that the Executive Council does everything in its power to safeguard FF/Control staff pensions, either Local Government Pension Scheme or New Firefighters Pension Scheme, whichever is appropriate.

REGION 3

IPDS

This Annual General Meeting condemns the failure of some EF&RS to embrace the principles and ethos of IPDS.

It is clear that this failure is leading to the prevention of ER&R Control Staff entry into the wider roles within the ER&RS. Therefore this AGM calls upon the Executive Council to ensure that the agreed route for progressing through the EF&RS i.e. by ability and not by workplace, is adopted, and acted upon, in ALL EF&RS.

REGION 5

I.P.D.S.

This A.G.M. believes that Emergency Fire Control staff are being left behind in the I.P.D.S. process.

We therefore call upon the Executive Council to investigate where this is the case and co-ordinate an overall approach to rectify the situation.

This to be done no later than Control Annual General Meeting 2008.

REGION 1

TRADE UNION FACILITIES

This Annual General Meeting instructs the Executive Council to urgently negotiate with the relevant bodies acceptable Trade Union facilities for FF/Control staff representatives. This is an extremely fraught and unsettled time for FF/Control staff and it is crucial that representatives have adequate facilities to fully represent their members.

REGION 3

REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARDS

Given that the Executive Council are encouraging more involvement with Regional Management Board, this Annual General Meeting demands that the Executive Council issue guidelines as soon as possible on this engagement, in particular to negotiation and consultation on issues affecting Control Room members.

The timescale is of the utmost importance and urgency, bearing in mind that Regional Control Centre issues including job descriptions, role maps and preferred shift patterns from the Department of Communities and Local Government are now being put to stakeholders for discussion and consultation.

REGION 7

RANK TO ROLE – EMERGENCY FIRE CONTROL ROOMS

This Annual General Meeting calls upon the Executive Council to investigate potential Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value cases, where any detrimental changes to managerial levels resulting from moving from rank to role are identified within Emergency Fire Controls, given that Emergency Fire Controls are predominantly staffed by a majority of women. Also where any such cases are identified that the union would consult with Thompsons, the union's solicitors, with a view to pursuing the said cases.

The initial investigation is to be carried out and reported to the Control Staff National Committee no later than six months from this Annual General Meeting.

REGION 1

G7 EC Attendance Record 2007

	Possible	Actual	Reasons for Non-Attendance
Ruth Winters (President)	6	6	
Mick Shaw (President)	16	15	1 – Other Union Business
Matt Wrack (General Secretary)	23	23	
Andy Dark (Assistant General Secretary	23	22	1 – Other Union Business
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS			
John McDonald	9	7½	1½ – Family Leave
Roddy Robertson	14	14	
Jim Barbour	23	23	
Alan McLean	23	19	3 – Sick Leave/1 – Compassionate Leave
Sean Starbuck (Acting EC Member)	4	4	
Sean Starbuck	11	11	
Jerry Pagan (Acting EC Member)	2	2	
Jerry Pagan	2	2	
Warren Gee	23	23	
Dave Green	23	22	1 – Childcare Difficulties
Dave Whatton	23	20	1 – Sick Leave/1 – Travel Difficulties/ 1 – Family Leave
Mike Smith	23	18	3 – Other Union Business/2 – Family Leave
Keith Handscomb	23	21	1 – Other Union Business/1 – Family Leave
Mick Shaw	6	6	
Ian Leahair (Acting EC Member)	17	13	3 – Annual Leave/1 – Other Union Business
Ernie Thornton	23	18	4 – Annual Leave/1 – Family Leave
Pete Miller	23	21	2 – Annual Leave
Tam MacFarlane	23	21	2 – Compassionate Leave
Jack Ford	23	22	1 – Annual Leave
Micky Nicholas	22	19	1 – Family Leave/2 – Paternity Leave
Tam Mitchell	23	23	
Vicky Knight	23	8	14 – Sick Leave/1 – Annual Leave
Dona Feltham (Acting EC Member)	9	8	1 – Annual Leave
Sharon Riley	23	20	2 – Annual Leave/1 – Other Union Business
Stewart Brown	22	17	1 – Annual Leave/1 Other Union Business 1 – Family Leave/1 – TU Leave Difficulties 1 – Fire Service Training Course
NATIONAL OFFICERS			
John McGhee	23	16	1 – Annual Leave/6 – Other Union Business
Dean Mills	23	18 full days 2 afternoons	1 – Special Leave/2 full days and 2 mornings Other Union Business
Paul Woolstenholmes	23	18	1 – Annual Leave/3 – Other Union Business 1 – Family Leave
Sean Starbuck	5	5	

G8 Elections

2007

Election of National Officer

Number of voting papers returned 17,850
Number of papers invalid blank/spoilt 1,193
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted 16,657

Result (One to Elect)
Bro Tam McFarlane 7,059
Bro Sean Starbuck 9,598

CERTIFIED BY ELECTORAL REFORM SERVICES 4th OCTOBER 2007
Bro Sean Starbuck elected National Officer

Election of President

Two candidates nominated:
Sis Ruth Winters
Bro Mick Shaw

Sis Ruth Winter's declined nomination, **Bro Mick Shaw** elected unopposed 27th February 2007.

Election of Vice President

Bro Alan McLean elected unopposed 19th July 2007

Election of National Treasurer

Bro Warren Gee elected unopposed 1st November 2007

Election of Executive Council Members

Region 1
Bro Roddy Robertson elected unopposed 23rd May 2007

Region 4
Bro Sean Starbuck elected unopposed 29th March 2007

Region 4
Bro Jeremy Pagan elected unopposed 27th November 2007

Region 6
Bro Dave Green re-elected unopposed 12th October 2007

Region 10
Bro Ian Leahair elected unopposed 19th December 2007

Region 11
Bro Ernie Thornton re-elected unopposed 12th October 2007

Election of Regional Secretaries

Region 1
Bro Ken Ross re-elected unopposed 24th July 2007

Region 3
Bro Steve Gregg re-elected unopposed 5th November 2007

Region 8
Number of voting papers returned 1,850
Number of papers invalid blank/spoilt 140
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted 1,710

Result (One to Elect)
Bro Grant Mayos 964
Bro Mark Watts 746

CERTIFIED BY ELECTORAL REFORM SERVICES 2nd JANUARY 2007
Bro Grant Mayos elected Region 8 Secretary

Region 12
Bro Karl Horan elected unopposed 2nd March 2007

Black & Ethnic Minority Members National Committee
Sis Samantha Samuels (Elect) elected unopposed 25th September 2007

National Women's Committee
Sis Kerry Baigent re-elected unopposed 29th March 2007

Control Staff National Committee
Sis Sue Offland re-elected unopposed 29th March 2007

Officers National Committee
Bro Dave Beverley re-elected unopposed 29th March 2007

National Gay & Lesbian Committee
Bro Pat Carberry elected unopposed 19th July 2007

Election of Regional Chairs

Region 1
Bro John Duffy elected unopposed 31st May 2007

Region 2
Bro Jimmy Quinn re- elected unopposed 29th March 2007

Region 3
Bro Steve Watson elected unopposed 25th September 2007

Region 4
Bro Ian Murray elected 31st May 2007

Region 11
Sis Dani Jones elected unopposed 30th March 2007

National Women's Committee
Sis Dona Feltham re-elected unopposed 25th September 2007

Control Staff National Committee
Number of voting papers returned 727
Number of papers invalid blank/spoilt 71
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted 656

Result (One to Elect)
Sis Kath Smith 418
Bro John Whitaker 238

CERTIFIED BY ELECTORAL REFORM SERVICES 11th DECEMBER 2007
Sis Kath Smith elected CSNC Chair

National Gay & Lesbian Committee
Sis Yannick Dubois elected unopposed 1st November 2007

National Retained Committee
Bro Harry Cotter re-elected unopposed 2nd October 2007

Election of Regional Treasurers

Region 12
Bro Dave Dymond re-elected unopposed 12th July 2007

Region 13
Sis Val Hampshire re-elected unopposed 25th September 2007

Election of Regional Officials

Region 8
Bro Chris Howells elected unopposed 2nd March 2007

Region 12
Sis Julie Barton elected unopposed 31st May 2007

G9 EC Meetings 2007

There were three full Business Meetings of the Executive Council for 2007:

13th, 14th and 15th February 2007
5th, 6th and 7th June 2007
18th, 19th and 20th September 2007

In addition there were further Executive Council Meetings held on:

19th January 2007	
5th February 2007	
6th February 2007	– NJC
28th March 2007	
19th April 2007	– Annual Conference Business
8th, 9th and 10th May 2007	– Annual Conference
15th June 2007	– NJC
18th July 2007	
22nd August 2007	
28th September 2007	– NJC
16th October 2007	
26th October 2007	– IUD Hearing
4th December 2007	
13th December 2007	– NJC

G10 Final Appeals Committee

In accordance with the Rules of the Union, one Official from each Region/Section (NG&LC - no nomination), was appointed by the 2007 Annual Conference to serve on the Final Appeals Committee.

REGION/SECTION	NAME
Region 1	Gavin Barrie
Region 2	Jim Quinn
Region 3	Steve Hedley
Region 4	Paul Matthewman
Region 5	Neil Thompson
Region 6	Dave Limer
Region 7	Chris Wood
Region 8	Chris Howells
Region 9	Tennyson Turney
Region 10	Joe McVeigh
Region 11	Mark Simmons
Region 12	Danny Whitelock
Region 13	Phil Jordan
NWC	Kerry Baigent
NG&LC	No nominee
NRC	Harry Cotter
B&EMM	Samantha Samuels
ONC	Alan Guest
CSNC	Sue Offland

The Final Appeals Committee met on the 23rd November 2007 to hear one appeal. The Final Appeals Committee upheld the decision of the Executive Council to expel from the Union one member of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service for co-responding.

Attendance Record

	Possible	Actual	Reasons for Non-Attendance
Paul Woolstenholmes (Secretary to the Final Appeals Committee)	1	1	
Gavin Barrie	1	1	
Jim Quinn	1	1	
Steve Hedley	1	1	
Paul Matthewman	1	1	
Neil Thompson	0	0	From Defendant's Region
David Limer	1	1	
Chris Wood	1	1	
Chris Howells	1	0	Leave
Tennyson Turney	1	0	Sick Leave
Joe MacVeigh	1	1	
Mark Simmons	1	1	
Danny Whitelock	1	0	Sick Leave
Phil Jordan	1	1	
Kerry Baigent	1	0	Leave
Harry Cotter	1	0	No Facilities
Samantha Samuels	1	1	
Allan Guest	1	0	Leave
Sue Offland	0	0	From Defendant's Region

G11 e-Bulletin

The E-bulletin electronic newsletter continued to be produced in 2007, with reports on FBU campaigns and services provided to FBU members. Distribution increased to around 20,000 members and officials. The number of issues published was higher than in 2006 and included a number of special pensions' e-bulletins on the Justice for Firefighter Pensions Campaign.

G12 FBU Website

The website continues to be developed with more information on key campaigns and issues on the Union's agenda. Usage remains high with close on 3 million pages downloaded. Among the most visited sections were the "site updates" containing principally press releases and FBU circulars, and the political section, which contains the political lobbying tool.

This tool, which allows members to send letters electronically to their MP at the touch of a button, was used extensively in 2007. One example was the campaign over the new Government guidance on ill-health pensions. The Union was quite clear that the letters sent from members to MPs were having an effect on the Government's position.

The Union launched FBU-TUBE TV in 2007 (www.youtube.com/fbutube). The service aims to provide FBU members with a voice on key issues they face. The videos already released cover the rescue effort during the floods of the summer, the Justice for Pensions Campaign and local campaigns such as Cornwall. Further videos around national and local campaigns and issues are planned in 2008.

The LRD pay and conditions database continued to be improved in 2007, with a revamp to make it easier to use. The database is a powerful tool for FBU officials to improve the conditions of FBU members. It provides those engaged in negotiations with:

- information on nationally agreed terms and conditions in the Fire Service
- details of local variations in the Fire Service and
- similar information across the whole economy

With the help of brigade officials the database now includes extensive coverage of local arrangements for maternity, paternity, parental leave, adoption and other issues linked to childcare, duty systems, overtime arrangements, disciplinary procedures, special leave provision, time off for public duties, career break arrangements, allowances, and union facilities agreements. The service also includes information on expenses, standby and callout, flexible working, dependency leave, grievance procedures, job sharing, health and safety, equal opportunities, bullying and harassment, and whistleblowing.

The service also provides a link to the full text of around 600 local documents covering alcohol and drugs misuse, allowances, incentives and fees, appointment, recruitment and

selection, bullying and harassment, career breaks, discipline, conduct and capability, dismissal, equal opportunities, expenses, external income and employment, flexible working, grievance, health and safety, holidays and annual leave, job sharing, maternity, mileage allowances, overtime, parental leave, paternity and maternity support, pornography, promotion, relocation, retained fees and arrangements, sick pay and sickness absence, special leave, standby/recall to duty, training and development, union recognition and facilities, whistleblowing, and working patterns/duty systems.
The service provides a link to the full text of the Grey Book, plus a series of pay and conditions reports, looking at key negotiating issues.

There are now separate sections grouping together the relevant local agreements on Conditions, Working Time and Leave; Allowances and Benefits; Working Parents; Contracts and Procedures; Health and Equality. The search engine has also been modified to enable greater ease of use.

Work to further improve it is ongoing and among the tasks in 2008 will be to: add model agreements; links to the relevant Grey Book also contained on the FBU site; and comparators to the various parts of the national FBU agreement on pay and conditions for the various reports.

The Union wishes to put on record thanks to Webmasters Eddie Cardoso and Stuart Brown for all their hard work on the website.

G13 Firefighter

Firefighter magazine is mailed to the homes of all members and out of trade members and mailed to MPs and key opinion formers within the fire service. Copies are also sent to all branches.

The magazine has a distribution in excess of 55,000 and is the most widely read publication within the UK fire service.

At the 2007 TUC Press and publications awards the judges described Firefighter magazine: “bold, positive and imaginative photos lead this classily designed production, packed with lively human interest stories, relevant news and excellent advice material.”

Firefighter was awarded second place and “highly commended” in the best feature category for our coverage of a firefighter (Ready, willing and able) who had his lower left leg amputated but was back working with the aid of a prosthetic limb. The judges described it as “a classic tale of one member with a difference, showing how far sheer human endeavour, spirit and union comradeship can take you. Inspirational and well backed up with illustration and box-outs.”

Firefighter was awarded third place and commended in the Best photograph category. The judges wrote: “A beautiful shot of a firefighter at play, packed with emotion, colour and movement that worked well on the page and draws readers into the feature content. High impact photography at its best.”

Firefighter was awarded second place and “highly commended” for the front page illustration of the pressure work has over family life. The judges described it as “an undeniably strong image of home life crushed by the cogs of working time: eye-catching, disturbing and well made.”

G14 G&L National Committee Report

National Representatives:

EC Member	Stewart Brown
National Gay & Lesbian Committee Chair	Yannick Dubois
National Gay & Lesbian Committee Secretary	Pat Carberry

Regional Representatives:

Region 1	Vacant
Region 2	Vacant
Region 3	Peter Wilcox
Region 4	Vacant
Region 5	Vacant
Region 6	Patsy Griffith
Region 7	Lisa Slevin
Region 8	Vacant
Region 9	Kevin Gutherson
Region 10	Norman Perry
Region 11	Vacant
Region 12	Alli Burrows
Region 13	Vacant

The National Committee met on several occasions this year:

2nd March Full Business	Head Office
8th May Annual Conference Delegation Meeting	Southport
22nd June Non Business	Edinburgh
3rd August Non Business	Brighton
4th October Full Business	Head Office
19th December Full Business and Committee AGM	Head Office

The following Dates have been booked for National Gay & Lesbian Committee meeting for 2008:

22nd February Full Business	Head Office
19th May Annual Conference Delegation Meeting	Southport
13th June Full Business	Head Office
1st August Non Business	Brighton
26th September Full Business	Head Office
12th December Full Business and Committee AGM	Head Office

Gay and Lesbian School:
The Gay and Lesbian School took place 19th October to 21st October 2007 at Wortley Hall (see G & L school Report). Dates for the 2008 G & L School have been set for 17th October to 19th October.

FBU Committees

National Fairness at Work Committee	Norman Perry
National Education Committee	Yannick Dubois
Regional Health & Safety Co-ords	Pat Carberry

Flagship
We produced two editions of Flagship in 2007. The format of the magazine has changed and is now smaller than in previous years but with a greater variety of contributions. Members are encouraged to continue to send articles in to Flagships Editor Pat Carberry.

Communities and Local Government
Members of the executive of the committee have been actively involved in assisting CLG with ensuring sexual orientation issues are included in any future policies. Members of the executive of the committee were also involved in the production and consultation process for the "Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy: 2008-2018. The NGLC enjoyed an open dialogue with Angela Smith Minister for Fire and a meeting has been scheduled for early 2008 with the new Minister Parmjit Dhanda.

Pride Events
Members of the Committee joined officials and members in various Pride Events around the Country. The first event was Pride Scotia held in Edinburgh on the 23rd June. Members of the committee executive attended meetings with managers and local officials in Scotland to ensure a successful event. Committee members also attended London Pride on 30th June and Brighton Pride on the 4th August.

External organisations
The NGLC continue to have a good working relationship with Stonewall. The committee continues to encourage Fire Authorities to become members of the Stonewall Employers Equality Index.

The NGLC also held a meeting with representatives from CFOA ensuring that sexual orientation is included in their future equality planning.

Avon Conference "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality in the Fire Service- an absolute taboo"
The NGLC attended this conference on the 9th and 10th October. Members of the committee joined forces with local Officials from Avon assisting in the planning and delivery of this conference. It was an historic decision Avon Fire Authority took to hold the first ever conference in the United Kingdom dedicated to the issue of sexuality in the fire service. The event proved very successful with over 200 delegates from 46 fire authorities attending.

LGBT support networks in European Fire Services
At the time of the annual report to conference going to print the NGLC were involved in a project looking at building and strengthening LGBT networks in European Fire Services. The initial project is looking at four countries, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Funding for the project is being sought from the European Union.

G15 G&L AGM 2007

The Annual General Meeting of gay and lesbian members took place on Wednesday 21st November at Wortley Hall.

Delegates:
- Region 3 – Peter Wilcox
- Region 7 – Lisa Slevin
- Region 9 – Kevin Gutherson
- Region 10 – Norman Perry
- Region 12 – Alli Burrows

Officials:
- National Secretary – Pat Carberry
- National Chair – Yannick Dubois

The following Resolutions were carried:

1. **HIV/AIDS POLICY**
   This Annual General Meeting of the Gay & Lesbian members understands the importance of health and safety and welfare of our members. A number of years have passed since the union policy on HIV/AIDS was written. We therefore request that the Executive Council and Health and Safety committee work in conjunction with the G&L committee to amend this policy and make it more comprehensive.

2. **MEMBERSHIP MONITORING**
   Conference notes that the issue of sexuality monitoring is a sensitive subject that has been the centre of mixed debate.

   It is broadly recognised that there are six main strands of equality. Conference calls on the Executive Council to develop and distribute an all members monitoring form, enabling members to detail which strands they identify with.

Conference further asks that all future membership application forms have included within them monitoring forms.

All information collated on monitoring forms must be treated with confidentiality with regard to the protection of the individual's identification.

3. **LGBT ANNUAL SCHOOL**
   This Annual General Meeting of the Gay & Lesbian members instructs the Executive Council to enter into talks with other Fire & Rescue TUC recognised unions with a view to looking at an annual school in October to bring together views from all over the service and allow more networking of LGBT employees in the Fire & Rescue Service.

   All three resolutions passed. There being only three resolutions debated all three were referred for debate at Annual Conference Southport 2008.

G16 National Retained Members Committee Report

The National Retained Committee has once again through 2007 been busy working to achieve many of it's objectives and has seen some major steps being taken in many areas that have been prioritised.

Election of National Retained Committee Chair
The National Retained Committee are pleased to see the re-election of Harry Cotter as Chair to the committee. Harry has many years experience as an official of the FBU and will continue to serve our RDS members with the same enthusiasm and dedication that he has shown previously. As the committee has undergone a number of changes over the past few years, it is encouraging to see a value being placed on the experience Harry has to offer us in our fight to promote and protect the interests of our RDS members in the many Fire & Rescue Services across the country.

Communication with RDS members
The front page of the website is under constant redesign to accommodate all the latest campaigns. We are pleased that there is now a straightforward one touch link to a page dealing with specific RDS issues from the front page. Our section of the website is packed with the latest information and available downloads but we are still looking to improve it further. I am sure by next year the RDS section of the website will be even more user friendly.

It is pleasing to report positive feed back from RDS members on the improving standards of the Alerter magazine as well as the increasing coverage of RDS issues in the Firefighter magazine and e bulletins.

Recruitment Campaign
This has been very high on our list of priorities and I am pleased to report that we have been successful in recruiting and retaining members in all parts of the UK.

The FBU has secured the services of Daniel Giblin from the TUC Academy for a period of 12 months as part of a successful bid to the Union Modernisation Fund. One of Daniels' roles is to assist in getting the FBU message out to RDS stations and to show exactly what we can do for our members. Daniel has been working with officials in Region 9 and plans to expand this to all parts of the UK over the next year.

Paul Woolstenholmes and his team have developed a member's welcome pack, which has been well received. He has been working on an official's pack, which is almost ready. This will assist us in showing officials and members what we do for them and what the role of our officials entails.

I hope to report more success next year as recruiting and retaining members is still one of the priorities for 2008.

Employment Tribunal latest position
After a busy year and several meetings with Thompsons solicitors the case returned to the Employment Tribunal in Croydon from 12-16 November 2007. The union was represented by Robin Allen QC, Martin Seaward, and by Thompsons.

The issues for determination in the case are firstly whether RDS firefighters do the same or broadly similar work as their whole-time colleagues and secondly whether the employers and the Secretary of State are able to justify the difference in treatment of RDS firefighters in relation to previous exclusion from access to the FPS, additional pay for additional responsibilities and sick pay.

These are the issues which are outstanding following the union's success in the House of Lords.

The court heard accounts from FBU members and officials from regions 11 and 12 who gave evidence to show that, as at December 2000 when these claims were lodged, there was an insubstantial difference between the amount of non-operational duties (and in particular community fire safety work) undertaken by whole-time firefighters and RDS firefighters.

Richard Arthur (Thompsons) in his report back to the FBU stressed that 'The evidence was very well presented by all of the union's witnesses, each of whom undertook meticulous preparation work for the purpose of the hearing.'

All the individuals who have given evidence have been written to thanking them for their continued commitment to this case. There was insufficient time before the Employment Tribunal for closing submissions to be heard. Detailed witness submissions are now being produced by the union's legal team and the Tribunal will hear those final submissions on 3 further days on 7, 8 and 9 January 2008. It is likely that, following the hearing in January 2008, the Tribunal will take time for lengthy deliberations. A decision from the Employment Tribunal could realistically be expected at around Easter-time.

IPDS for the RDS firefighter
The report has been completed and is out on the implementation of IPDS for firefighters working the retained duty system. We will be using this and other information to work towards our goal of achieving a more equal UK fire service.

Issues such as transferability, workplace assessments and acquired prior learning need to be addressed. For example still over half of the UK brigades require an RDS firefighter to complete the full process from application form to full initial training before movement to Wholetime status even though 80% of them use a system of personal development recording. This is absolute madness and is high on the list of things to address with the NRC in the next few months. It looks like the National Retained Committee may well have a busy time ahead.

Pensions and the RDS
The NRC has played an active part in the ongoing pensions issue and we continue to campaign against the despicable attack on the ill-health pension provision. This has major implications for all irrespective of what duty system you are contracted to. We have highlighted the issue that RDS firefighters potentially could lose both their primary and RDS employment without receiving any pension whatsoever if this disgraceful attack is allowed to succeed.

Although the initial problem rose in London with the 3 retired firefighters who had their pensions stopped it is now a problem faced by every firefighter in the UK even those who have already retired.

RDS firefighters realise the implications of this attack- whether you qualify for an ill- health pension through the J4 rule or under the NFPS, the 2006 guidance makes receipt of an ill–health pension almost impossible and a capability dismissal a very real threat.

The NRC have taken a strong view on this and reported this at the all officials meeting in Birmingham on November 22nd 2007.

The new National Joint Council constitution
This has now been agreed with no seat for the RFU, who did not take up their initial offer of a seat. RFU officials had repeatedly made commitments to RDS firefighters that they would actively seek a seat at NJC and use it to work for RDS firefighters at the reformed NJC. The initial offer of a seat was to be confirmed if the RFU could prove through an independent audit that their membership was equal to 1/14th of the members they could represent. At the 11th hour however RFU leaders decided that the organisation would not play any role at NJC and would instead focus on its organisation at local level. This complete turnaround now means that the RFU will have to apply for a seat and prove membership figures before getting an opportunity to get a seat on the NJC. Despite all the empty promises of the RFU to their members it remains that the FBU are the only union who represent firefighters at the NJC.

Education
RDS firefighters have been involved in the union learning project around the UK with many becoming union learning reps and hopefully this will continue. There have been some tremendous initiatives around the UK bringing together ULRs and RDS firefighters with benefits for both.

Once again we had firefighters working the RDS attending FBU National School and it has been recognised that with some slight adaptations it may be easier for more firefighters working RDS to attend.

Modernisation
The NRC has continued to support local officials who are being faced with the introduction of salary schemes and have joined in campaigns opposing station closures. There are still inconsistent approaches to the level of CPD being paid to firefighters working the RDS and the NRC has been involved in trying to get the best deal for FBU members.

120 hours and establishment figures
At the June 2007 Executive Council meeting Paul Woolstenholmes presented a paper and gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining a problem with RDS establishment figures. The report highlighted the fact that brigade's establishment figures were still not taking into consideration the fact that every firefighter was still being counted as a 24 hour unit. Since the introduction of the 120 hour banding this meant that a possible 48 hours a week per person was not being covered and establishment figures should have been increased accordingly. This means in simple terms for every firefighter previously counted as one 24 hour firefighter this figure should now be multiplied by 1.547 to see how many 120 hour firefighters are actually required to cover the same timeframe. This issue was also raised at the Practitioners Forum and has been highlighted by NRC officials as a major factor impacting on RDS stations being unavailable.

G17 National Retained Members AGM 2007

The AGM of Retained Members representatives met on the 18th November 2007 at Wortley Hall.

Delegates name and Region:

Sean McMillan	2
Noel Jordan	2
Seamus McMahon	2
Mick Jones	3
Nigel Howarth	3
Dave Todner	3
Allan Patterson	3

Darren Stones	4
Rick Arrand	4
Mills Parkinson	5
D Beardsall	6
Paul Brownhill	7
Stuart Owen	7
Damian Wilford	8
Martin Jones	8
Lyndon Jones	8
John Haizelden	11
Visdat Somness	11
Neal Martin	11
Neil Stafford	12
Gary Williams	12
Bob Dewis	12
Colin Gardner	13
Leigh Redman	13
Chris Jones	13

The following resolutions were carried:

BOUNTY SCHEME
This Annual General Meeting demands that the Executive Council pursue the retention of the bounty scheme for Retained Firefighters who choose not to opt into the New Firefighters Pension Scheme.

REGION 2

KEY WORKERS HOUSING SCHEME
This Annual General Meeting calls upon the Fire Brigades Union to look for avenues for members working the Retained Duty System to be included in the key workers housing scheme.

REGION 12

RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM SALARY SCHEMES
This Annual General Meeting is concerned that a number of Fire & Rescue Services are entering into duty systems that could prove to be disadvantageous to the wider membership of the Fire Brigades Union.

We demand that as soon as possible, but no later than the next Fire Brigades Union Annual Conference, the Executive Council produce a "best practice" guidance note for all Officials relating to Retained Duty System salary schemes. This document should be produced in conjunction with the National Retained Committee, following consultation with Retained Duty System Firefighters and all information to be collated through a task and finish group of FBU officials.

REGION 13

HOURLY PAYMENT
This Annual General Meeting demands that the Executive Council pursues full hourly payment for Retained Firefighters, presently paid for 15 minute periods when a callout exceeds two hours.

REGION 2

INCREASE RETAINING FEE
Given the difficulty of recruiting and retaining Firefighters to work the Retained Duty System, this Annual General Meeting asks the Executive Council to negotiate with the necessary bodies to increase the annual retaining fee for all levels of cover.

REGION 3

PAID TIME FOR FITNESS TRAINING
This Annual General Meeting calls upon the Executive Council to enter into negotiations with the national employers to ensure that there is a provision for paid time in accordance with Section 4, Part B, Para.16 of the National Conditions of Service, for fitness/exercise training for members on the retained duty system.

This is to be in addition to the requirements of the National Joint Council Conditions of Service, Section 4, PART A Para. 16 (1).

REGION 7

TRANSFER PROCESS
This Annual General Meeting demands that any nationally or locally developed process for recruitment, selection and progression of Retained Firefighters should not hinder the transfer process to Wholetime for Retained Firefighters by the inappropriate use of the National Firefighter Selection Tests.

REGION 4

TRADE UNION LEAVE
This Annual General Meeting urges the Executive Council to raise as a matter of urgency the right of Retained Fire Brigades Union representatives time off with pay whilst engaged in legitimate Trade Union duties

REGION 12

ESTABLISHMENT LEVELS
This Annual General Meeting demands that the National Joint Council and Fire Authorities give full commitment to recruiting and maintaining staffing levels in Retained Duty System workplaces. The establishment levels must take full account of all national agreements on contracted hours and leave reached in recent years.

REGION 4

NATIONAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY
This Annual General Meeting recognises the difficulties experienced in keeping up to Establishment levels within the Fire Service. Therefore we ask the Executive Council to set up a Sub-Committee with a view to launching a new National Recruitment Strategy for the Retained Duty System, and to negotiate its introduction with the relevant bodies.

REGION 3

RECRUITMENT
This Annual General Meeting recognises that increasingly Fire Authorities are filling staffing shortfalls in Retained Duty System workplaces by using Wholetime Firefighters temporarily. Whilst recognising this as an agreed principle, this practice must not be used to allow Fire Authorities to ignore the need to maintain staffing and cease actively recruiting Retained Firefighters.

REGION 4

RETAINED UNION LEARNING REPS
This Annual General Meeting instructs the Executive Council to investigate the possibility of additional funding from appropriate sources to allow the introduction of regional retained union learning representatives.

REGION 7

ACTION ON RESOLUTIONS
This Annual General Meeting notes the large number of resolutions that have been submitted and passed from Retained Members AGM's over the years.

We request that as soon as possible, but no later than the next Fire Brigades Union Annual Conference, the Executive Council produce a document detailing all resolutions passed by previous Retained Members AGM's and indicate the work carried out to fulfil these resolutions. This document must be updated as necessary.

REGION 13

The following motions were withdrawn:

BOUNTY PAYMENTS
This Annual General Meeting asks the Executive Council to enter into negotiations with the relevant bodies, to extend the Bounty Scheme for Retained Duty System members coming to the end of their career, where joining the New Firefighters Pension Scheme is not a realistic financial option.

REGION 3

RETAINED BOUNTY SCHEME
This Annual General Meeting calls on the Executive Council to enter into negotiations with the National Employers to reinstate the retained duty system bounty scheme.

REGION 7

No motions were defeated.

G18 Officer Members AGM 2007

The AGM of Officer Members representatives met on the 20th November 2007 at Wortley Hall.

Delegates name:

Region 1 – Wullie Brown, Gordon Griffen
Region 2 – John Denvir, Victor Spence
Region 3 – Martin Pottinger
Region 5 – Ian Johnson, Peter Moss, Stephen Flanagan
Region 6 – Craig Dooley
Region 7 – Bill Perrins
Region 8 – Mike Higgins
Region 9 – Dave Cain, Bob Lapping
Region 10 – Michael Cunningham, Pan Poullais
Region 11 – Russel Troth
Region 13 – Michael Feher

Officials:

Executive Council Member – Jack Ford
National Secretary – Dave Beverley
National Chair – Allan Guest

The following Resolutions were carried:

1. **AREA MANAGER PROPOSALS**
   This Annual General Meeting of Officer members condemns the actions of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority to encourage Area Managers to sign new conditions of service outside the National Joint Council constitution. These new proposals will also affect current Group Managers, as it will be a prerequisite to promotion. This Annual General Meeting of Officer members believes that this is LFEPA's attempt to undermine Fire Brigade Union members and may have national implications.

   This Annual General Meeting of Officer members therefore instructs the Executive Council and Brigade Officials to resist any attempts by the national and/or local employers to force FBU members outside the NJC constitution and to protect those FBU members wishing to remain within the NJC constitution and those seeking promotion to Area Manager levels.

2. **ESTABLISHMENT LEVELS**
   This Annual General Meeting calls on the Executive Council to carry out a survey of Flexible Duty Officer establishment levels, in particular to identify how many operational Officer posts have been lost to non operational posts. This Annual General Meeting believes that operational effectiveness, particularly at night time and weekends, is being severely compromised and is placing undue stress on Flexible Duty Officers.

3. **PUBLIC HOLIDAY PAY**
   This Annual General Meeting calls upon the Executive Council to enter into negotiations with the employers side of the National Joint Council to achieve that Officers conditioned to the flexible duty system and who are required to work on a public holiday shall be paid at double time (which shall not be pensionable) for those hours worked as positive hours and for those hours when they are required to attend an emergency incident whilst on standby.

4. **STANDBY/CALL OUT DUTY**
   This Annual General Meeting of Officer members calls on the Executive Council and Brigade Officials to resist any attempts by the national and/or local employers from implementing any detrimental changes to the standby/call-out duty conditions of the flexible duty system as currently contained within the National Joint Council Scheme of Conditions of Service (Sixth Edition).

5. **CIVILIANISATION OF POSTS**
   This Annual General Meeting is concerned at the number of "Green" to "Grey" book transfers that are taking place throughout the UK Fire and Rescue Service. This AGM believes that many of these transferees lack knowledge and experience and are not "sector competent" in many of

the tasks they are being given. Accordingly, we call on the Executive Council to negotiate with the relevant bodies, to ensure that Assessment and Development Centres must take into account the Health & Safety definition of "competent person" i.e. Skills, Knowledge and Experience, when appointments into current operational posts are made.

6. **RECALL TO DUTY**
This Annual General Meeting calls upon the Executive Council to enter into negotiations with the employers side of the National Joint Council to achieve that employees in the role of Group or Area Manager who are recalled to duty shall be paid at the appropriate rate for their role and not at Station Manager rate.

7. **STATION OFFICERS PROTECTED PAY**
This Annual General Meeting of Officer members calls on the Executive Council and Brigade Officials to resist any attempts by the national and/or local employers to freeze salaries for Station Officers on pay protection. This being the employers position as indicated on circular emp/09/07.

8. **ER/01/07**
This AGM demands that paragraph 2 of the 'Constitution of the National Joint Council and the Middle Managers Negotiating Body' for 'Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services' introduced on 28th September 2007 is strictly adhered to in that:-

"The National Joint Council shall cover all uniformed employees of the Fire and Rescue Services in the United Kingdom in the roles of Firefighter to Area Manager."

9. **ER/02/07**
This AGM celebrates the withdrawal of the Retained Firefighters Union from the NJC on the 27th September 2007 and call upon the Executive Council to take steps to ensure the same outcome in regard to the Middle Managers Negotiating Body and the Fire Officers Association.

No motions were defeated.

G19 Political Fund

The political fund continues to be used for the provision of campaign funding and political education work.

Members will note the increase in publications we issue for briefings to politicians to benefit all sections and members, ensuring our political work is effective, targeted, and assists those who actively help our members.

The available fund continues to grow following the disaffiliation from the Labour Party and this additional financial resource has been used in all areas of political work to benefit members by campaigning on their behalf at local and national level.

G20 RAFT

RAFT (Restoration of Appearance and Function Trust) is a registered charity and deals with people suffering from physical disfigurement and terrible wounds including severe burning, and as a result several of our own members benefit from their work.

The Union has continued its association with RAFT throughout 2007.

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Mr K Ross
Regional Chair
Mr J Duffy
Regional Official
Mr J Docherty
Regional Treasurer
Mr G K Barrie

Brigades	**Brigade Secretary**	**Brigade Chair**
Central	Mr G McQuade	Mr A Paterson
Dumfries & Galloway	Mr T Craig	Mr W Brown
Fife	Mr S McCabe	Mr G Birtley
Grampian	Mr A Paterson	Mr L Murray
Highlands & Islands	Mr W Sanderson	Mr F Parr
Lothian & Borders	Mr A Fulton	Mr B J Banks
Strathclyde	Mr J Spiers	Mr J Cairns
Tayside	Mr J Malone	Mr J Duffy

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Mr S Watson
Regional Official
Mr P Wilcox
Regional Treasurer
Mr S Hedley

Brigades	Brigade Secretary	Brigade Chair
Cleveland	Mr S Watson	Mr T Whitfield
Durham	Mr K Shaw	Mr R Morton
Northumberland	Mr C James	Mr G Wilson
Tyne & Wear	Mr A Noble	Mr D Turner

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Mr J Pagan

Brigades	Brigade Secretary	Brigade Chair
Humberside	Mr P Smith	Mr D Collingwood
North Yorkshire	Mr I Watkins	Mr G Willis
South Yorkshire	Mr N Hodges	Mr J Speight
West Yorkshire	Mr M Wilson	Mr N Sutcliffe

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Regional Chair
Mr N Thompson
Regional Official
Vacant
Regional Treasurer
Mr S Shelton

Brigades	Brigade Secretary	Brigade Chair
Cheshire	Mr D Williams	Mr A Price
Cumbria	Mr M Hind	Mr D Greenway
GMC	Mr P Taylor	Mr A Anderson
Isle of Man	Vacant	Vacant
Lancashire	Mr S Harman	Mr M Gallagher
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Mr T D Murray
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Derbyshire	Mr M Cobb	Mr P Poole
Leicestershire	Mr G Vaux	Mr R Palmer
Lincolnshire	Mr J Curry	Mr M J Curry
Northamptonshire	Mr G Mitchell	Mr S Mason
Nottinghamshire	Mr S Ainley	Mr P Coates

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Mr A Larose
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Mr P Goulden
Regional Treasurer
Mr C Wood

Brigades	Brigade Secretary	Brigade Chair
Hereford & Worcester	Mr J Richards	Mr C Horsburgh
Staffordshire	Mr M Lamb	Mr A Brown
Shropshire	Mr B Moss	Mr G McLeod
Warwickshire	Mr T Conn	Mr M rattray
West Midlands	Ms R Jones	Mr M Fellows

Region 8 – Wales

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Bedfordshire	Mr J Hollamby	Ms J Clarke
Cambridgeshire	Mr K Napier	Mr P McQuillen
Essex	Mr D Barnard	Mr A Hull
Hertfordshire	Mr A Smith	Mr S Duncan
Norfolk	Mr N Day	Mr P Greeves
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Region 11 – South Eastern

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Mr J Parrott
Regional Chair
Mrs D Jones
Regional Official
Mr M Simmons
Regional Treasurer
Mr S Beckwith

Brigades	Brigade Secretary	Brigade Chair
Kent	Mr H Sawyer	Mr I Young
Surrey	Mr R Jones	Mrs D Jones
East Sussex	Mr S Huggins	Mr M Dale
West Sussex	Mr F Bishop	Mr M Cambers

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Regional Chair
Mr D Whitelock
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Mr D Dymond

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Berkshire	Mr E Cardoso	Mr M Stollery
Buckinghamshire	Mr R Matthews	Mr M Bliss
Hampshire	Mr C Jordan	Mr L Ramsey
Isle of Wight	Mr P Fletcher	Mr M Deacon
Oxfordshire	Mr A Middleton	Mr A Sillman

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Mr P Jordan
Regional Official
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Regional Treasurer
Ms V Hampshire

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Avon	Mr C Jackson	Mr C Taylor
Cornwall	Mr T Nottle	Mr M Tremellen
Devon & Somerset	Mr T French	Mr B Walker
Dorset	Ms K Adams	Mr C Stanley
Gloucestershire	Mr M Tully	Mr S Turner
Wiltshire	Mr J Tray	Mr P Lawler

B&EMM National Committee

Executive Council	
Member B&EMM	Mr M Nicholas
Secretary B&EMM	Ms S Samuels
Region 1	Vacant
Region 2	Vacant
Region 3	Vacant
Region 4	Mr M Brown
Region 5	Vacant
Region 6	Mr D H Powell
Region 7	Mr W Simpson
Region 8	Mr B Amos
Region 9	Mr V Liburd
Region 10	Mr G Brooks
Region 11	Ms C Brown
Region 12	Mr A Fernandes
Region 13	Mr L Phillpotts

Control Staff National Committee

Executive council	
member CSNC	Ms S Riley
Secretary CSNC	Ms S Offland
Chair CSNC	Ms K Smith
Region 1	Ms E Logan
Region 2	Ms L Rowan-O'Neill
Region3	Ms J Westwood
Region 4	Mr W Sunderland
Region 5	
Region 6	Mr P Poole
Region 7	Mr I Titley
Region 8	Ms S Williams
Region 9	Ms S Thorndyke
Region 10	Vacant
Region 11	Ms A Stott
Region 12	Mr P Watts
Region 13	

Officers' National Committee

Executive council	
member ONC	Mr J C Ford
Secretary ONC	Mr D Beverley
Chair ONC	Mr A Guest
Region 1	Mr R Brown
Region 2	Mr J Denvir
Region 3	Mr M Pottinger
Region 4	Mr N Sutcliffe
Region 5	Mr P Moss
Region 6	Mr M Coakley
Region 7	Mr W Perrins
Region 8	Mr R Martin
Region 9	Mr D Cain
Region 10	Mr P Poullais
Region 11	Mr R Troth
Region 12	
Region 13	Mr M J Feher

Gay & Lesbian Committee

Executive council	
member G/L	Mr S Brown
Secretary G/L	Mr P Carberry
Chair G/L	Ms Y Dubois
Region 1	Vacant
Region 2	Vacant
Region 3	Mr P A Wilcox
Region 4	
Region 5	
Region 6	Ms P Griffith
Region 7	Ms L Slevin
Region 8	Vacant
Region 9	Mr K Gutherson
Region 10	Mr N Perry
Region 11	Vacant
Region 12	Ms A Burrows
Region 13	

National Retained Committee

Executive council	
member NRC	Mr T Mitchell
Secretary NRC	Mr P Preston
Chair NRC	Mr D H Cotter
Region 1	Vacant
Region 2	Mr N C Jordan
Region 3	Mr M W Jones
Region 4	Mr R Arrand
Region 5	Mr M Parkinson
Region 6	
Region 7	Mr p Brownhill
Region 8	Mr L Jones
Region 9	Mr K J Kiddell
Region 10	Vacant
Region 11	Mr J Haizelden
Region 12	Mr R H Dewis
Region 13	Mr L P Redman

National Women's Committee

Executive council	
member NWC	Ms V Knight
Secretary NWC	Ms K Baigent
Chair NWC	Ms D Feltham
Region 1	Ms D Christie
Region 2	Ms L Rowan-O'Neill
Region 3	Ms S Rye
Region 4	Ms T Jeffrey
Region 5	Ms L Smethurst
Region 6	Mrs S Leech
Region 7	Ms H Harrison

Region 8	
Region 9	Ms E Davis
Region 10	Ms S Harper
Region 11	Ms J Craig
Region 12	Ms K Ellis
Region 13	Ms P Layhe

Education Officers

Region 1	Mr J Duffy
Region 2	Ms L Rowan
Region 3	Mr P Wilcox
Region 4	
Region 5	Mr N Childs
Region 6	Mr D Limer
Region 7	Mr A Larose
Region 8	Mr C Griffiths
Region 9	Mr S Brinkley
Region 10	Ms L Smith
Region 11	Mr J C Saynor
Region 12	Mr C Jordan
Region 13	Mr R Walker
CSNC Education Rep	Ms J Westwood
ONC Education Rep	Mr D Beverley
NRC Education Rep	Mr D H Cotter
NWC Education Rep	Ms D Feltham
B&EMM Educ. Rep	Mr L Philpotts
G&L Education Rep	Ms Y Dubois

Regional Health and Safety Reps

Region 1	Mr J Docherty
Region 2	Mr J Heron
Region 3	Mr R King
Region 4	Mr P Matthewman
Region 5	Mr I McGill
Region 6	Mr T D Neal
Region 7	Mr P W Goulden
Region 8	Mr S Fleming
Region 9	Mr B Hooper
Region 10	Mr G Fielden
Region 11	Mr M Brown
Region 12	Mr D Dymond
Region 13	Mr K Herniman
CSNC Rep	Ms K Smith
ONC Rep	Mr P Poullais
NRC Rep	Mr L Jones
NWC Rep	Ms S J Harper
B&EMM Rep	Ms S J Samuels
G&L Rep	Mr P Carberry

Regional Fairness at Work Reps

Region 1	Mr A Miller
Region 2	Mr J Quinn
Region 3	Mr B Gibson
Region 4	Mr D Williams
Region 5	Ms V Salmon
Region 6	Mr Mayne
Region 7	Vacant
Region 8	Mr D E Parry
Region 9	Mr J Clarke
Region 10	Mr S Wakeford
Region 11	Mrs D Jones
Region 12	Mr L Ramsey
Region 13	Mr L Phillpotts

G22 Retired Officials

Executive Council members

Bob Blackburn – Region 4
Brother Bob Blackburn retired in February 2007 after serving in South Yorkshire and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services for a total of 34 years.

Bob held several positions within the FBU including all the positions at branch and brigade level before taking up a regional position as Regional Secretary in Region 4.

Bob also held the position as Officers rep and his meticulous attention to detail stood him in good stead when taking up the post of Executive Council member for the region following the dispute in 2003.

Bob was very active in his support for Wortley Hall and in supporting local Trades Councils and the Trade Union movement in general both regionally and nationally.

The Executive Council wish Bob a peaceful, long and happy retirement and thank him on behalf of all members for his contribution to the FBU throughout his lengthy service.

John McDonald – Region 1
Brother John Mc Donald retired in May 2007 after 32 years of service to the public and the Fire Brigades Union.

Shortly after joining the Fire Service John became an official in Strathclyde at Branch level and throughout his service held position within the FBU up to and including regional level.

After becoming the Executive Council member for Scotland John led the region during the difficult period in the build up to the 2002/3 strike and all the way through it.

John's work in the Trade Union movement and for working people was not only restricted to Scotland or within the FBU itself. John spoke passionately on international and equality issues and sat on a number of EC sub committees representing the views and interests of all members in the Scottish Region.

John also represented the FBU at the STUC, the TUC and at the NJC in addition to providing help and assistance to officials both inside and outside the region.

The Executive Council wish John a long productive and very happy retirement from the FBU and we are in no doubt his work for others will continue ensuring those who have no voice are afforded one.

Regional Officials

Jim Brown	– Regional Treasurer Region 9
Peter Gallagher	– Regional Secretary G&L and West Mids Brigade Secretary

Brigade Officials

Keith Walters	region 4
Tony Pearson	region 7

In addition several officials stood down from posts pending their retirement date and they will be formally recorded when they leave the service.

Our sincere thanks to those officials who have selflessly served members and the public during the period covered by this report.

G23 Sectional AGMs 2007

A collection was taken at the 2007 Sectional AGMs for the 'Warwickshire Firefighters Families Fund', raising £1410.82.

G24 Statistical Statement

Membership Statistics as at 31 December 2007

Region	Brigade Name	Code	Whole-time	Retain-ed	Control	Total	Levy to Labour	FBU	No Levy	Total	AIF – Yes	AIF – No	Total	Male	Female	Total
Head Office	National Official	HO	6	0	0	6	4	1	1	6	6	0	6	6	0	6
Total			**6**	**0**	**0**	**6**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**6**	**6**	**0**	**6**	**6**	**0**	**6**
1	Central	CE	237	97	10	344	212	49	83	344	342	2	344	328	16	344
	Dumfries/Galloway	DU	87	169	14	270	117	9	144	270	270	0	270	243	27	270
	Fife	FI	348	63	15	426	194	175	57	426	421	5	426	400	26	426
	Grampian	GR	309	135	29	473	383	35	55	473	471	2	473	430	43	473
	Highland & Islands	HI	130	423	14	567	300	49	218	567	562	5	567	529	38	567
	Lothian/Borders	LB	723	157	30	910	350	517	43	910	896	14	910	830	80	910
	Strathclyde	ST	1998	401	70	2469	1352	943	174	2469	2464	5	2469	2364	105	2469
	Tayside	TA	406	160	21	587	181	222	184	587	587	0	587	543	44	587
Total			**4238**	**1605**	**203**	**6046**	**3089**	**1999**	**958**	**6046**	**6013**	**33**	**6046**	**5667**	**379**	**6046**
2	N.I.F.B.	NI	869	770	50	1689	371	62	1256	1689	1689	0	1689	1631	58	1689
Total			**869**	**770**	**50**	**1689**	**371**	**62**	**1256**	**1689**	**1689**	**0**	**1689**	**1631**	**58**	**1689**
3	Cleveland	CL	515	62	25	602	237	204	161	602	558	44	602	563	39	602
	Durham Co.	DH	355	108	25	488	330	93	65	488	486	2	488	456	32	488
	Northumberland Co.	NO	184	115	20	319	226	69	24	319	316	3	319	287	32	319
	Tyne/Wear	TY	900	16	49	965	515	110	340	965	961	4	965	899	66	965
Total			**1954**	**301**	**119**	**2374**	**1308**	**476**	**590**	**2374**	**2321**	**53**	**2374**	**2205**	**169**	**2374**
4	Humberside	HU	634	223	23	880	591	149	140	880	834	46	880	831	49	880
	North Yorkshire	NY	323	194	16	533	315	26	192	533	507	26	533	501	32	533
	South Yorkshire	SY	816	48	38	902	407	314	181	902	870	32	902	845	57	902
	West Yorkshire	WY	1365	112	47	1524	689	239	596	1524	1458	66	1524	1451	73	1524
Total			**3138**	**577**	**124**	**3839**	**2002**	**728**	**1109**	**3839**	**3669**	**170**	**3839**	**3628**	**211**	**3839**
5	Cheshire	CH	542	147	20	709	506	166	37	709	701	8	709	674	35	709
	Cumbria	CU	240	162	8	410	253	42	115	410	378	32	410	394	16	410
	GMC	GM	1760	18	47	1825	1208	308	309	1825	1778	47	1825	1757	68	1825
	Isle of Man	IM	1	41	0	42	39	0	3	42	42	0	42	42	0	42
	Lancashire	LA	852	255	44	1151	938	208	5	1151	1148	3	1151	1090	61	1151
	Merseyside	ME	828	6	31	865	668	168	29	865	814	51	865	808	57	865
Total			**4223**	**629**	**150**	**5002**	**3612**	**892**	**498**	**5002**	**4861**	**141**	**5002**	**4765**	**237**	**5002**
6	Derbyshire	DE	412	257	25	694	472	89	133	694	681	13	694	656	38	694
	Leicestershire	LE	419	121	24	564	288	39	237	564	544	20	564	532	32	564
	Lincolnshire	LI	172	227	18	417	343	27	47	417	413	4	417	373	44	417
	Northamptonshire	NR	259	86	17	362	154	102	106	362	355	7	362	339	23	362
	Nottinghamshire	NT	557	193	20	770	341	273	156	770	765	5	770	737	33	770
Total			**1819**	**884**	**104**	**2807**	**1598**	**530**	**679**	**2807**	**2758**	**49**	**2807**	**2637**	**170**	**2807**
7	Hereford/Worcester	HW	313	160	16	489	309	118	62	489	477	12	489	446	43	489
	Staffordshire	SF	400	251	15	666	360	219	87	666	659	7	666	621	45	666
	Shropshire	SP	189	108	9	306	156	30	120	306	300	6	306	292	14	306
	Warwickshire	WA	249	92	17	358	126	38	194	358	347	11	358	332	26	358
	West Midlands	WM	1626	10	51	1687	701	795	191	1687	1663	24	1687	1581	106	1687
Total			**2777**	**621**	**108**	**3506**	**1652**	**1200**	**654**	**3506**	**3446**	**60**	**3506**	**3272**	**234**	**3506**
8	Mid & West Wales	MW	443	484	35	962	591	345	26	962	961	1	962	895	67	962
	North Wales	NW	273	476	31	780	565	149	66	780	780	0	780	727	53	780
	South Wales	SW	916	406	50	1372	996	252	124	1372	1341	31	1372	1308	64	1372
Total			**1632**	**1366**	**116**	**3114**	**2152**	**746**	**216**	**3114**	**3082**	**32**	**3114**	**2930**	**184**	**3114**

Membership Statistics as at 31 December 2007 (continued)

Region	Brigade Name	Code	Whole-time	Retain-ed	Control	Total	Levy to Labour	FBU	No Levy	Total	AIF – Yes	AIF – No	Total	Male	Female	Total
9	Bedfordshire	BE	292	60	25	377	185	134	58	377	377	0	377	342	35	377
	Cambridgeshire	CA	215	92	10	317	105	96	116	317	308	9	317	296	21	317
	Essex	ES	896	209	27	1132	770	236	126	1132	1120	12	1132	1079	53	1132
	Hertfordshire	HE	464	79	14	557	342	148	67	557	552	5	557	532	25	557
	Norfolk	NF	262	136	13	411	251	129	31	411	395	16	411	388	23	411
	Suffolk	SU	180	126	6	312	181	103	28	312	292	20	312	295	17	312
Total			**2309**	**702**	**95**	**3106**	**1834**	**846**	**426**	**3106**	**3044**	**62**	**3106**	**2932**	**174**	**3106**
10	London	LO	5790	0	0	5790	4025	1361	404	5790	5657	133	5790	5590	200	5790
Total			**5790**	**0**	**0**	**5790**	**4025**	**1361**	**404**	**5790**	**5657**	**133**	**5790**	**5590**	**200**	**5790**
11	Kent	KE	867	402	27	1296	662	167	467	1296	1255	41	1296	1236	60	1296
	Surrey	SR	568	57	20	645	517	35	93	645	643	2	645	611	34	645
	East Sussex	SX	406	95	13	514	141	25	348	514	495	19	514	485	29	514
	West Sussex	WS	319	48	9	376	244	38	94	376	372	4	376	352	24	376
Total			**2160**	**602**	**69**	**2831**	**1564**	**265**	**1002**	**2831**	**2765**	**66**	**2831**	**2684**	**147**	**2831**
12	Berkshire	BK	399	77	25	501	336	73	92	501	496	5	501	472	29	501
	Buckinghamshire	BU	352	124	14	490	241	59	190	490	482	8	490	467	23	490
	Hampshire	HA	563	82	10	655	176	118	361	655	614	41	655	628	27	655
	Isle of Wight	IW	58	86	14	158	99	9	50	158	157	1	158	143	15	158
	Oxfordshire	OX	225	140	9	374	160	43	171	374	345	29	374	348	26	374
Total			**1597**	**509**	**72**	**2178**	**1012**	**302**	**864**	**2178**	**2094**	**84**	**2178**	**2058**	**120**	**2178**
13	Avon	AV	604	108	35	747	381	193	173	747	715	32	747	707	40	747
	Cornwall	CO	185	164	1	350	114	44	192	350	348	2	350	342	8	350
	Dorset	DO	288	104	22	414	148	80	186	414	398	16	414	383	31	414
	Devon	DV	636	323	43	1002	401	156	445	1002	950	52	1002	946	56	1002
	Gloucestershire	GL	221	103	18	342	138	32	172	342	324	18	342	307	35	342
	Wiltshire	WI	178	80	9	267	126	43	98	267	266	1	267	250	17	267
Total			**2112**	**882**	**128**	**3122**	**1308**	**548**	**1266**	**3122**	**3001**	**121**	**3122**	**2935**	**187**	**3122**
TOTAL			**34624**	**9448**	**1338**	**45410**	**25531**	**9956**	**9923**	**45410**	**44406**	**1004**	**45410**	**42940**	**2470**	**45410**

G25 Union Trustees

The EC wish to place on record their appreciation to Bro. Stan Fitzsimmons and Bro. 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.

G26 Women's National Committee Report

National Representatives:

EC Member	Vicky Knight
National Women's Committee Chair	Dona Feltham
National Women's Committee Secretary	Kerry Baigent
National Women's Committee Vice-chair	Helen Harrison

Regional Representatives:

Region 1	Heather Lawrie/Denise Christie
Region 2	Lynda Rowan
Region 3	Samantha Rye
Region 4	Trish Jeffery
Region 5	No rep
Region 6	Staci Leach
Region 7	Helen Harrison
Region 8	No rep
Region 9	Emma Davis
Region 10	Sally Harper
Region 11	Jenny Impey
Region 12	Kate Ellis/Julie Barton (resigned in early 07 – to become the regional official for region 12)
Region 13	Pauline Layhe

National Women's Committee Meetings

The National Women's Committee met on several occasions this year.

Date	*Meeting/Location*
12th December 2006	NWC exec *Wortley Hall*
13th December 2006	NWC business meeting *Wortley Hall*
21st February	NWC working meeting *Wortley Hall*
22nd February	NWC full business meeting *Wortley Hall*
20th June	NWC working meeting *Wortley Hall*
21st June	NWC full business meeting *Wortley Hall*
1st August	NWC business meeting *London*
17th September	NWC business meeting *London*
18th October	NWC full business meeting *Wortley Hall*
19th October	NWC working meeting *Wortley Hall*
19th November	NWC AGM *Wortley Hall*

Committees that the NWC were represented at

FBU Executive Council Sub Committees	*NWC Official*
EC Representation Appeals Committee	Vicky Knight
EC International sub-committee	Vicky Knight
EC Re-organisation sub committee	Vicky Knight
FBU committees	*NWC Official*
National Fairness at Work Committee	Kerry Baigent
National Fairness at Work Strategy Group	Kerry Baigent
National Education Committee	Dona Feltham
Regional Education Officers Committee	Dona Feltham
National Health and Safety Committee	Sally Harper
Campaign Coordinators	Kerry Baigent
IRMP Coordinators	Kerry Baigent
Control Care Campaign	Kerry Baigent
Final Appeals Committee	Kerry Baigent
Firefighter Representative	Sam Rye
TUC Committees	*NWC Official*
TUC Women's Committee	Vicky Knight
TUC Gold Badge Panel	Vicky Knight
Other Committees	*NWC Official*
Charter for Women	KerryBaigent/ Sian Griffiths
CLG Retention of Women Firefighter's Strategy Group	Kerry Baigent
Equality and Diversity Stakeholder Group	Vicky Knight

Conference and events with speaking commitments attended by the NWC

WTUC Scarborough 14th – 16th March 2007

Delegation:
Ruth Winters
Vicky Knight
Dona Feltham
Kerry Baigent
Patsy Griffith
Sian Griffiths
Sue Offland

The following resolutions were passed by Conference. "Women in Zimbabwe" was the substantive motion and "Childcare" was our emergency motion.

WOMEN IN ZIMBABWE
Conference welcomes the TUC's long standing relations with the trade union movement in Zimbabwe, particularly the most informative visit from Tabitha Khumalo to Congress 2006.

We now recognise that there is much support and assistance required from affiliates to assist women in Zimbabwe, millions of whom, due to financial and political constraints, are without safe affordable sanitary products.

The lack of this most basic requirement leads, via improvised sanitary protection, to an increase in vaginal infections, infertility and depression. Drug shortages mean that treatment is either unaffordable or unavailable and domestic violence is increasing due to a lack of understanding and knowledge regarding the difference between STI's and vaginal infections.

The situation for Zimbabwean women is at crisis point.

Conference calls upon the TUC and its affiliates to:
i) write to the Zimbabwe Government via the Zimbabwe High Commission;
ii) lobby the UK Government to support the campaign;
iii) keep pressure on the TUC to take all possible steps to achieve the campaign's objectives;
iv) support the ACTSA campaign;
v) send donations to the sanitary appeal; and
vi) download and distribute "Dignity.Period!" information.

Emergency Motion
Childcare – FBU emergency motion
Conference deplores the decision of the General Council, reported to the TUC Women's Committee on the 19th January 2007, not to expand the current childcare provisions for conferences and events run by the TUC. We are appalled that this decision has been taken despite the overwhelming endorsement by delegates to the TUC Women's Conference 2006 to expand childcare provision.

The TUC Women's Committee have repeatedly made it clear that inadequate, inappropriate and unaffordable childcare is a huge barrier to parents and carers and in particular, to women's involvement in the trade union and labour movement.

We believe that childcare provision for conference hours solely, is certainly not adequate for delegates wishing to expand their knowledge and experience at any conference, e.g. fringe events or organised social events such as the International Women's Day rally this year, or simply to network and debate outside of session times.

Conference further deplores the General Councils decision which has based its conclusion not to expand childcare provision on the lack of commitment or response from affiliates during the recent childcare consultation. This Conference believes that the TUC should be a 'Leader' of best practice, not solely the provider of the 'average' of its affiliates.

This resolution was chosen by conference to be the motion proposed to main congress in September.

Ruth Winters spoke at the Latin America fringe meeting.

Vicky Knight got re-elected onto the TUC Women's Committee – congratulations Vicky

Well done to all of the delegation for their hard work and great speeches.

TUC 11th – 14th September – Brighton
Dona Feltham was part of the FBU delegation to the TUC and seconded the childcare motion moved by the TUC Women's Committee. This resolution fell, however we will come back again next year.

STUC Women's Conference – 13th and 14th November – Glasgow

Delegates:
Denise Christie
Kerry Baigent
Linda Shanahan
Julia Small
Rachael Connolly

The FBU submitted two resolutions, maternity and dignity period, both were carried by conference.

Denise Christie was elected onto the STUC Women's Committee – congratulations Denise

Linda Shanahan was presented with the STUC meritorious award by the chair of the conference. Linda deserved this award for her amazing commitment to the trade union movement. Linda has been a tremendous support to the FBU Women's Committee over many years and we congratulate her on her achievements. We can't think of anyone else more deserving. The NWC sent a bouquet of flowers to Linda at the conference.

Other conferences and events attended by the NWC

Date/Event/NWC Attendees

22nd November 2006
Pro choice Lobby – Kerry Baigent, Jo Winrow-Jones and Sally Harper

5th – 7th December 2006
EC – Vicky Knight

7th and 8th December 2006
Transnational conference – Dona Feltham

14th and 15th December 2006
NJC – Vicky Knight

19th December 2006
CLG – retention of women firefighters meeting – Kerry Baigent

22nd December 2006
NASUWT – Vicky Knight

9th January 2007
DHPB – Vicky Knight

12th January
Equality and Diversity stakeholders group – Vicky Knight

16th January
TUC Women's Committee – Vicky Knight

17th and 18th January
Grievance training – NWC

19th January
Special EC – Vicky Knight

24th and 25th January
ADAE meeting – Kerry Baigent

1st February – am
Re-organisation sub committee – Vicky Knight

1st February – pm
International sub committee – Vicky Knight

5th February
EC – Vicky Knight

6th February
NJC – Vicky Knight

7th February
CLG workshop on the FRS equality and diversity strategy – Kerry Baigent, Dona Feltham, Vicky Knight and Helen Harrison

7th February
London Women's School – Sally Harper and Sian Griffiths

12th February
Re-org sub committee – Vicky Knight

13th – 15th February
EC – Vicky Knight

6th February
Pensions seminar – Kerry Baigent

20th February
TUPE seminar – Vicky Knight and Kerry Baigent

26th February
IER – Vicky Knight

26th February
Charter for Women – Sian Griffiths

28th February
TUFB Conference – Vicky Knight

8th and 9th March
NJC – Vicky Knight

8th March
TUC – International Women's Day – NWC Exec

12th March
TUC Women's Committee – Vicky Knight

13th – 16th March
WTUC – NWC Delegation

21st and 22nd March
Equality Seminar – Kerry Baigent

26th March
CLG – retention meeting – Kerry Baigent

27th March
FAW meeting – Kerry Baigent

2nd and 3rd April
Legal Conference – Dona Feltham

3rd April
FAW meeting – Kerry Baigent

4th April
Sections meeting – Head office – Vicky Knight, Kerry Baigent and Dona Feltham

5th April
NJC working party – Vicky Knight

12th – 15th April
Women's School – NWC

16th April
Campaign Coordinators – Kerry Baigent

18th – 20th April
TUC equality course – Kerry Baigent

19th April
Special EC – Vicky Knight

25th April
SW TUC Women's conference – Vicky Knight

25th – 26th April
Region 13 Annual Conference school – Kerry Baigent, Helen Harrison, Pauline Layhe, Vicky Knight and Denise Christie

3rd May
NJC working party – Vicky Knight

8th May
EC – Vicky Knight

9th – 11th May
Annual Conference – Vicky Knight, Kerry Baigent, Dona Feltham, Helen Harrison, Sam Rye, Emma Carr, Jo Winrow-Jones, Jenny Impey and Lisa Smethurst

19th – 20th May
NAW – Dona Feltham, Sam Rye

21st – 22nd May
FAW Strategy Group – Kerry Baigent

31st May
Cornwall rally – Kerry Baigent and Dona Feltham

5th June
CLG – Kerry Baigent

12th June
Membership Pack Meeting – Kerry Baigent

26th June
FAW meeting – Kerry Baigent

28th June
CLG meeting – Kerry Baigent, Dona Feltham and Helen Harrison

17th July
Control seminar – Kerry Baigent and Dona Feltham

19th July
Membership pack meeting – Kerry Baigent

16th August
Charter for Women Meeting – Kerry Baigent

17th August
Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Lecture – Kerry Baigent, Dona Feltham and Helen Harrison

22nd August
EC – Dona Feltham

10th – 14th September
TUC – Dona Feltham

13th September
FAW meeting – Kerry Baigent

18th September
Equality and Diversity Project Board – Kerry Baigent

18th – 20th September
EC – Dona Feltham

1st October
Equality and Diversity Stakeholders Group – Kerry Baigent

2nd and 3rd October
Health and Safety meeting – Sally Harper

4th and 5th October
How to be an effective rep school – Kerry Baigent, Helen Harrison, Sam Rye and Pauline Layhe

9th and 10th October
Avon LGBT conference – Kerry Baigent

12th – 14th November
WSTUC – Denise Christie, Kerry Baigent, Julie Small, Rachael Connolly and Linda Shanahan

16th November
CLG meeting – survey – Helen Harrison

Affiliations and donations

- Abortion Rights
- Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Statue
- National Assembly of Women
- The Charter for Women
- Dignity Period - ACTSA

The Women's School

Wortley Hall Sheffield 13th - 14th April 2007
This years' theme was Enthusing Educating Empowering

Fifty six FBU women attended alongside 6 women from the UFUA (Australian firefighting union) 35 children attended

Our International Speaker was Lucia Matibenga from Zimbabwe TUC

Our other speakers were:
Megan Dobney Regional Secretary SERTUC
Terry Marsland National Assembly Women
Matt Wrack FBU General Secretary

Our TUC Tutors were: Theresa Bennett, Lorene Fabian and Julie Weekes from Dunstable College.

Workshops were:

Workplace Bullying – Identify and challenge it: Helen Harrison and Emma Carr

Women in the Fire Service – Lorene Fabian, Dona Feltham and Julie Small

Finding Your Voice – Theresa Bennett and Vicky Knight

Pensions – Local Government and Firefighters Pension Scheme: Ivan Walker and Sam Rye

Know your rights – Family Friendly Legislation: Jo White, Jenny Impey and Sam Rye

Campaigning – Terry Marsland, Sally Harper and Sue Offland

FBU Women's Charter – Julie Weekes, Theresa Bennett and NWC

Moving forward together – Lorene Fabian, Theresa Bennett and NWC

The school was a great success with incredible reviews and some great ideas for next years school, which is being held on the 7th – 9th March 2008. The application form is on the back of the November issue of Siren.

Other areas of work that the NWC have undertaken

Brigade Women's Committees
The agenda set by the NWC for the past 12 months was to prioritise our work around the organisation of FBU women members. We have therefore organised and held meetings for the first time in the following FRS's: Grampian, Strathclyde, Lothian and Borders, Tayside, Cleveland, Northumberland, Humberside, West Yorkshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Kent, Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Wiltshire, Avon, Gloucestershire and finally Dorset. These meetings have been held in addition to the continuing work of the already established Brigade Women's Committees in regions previously represented at the NWC. All of these meetings were organised with the support of local officials and we have been really encouraged by this joint approach and thank those officials for their support.

Regional Women's Committees
Due to the above mentioned work in FRS's the NWC has progressed the Regional Women's Committees even further. In region 1, region 11 and region 13 – the NWC now has functioning committees with dedicated officials. The regions that are already well established have, in the main, continued to organise and have grown stronger with better representation. This is down to NWC officials' tireless work and the support of active women in these areas. We would also like to thank the Regional and Brigade officials in those areas that have provided great support in getting meetings off the ground.

Website
The website has continued to be updated throughout the year with new sections being placed on it. Of particular note is the women members' calendar, which has been designed to enable women members to access it to see what is going on in their area. Please view on www.nwcfbu.co.uk

Committee Education
The committee held its own grievance training at the start of the year. This training has enabled officials to gain some vital knowledge on the complexities of grievances. Of particular note for NWC reps is that many of our grievances could end up at an ET and as such the type of skills gained at this training event was vital. In addition to this training the South West Region invited members of the NWC to attend the two schools they ran in 2007. These schools provided terrific education for members of the NWC and we would like to thank the South West region for inviting us and enabling members of the NWC to continue to develop.

CLG work
NWC officials have been working hard with the CLG this year on two main areas. The first area is the fire-fighter survey carried out in the summer. The NWC advised CLG on the types of questions needed to be asked and have been involved at all meetings. The results will be formalised and put into the public domain later this year. The NWC has set up a sub committee to look at the results and to develop a strategy that will help to protect women members from any backlash that could occur and to ensure that the findings are pursued properly. The second area of work has been around the development of the FRS equality and diversity strategy. The FBU is represented by John McGhee on the main body working on the strategy, but the NWC have been involved in discussions around the targets for FRS's. The strategy has recently been sent out for consultation and the NWC will continue to be fully involved in that.

Facilities
Due to the NWC resolution on facilities being passed at Annual Conference this year, the FAW committee in conjunction with the health and safety committee have carried out a survey of all FRS workplaces. The results are currently being collated. The main area of our opposition is the notion by some FRS's that unisex facilities will help to challenge the culture within the Fire and Rescue Service. The NWC oppose this view and as such a resolution of this nature has been put to the NWC AGM.

Women's Secretary and Chair election
Both Kerry Baigent and Dona Feltham were re-elected unopposed in the secretary and chair elections in 2007.

New/old Reps
The National Women's Committee has seen the election of four new regional NWC officials, Denise Christie (Region 1), Trish Jeffery (Region 4), Kate Ellis (Region 12) and Pauline Layhe(Region 13) a big welcome to Denise, Trish, Kate and Pauline who have been working tirelessly since they were elected. Thank you to Heather Lawrie, Gayle Banks and Julie Barton, who have had to stand down from their positions for various reasons, for all their work on behalf of women members.

Siren
We have produced three copies of Siren this year. Siren has been distributed to branches and to women members' home addresses. We have received positive feedback about Siren this year.

NWC Papers
The NWC wrote the following papers:

1. Maternity, adoption and breastfeeding negotiating document
2. TUC childcare review
3. Assisted John McGhee on the re-write of ADAE
4. Welcome to the FBU and the NWC booklet

Support and advice to women members
NWC Officials have represented fifty women in the year 2007.

G27 Women Members' AGM 2007

The AGM of Women Members representatives met on the 20th November 2007 at Wortley Hall.

Delegates:

Region 1: Sharon Sales-Mossop, Rachel Connolly, Denise Christie
Region 3: Amanda Gregin, Sam Rye
Region 4: Denise Fowler, Patricia Jeffery
Region 5: Lisa Smethurst, Anna Mckeown, Jo Winrow-Jones
Region 6: Staci Leech
Region 7: Kate Baer, Tamsin Walkowiak, Lisa Slevin
Region 9: Allie Graver, Helen Astridge, Emma Davis
Region 11: Jenny Impey, Maisie Rudkin, Anne Hooper
Region 13: Catrina Dunn, Pauline Layhe, Sharon Wilcock

Officials:

Executive Council Member (acting) – Dona Feltham
National Secretary – Kerry Baigent
National Chair (acting) – Helen Harrison

Observers:

Executive Council Member: Vicky Knight
Region 13: Nicola Lown, Val Hampshire

The following resolutions were carried:

FACILITIES

This Women's Annual General Meeting notes that many facilities on fire stations fall way below the National Women's Committee minimum facilities policy document. This is no longer acceptable! What the women's committee are demanding is that the Executive Council raise this issue at the highest possible governmental level. This is to include all existing stations and new builds. The changes need to include all Fire Services and ensure that they up grade by 2010. Full consultation with women and Brigade reps in the up grading would be an absolute necessity.

The Executive Council to report its progress within 6 months of the Women's AGM.

REGION 3

FIRE GROUND FACILITIES

This Women's Annual General Meeting is disappointed by the disgraceful standard of facilities on the fire ground available to women in the UK Fire and Rescue Service. These often include no toilet facilities, no sanitary provision and no means for sanitary disposal.

We call upon the Executive Council of the Fire Brigades Union to formulate a "best practice policy on fire ground facilities." The policy must cater for all fire service personnel regardless of sex/gender, comply with existing guidelines and legislation and pay particular attention to the dangers of toxic shock syndrome. We further demand that upon completion of the policy that the Executive Council put pressure on the employer's representatives at the National Joint Council to adopt the policy as a basic standard and a human right to dignity when on the fire ground.

We further call upon the Executive Council to report back progress of this issue to the National Women's Committee within 6 months of this AGM.

REGION 13

UNISEX FACILITIES

This Women's Annual General Meeting is concerned by the growing development and use of unisex facilities in the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS). This AGM does not support the idea which is being pursued by some FRS diversity managers that the adoption of unisex facilities can challenge and change the culture of the FRS.

Women members inform us repeatedly of the need for privacy at work in regard to toilet, shower and changing facilities and as such this AGM opposes the use of unisex facilities in the workplace.

This AGM therefore instructs the Executive Council to enter into negotiations at the National Joint Council regarding this issue, with the aim of ensuring that our members do not suffer from a lack of privacy and dignity whilst at work.

REGION 5

SANITARY PROVISION

This Women's Annual General Meeting is frustrated at the lack of sanitary resources provided by Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) in the workplace. The AGM recognises that whilst some FRSs do provide some level of sanitary provision, many still fail to do so.

We demand that the Executive Council instruct Brigade Officials and Health & Safety Reps to raise this issue with management as a matter of urgency, with a view to proper provision being afforded in line with the following minimum requirements:

- All FRS workplaces to have sanitary disposal receptacles in all women's toilets;
- All FRS workplaces to have sanitary dispensers in all women's toilets;
- All FRS appliances to carry a sealed welfare box that contains sanitary towels and tampons.

All progress to be reported back to the Women's Section AGM 2008.

REGION 1

RETURN TO WORK FOLLOWING MATERNITY LEAVE

This Women's Annual General Meeting notes the continual progress being made by some Fire and Rescue Services/Brigades in updating their Maternity Policies. However, this AGM is concerned that the issues around new mothers returning to work are not being fully addressed.

Issues such as mothers still breast feeding, risk assessments, phased return and return to work training are not being addressed fully to ensure our women members are given the help and support they need after a period of maternity leave.

This AGM therefore calls upon the Executive Council to instruct Brigade Officials, with the support of NWC Officials, to revisit their Fire and Rescue Service/Brigades maternity policy to ensure that return to work issues are addressed and implemented by management.

We further call upon the Executive Council to report the progress back to the Women's AGM 2008.

REGION 9

ENHANCED GREY BOOK MATERNITY CONDITIONS

The Women's Annual General Meeting demands that the Grey Book Maternity conditions are enhanced. This is to include recent changes in law to maternity pay and leave but also to enhance the existing conditions. The Grey Book is an absolute minimum and the Fire Service relies on this as best practice. The Women's AGM are demanding that the Executive Council negotiate at the National Joint Council for better conditions which are laid out in the National Women's Committees updated Maternity Policy. This would include nine months at full pay.

This to be negotiated by the Executive Council and brought to rule change conference 2008.

REGION 3

PPE

This Women's AGM is appalled that many Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) have adopted a one size fits all policy in regard to the provision of gas tight suits and dry suits.

Many women members are suffering by being forced to wear something that does not fit them properly, or by being excluded from fulfilling all of their operational roles because of ill fitting PPE. This failure to adequately provide suitable and sufficient personal protective clothing can also have a detrimental effect on the health, safety and welfare of female members.

This Women's AGM demands that the Executive Council seeks to rectify this negative situation predominantly affecting our women members by raising this issue as a matter of urgency with the National Joint Council National Employers as well as any other relevant national forums.

The Executive Council to report back on this matter to the National Women's Committee within 6 months of this AGM.

REGION 1

POST NATAL DEPRESSION

This Women's Annual General Meeting recognises that post natal depression affects women who are mothers and is triggered by childbirth. Presentation of the depression may be months or years later. Due to the complexity of its nature, symptoms can range from low mood, lack of energy, feelings of worthlessness, anxiety, reduced concentration, to thoughts about death or suicide. Women quite often don't realise they have it and will feel overwhelmed by the new demands placed upon them as a mother and fitting back into the working environment.

Many brigades/fire and rescue services do not fully recognise or understand the traumatic affects that post natal depression can have on women. Inappropriate return to work medicals may miss current symptoms and fail to monitor potential symptoms in the future. Symptoms may spiral out of control if a woman's condition is left undiagnosed and unsupported. Post natal depression is a serious illness and is diagnosed under the guidance of the doctor in order to provide the correct therapy, which may include the use of anti-depressant medication.

This AGM urges the Executive Council to put pressure on the employer's representatives at the National Joint Council to adopt the use of confidential medicals for women who have returned to work following maternity leave, miscarriage, still birth and adoption. The confidential medical will be managed by the occupational health doctor and will take into account the specific assessment required in order to identify post natal depression. Confidential medicals should also provide a point of contact, regular support and information about post natal depression and will allow time off, for women who are suffering, to attend prescribed therapy. Any sick leave periods due to post natal depression should not be included in any normal monitoring in regard to pay purposes or disciplinary action.

We further call upon the Executive Council to report progress back to the Women's AGM 2008

REGION 13

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This Women's Annual General Meeting notes that all Fire and Rescue Services should be carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) in line with their legal duties under the recently promulgated Equality Act, which came into force in April 2007. This AGM is concerned that some FRSs in Scotland are not carrying out EIAs. This may well be the case in other FRSs in the United Kingdom.

This AGM instructs the Executive Council to raise this issue with the FRS National Employers as a matter of urgency, with a view to ensuring that all FRS Management undertake to carry out these assessments.

The Executive Council to report back on this matter to the National Women's Committee within 6 months of this AGM.

REGION 1

ELECTIONS

This Women's Annual General Meeting believes that accountability and democracy are at the heart of the Fire Brigades Union. In regard to the election of the Women Members Executive Council Member, National Chair and Secretary, this AGM is concerned that Rule 19 (3) (e) which enables Brigade Committees to nominate one woman member as a candidate for these positions, does not afford true democracy and accountability to women members. This Women's AGM believes that the constituent group (Brigade Women's Committees), to whom the relevant official is subsequently accountable, should therefore be the nominating committee.

Therefore; this AGM instructs the Executive Council to formulate the required rule changes in order to address this issue. These rule changes to be presented to the next rule change Conference.

REGION 5

REPRESENTATION

This Women's Annual General Meeting believes that the decision of Annual Conference 2004 and 2005 which carried resolution 58 and the subsequent change to rule 25(3)(a) respectively, has proved detrimental to the Fire Brigades Union's policy 'All different All Equal' (ADAE). This AGM is concerned that in cases of bullying, harassment and discrimination, where assistance is subsequently removed from a member following an ADAE investigation, that the FBU is representing members who do not have an arguable defence for bullying and harassing others. This AGM believes that this sends a negative message to the many women that are suffering at the hands of these bullies and will deter women members from making justifiable claims of harassment and bullying.

This AGM calls for the ADAE policy to revert to its original position of withdrawing representation from a member who is accused of discrimination, bullying and/or harassment until such time as an arguable defence is located by the relevant Regional Committee.

We therefore call upon the Executive Council to amend the ADAE policy document accordingly and to present the required rule changes at Annual Conference 2008.

REGION 7

TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN FOR THE SEX TRADE

This Women's Annual General Meeting is disgusted that women as young as 16 are being trafficked from their home land, sold as sex slaves and forced into prostitution in Cambridgeshire and across the whole of the UK. Trafficking criminals make between £1,000 and £2,000 a day by exploiting victims. Trafficked women are usually forced to have sex with between 20 and 30 men per day.

We call upon the Executive Council and Brigade Committees to raise awareness of the issue of trafficking and raise the level of debate by urging members to lobby MPs asking them to support the Anti-Slavery, Amnesty International, National Federation of Women Institutes and UNICEF UK's campaign to:

- Ratify and incorporate into domestic law the UN protocol on trafficking – the Palermo Protocol.
- Sign and ratify the UN convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and their families (1990)
- Introduce legislation to make it illegal to withhold, conceal, damage or destroy another person's passport and other identity document in order to restrict their freedom of movement or maintain their labour or services.

REGION 9

STOP FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

This Women's Annual General Meeting is horrified to learn that a growing number of females in the UK are being forced to go through the barbaric ritual of female circumcision, widely known as female genital mutilation (FGM). Whilst here in the western world it is seen as child abuse it is seen as a right of passage for women in many parts of Africa. Although this is very much a hidden crime, there is evidence that it is being practiced in the immigrant communities here in the UK.

Although figures are difficult to obtain, it is estimated that 130 million girls world wide have been circumcised and as many as 74,000 in the UK.

Amnesty International state that the practice is carried out usually on girls from the ages of birth to mid teens. FGM, which is the removal of part, or all, of the female genitalia results in excessive bleeding, infection, trauma and even death. Later on there will be difficulties in intercourse and childbirth. The practice is opposed by women's groups in Africa and elsewhere as a violation of the right to physical and mental integrity. Opponents consider FGM a particularly violent form of controlling the status and sexuality of women.

This AGM believes that FGM is a violation of human rights that cannot be justified by any political, religious or cultural claim and we call upon the Executive Council to give its full backing to the Amnesty International campaign and any other campaign against this barbaric ritual.

We call upon the Executive Council to implement the following strategy within 12 months:

- Write letters and send e-mails to the Government Authorities in Amnesty International targeted countries and to the "International Zero Tolerance to FGM" forums
- Encourage FBU members to take part in special events organised by Amnesty International
- Sign up for the Amnesty International Women's bulletin
- Make a donation to Amnesty Internationals campaign against FGM
- Write a feature article for Firefighter on FGM
- Report progress back to the National Women's AGM 2008

REGION 13

'HONOUR KILLINGS'

This Women's Annual General Meeting is horrified that 'Honour' killings are still taking place in Europe and around the world. 'Honour' killings of women can be defined as acts of murder by which a woman is killed for her actual or perceived immoral behaviour. This so called immoral behaviour may take the form of marital infidelity, refusing to submit to an arranged marriage, demanding divorce, flirting with or receiving phone calls from men, failing to serve a meal on time or 'allowing' herself to be raped.

This AGM believes that the FBU must do everything in our power to stop these acts of violence, and unite with other like organisations to support such women fleeing these said environments.

We therefore call upon the Executive Council to use its influence in all political arenas to fight the international campaign against all honour killings, and to encourage Brigade Committees to support any local or national campaigns for women seeking asylum who are fleeing these horrific environments.

REGION 9

DIGNITY! PERIOD CAMPAIGN

This Women's Annual General Meeting notes that there is a chronic shortage of sanitary products in Zimbabwe and only the rich can afford to purchase the limited number of tampons and sanitary towels that are available. Women are using old rags as towels or inserting newspapers into their vaginas instead of tampons. Schoolgirls are missing a week of school every month as they cannot attend when they are having their period.

The lack of sanitary products has led to an increase in vaginal infections, but the majority of women in Zimbabwe cannot afford the drugs or treatment to cure the infections.

This Women's Annual General Meeting calls on the Executive Council to support the Dignity Period Campaign by

- Making a donation of £1000
- Distributing campaign information to all branches
- Producing articles in FireFighter magazine
- Encouraging regions to affiliate to the campaign

REGION 7

ACTION ON RESOLUTIONS

This Annual General Meeting is concerned that those resolutions passed by the Women's AGM's in 2005 & 2006 and forwarded in line with Standing Order 23 for the AGM of Women's Representatives, to the Executive Council, have not yet been actioned by the EC.

Therefore, we call upon the Executive Council to ensure that all resolutions passed at the Women's AGM, including those outstanding, will be acted upon within twelve months and that interim quarterly progress reports will be made to the National Women's Committees as a matter of urgency.

REGION 5

The following motion was withdrawn:

MATERNITY PROVISION: PAY

Maternity provision has an important influence on the recruitment and retention of women Firefighters. We demand that the Fire Brigades Union nationally negotiate maternity pay that is an improvement on the statutory minimum. The minimum acceptable to be:

- 15 weeks full pay and 24 weeks half pay, plus SMP

This would improve on what is currently in the Grey Book and would be an important factor in the retention of women at relatively low cost.

REGION 10

No motions were defeated.

H1 Introduction

Educational courses and seminars have been run successfully within regions, brigades and sections.

Following a review of Education by the National Officer additional meetings were arranged with the Education Committee and Regional Education Officers. In addition meetings with the sectional education officers took place for the first time during the period covered by this report to ensure that all education fits into the overall education strategy.

To assist in the on going improvement and development of opportunities for all members the Executive Council agreed to the secondment to the FBU of Trevor Cave from Park Lane College to assist in the developing of courses and ensuring that course delivery across the FBU was of a consistent standard.

The feedback from each school is thoroughly reviewed and comments made by the members attending considered carefully and acted upon.

All regions receive funding through the imprest system to run educational courses and seminars as part of their overall financial allocation each quarter. Many regions have run successful courses on occasion in conjunction with other regions; a practice it is hoped will continue.

The Executive Council will continue to strive to provide the greatest range of access to educational opportunities for members and officials at all levels and positions within the FBU.

H2 B&EMM School 2007

B&EMM School 2007 took place from 12th – 14th October 2007 at Wortley Hall Sheffield.

The School was attended by 55 students from across 15 different Brigades, the President and General Secretary, Dean Mills National Education Officer and the B&EMM National Committee. Eleven guests and speakers also attended including 3 members of London Fire Brigade; Professor Gus John; Sue Evans from the Fire Service College; Zita Holbourne from PCS; Paul Obinna; and Honorary B&EMM Member Frank Bailey.

The theme of the B&EMM School this year was '200 years on.' This was to commemorate the 200 year anniversary since the abolition of the British trade in enslaved Africans.

Students were invited on a journey to discover the past, and to explore how the legacy of our past now has a bearing on the present state of our communities, and then to look into your future within the Fire and Rescue Service and how a difference could be brought about through personal development.

The B&EMM National Committee set the agenda for the School and drew on the previous year's activities to produce a school that was informative empowering and thought provoking.

Guest Speakers included

- Professor Gus John the first black Director of Education in a UK Local Authority and who is a community activist against gun crime in Manchester.

- Khi Rafe who is a UNISON activist and a founder member of UK Black Pride (which is a supportive and awareness raising organisation about LGBT Black issues),
- Paul Obinna who is a cultural engagement specialist.

Three workshops were organised focusing on the past, and the future. The first workshop focused on the legacy of the enslavement of Africans and how this impacts on our society and communities today.

To consider the future Sue Evans from the IPDS Hub at the Fire Service College gave an overview of the promotions process and procedures. It was noted that not all employers were following the advice from the IPDS hub.

On the Friday evening of the school a performance called 'Cracking the Whip' took place. This was an educational and entertaining production performed by a newly formed theatre company with professional directors who are also ex-offenders. This empowering performance was one of the many highlights that made the B&EMM School a very special and appropriate commemorative event.

The B&EMM School incorporated a women's breakfast into the activities. This was first done in 2006, and it is hoped it will become a permanent feature. Black and Ethnic Minority women are in a complete minority in the Fire and Rescue Service, and it is hoped to hold future specific events to target B&EMM women and encourage them to become more involved in the Fire and Rescue Service and the Trade Union movement.

Khi Rafe gave an insight into the contributions and sacrifices that black women had made in their struggle for freedom from enslavement. This session was at times painful to hear but essential information and education for all those at our school.

One of the most important elements of the school is the networking. This year we welcomed 15 first time attendees to our B&EMM School which in itself is an achievement. The FBU are proud of what those attending the school have been able to achieve over the last 13 years, and the B&EMM committee are determined to continue developing the school each year to meet the ever changing needs of B&EMM members.

A regional activity was programmed so that regional representatives could become familiar with those who attended from other regions and encourage participation in all future FBU activities.

A closed session at the school allowed members to express their confidential concerns and issues in a comfortable environment.

On the final morning the School commenced with some powerful poetry from Zita Holbourne a black women, and trade union activist from PCS. The session was well received by B&EMM members.

This year the Frank Bailey Merit Award was inaugurated. The award was specifically established in this commemorative year to express our need and desire to look back in order to learn the lessons of the past, and utilise these in the future to improve the future.

The award in this, the inaugural year, was presented by Frank Bailey himself to Brother Carl St Paul the first B&EMM National Secretary and co founder of B&EMM.

The crèche at B&EMM School had 4 children attending although this by no means negated their contribution. The children were entertained and educated by Anansi who came to tell them stories and to assist them in their presentation to the B&EMM School which they gave on Sunday morning. Another highlight of the weekend was the children showing off their acting talents with a short play about 'not playing with fireworks'. Their performance was very well received by all those attending the school.

Our final speaker was Paul Obinna who is a cultural engagement specialist. He did not disappoint. He had the school enthralled for nearly 2 hours with his presence and knowledge.

The B&EMM committee would like to thank all those who made this school happen. It was indeed a fitting tribute to our ancestors.

H3 G&L School 2007

The National Gay and Lesbian School ran from the 19th to the 21st October 2007 at Wortley Hall in Sheffield.

The school was again very successful and is well regarded amongst other unions. As a result we receive many requests from members of other unions to attend, as it seems the FBU is one of the only unions to provide such an event. It was also pleasing to see many new members attending, and we trust the school was an incentive to become active members.

The school was opened by the General Secretary, Matt Wrack and Sharon Allen (ASLEF Equalities Adviser). They respectively gave us updates focusing on the UK Fire Services' and ASLEF's current issues and campaigns.

The sessions that members took an active part in over the three days included:

- Grievance and Discipline Procedure workshop
- An Introduction to Transgender Awareness (level 1)
- Closed session
- LGBT Iraqi with Ali Hili
- All Different All Equal workshop

The feedback from the students and all attendees was very positive with a greater understanding of a range of issues gained by all those attending.

The school was an opportunity for those attending to discuss and debate pertinent issues and the 2008 school will help build the confidence of members whilst permitting the development of new officials for the benefit of all FBU members.

The following statement is a passage of a first year student's feedback on the school which summarises its great success:

> "The whole experience was a positive one for me – meeting new people both from within ASLEF and the FBU, gaining an understanding of the issues and challenges they might face, learning and improving awareness of the specific subjects on the agenda and last but not least understanding more about the role of the ASLEF LGBT and FBU Consultative Committee and the hard work they carry out voluntarily on behalf of all of us. I would strongly urge anyone who has not been to the school before to consider doing so next year – it's the 10th anniversary (5th year for ASLEF) and so promises to be something special. You might even become a regular and I can guarantee you won't regret it".

H4 National Education Grants

The Executive Council are pleased to report the continued uptake of national grants to those undertaking Trade Union related studies which will be of benefit to Union members.

Grants are subject to approval by the Executive Council and reports are submitted from those awarded grants during their progress and a final report made on conclusion of their course.

H5 National School

National School 2007 was held from the 28th October to the 2nd November at Wortley Hall Sheffield and attracted 35 student assisted by facilitators and tutors for the sessions.

The Programme for 2007 was designed so as to be a template for future schools and was drawn up by FBU Head Office Officials and the education committee with the assistance of Trevor Cave, TUC/FBU Tutor and Head of Park Lane College Leeds Department of Trade Union Studies.

The course was set out with two classes and designed to run with simultaneous themes with the substantive content class directed.

Group 1 attracted 17 members and was overseen by Ron Oldfield, TUC Tutor and Head of East Riding College Hull, Trade Union Studies Centre. Dona Feltham acted as the class facilitator.

Group 2 had 18 members and was overseen by Trevor Cave, TUC Tutor and Head of Park Lane College Leeds, Department of Trade Union Studies. Sean Starbuck acted as the class facilitator.

Themes running through the School included

- Modernisation of the Fire Service and trade union strategies
- Building union organisation and effective communications
- Trade Unions and Engaging with Politics
- International Trade Unionism and Migrant Workers
- Promoting Fairness, Equality and Diversity in the fire service and within society
- Developing Skills and Confidence as active members

The course aims were to help participants to

- Understand the importance of trade union activities at both local, national and international levels and the ways in which these can interlink
- Discuss key current issues for the FBU within the UK Fire Service, of concern to the National Joint Council and identify priorities for the union and its members
- Consider how to best improve industrial relations within the fire service
- Consider how the union might develop strategies for building effective organisation at all levels in order to protect the interests of the membership
- Think about the relevance of political ideas in pursuit of trade union objectives such as fair and equal treatment and discuss how to challenge far right ideas in the workplace

The guest speakers at the school included Parmjit Dhanda, Minister with responsibilities for the Fire Service, Sarah Messenger the employers Secretary and Councillor Les Byrom, Chair National Joint Council Employers' Side.

Both classes looked at the need for an improvement in industrial relations and how authorities could assist in this process by ensuring FBU members and officials received sufficient time for training opportunities as raised at the NJC.

The School was opened on Sunday 28th October by the President Bro Mick Shaw.

On the first full day of the School following the employer's sessions in the school and the role and functioning of the NJC John McDonnell MP Secretary of the FBU Parliamentary Group addressed the school.

Professor Gregor Gall, of the University of Hertfordshire dealt with Understanding Modernisation of the UKFRS on the Tuesday morning and Tony Benn led a lively and popular discussion on Trade Unions and Politics.

An evening session included a study on modern communications methods and a well received session from Alan Miles from Region 10 and the filming he had been involved in.

The Wednesday sessions included ICT development as a continuation of the previous evening's overview.

Members considered the plight of Migrant Workers and the impact on the UK economy and of the Macro effect in areas with a high migrant worker density.

The final day time session covered International Trade Unionism and the night time session was a performance by the Banner Theatre company and a plenary session following their play on Migrant Workers which prompted considered questionings from all members of the school.

In line with best practices used by the TUC equality and dignity at work matters were included in every session of the school.

On Thursday of the School Dave Parr, Disability Champions Project Manager from the East Riding College Trade Union Studies Centre Hull, led a session on Promoting Disability Champions in the Workplace

Parmjit Dhanda MP addressed the whole school and prompted many questions from members and officials present and evoked a lively debate in both classes following his extended session.

The afternoon sessions looked further into the role and functioning of Union Learning and the role of Union Learning Reps and Skills for Life in the FBU and UKFRS.

The final day of what was a fairly intense school included an open session on Pensions and a report from Martin Marion on behalf of all firefighters who stood to have their pensions reduced or taken from them. There was overwhelming support for those who were under threat and a sustained standing ovation was given to Bro Marion following his address to the school.

The closure of the 2007 National School was overseen by Bro Andy Dark, FBU Assistant General Secretary

In the review of the school members scored the school as extremely successful with 94% expressing approval, 78% left being positive about problem solving, and 94% were also positive regarding the quality of the plenary sessions.

A full report of the School was presented to the Executive Council and some of the attendees comments are worth recording in this Annual Report.

- I found all methods useful and I believe the variety helped to stimulate and maintain my interest and this helped me to assimilate more information, more easily
- I gained broader understanding of techniques to use to better organise and educate members
- I believe it has had an extremely positive effect and I look forward to returning to my brigade and putting everything I learned into practice
- An excellent course with great value to my position within the FBU and effectiveness as an official
- It was a lot more intense than I thought it would be, however it was enjoyable and educational
- Very valuable particularly to new officials
- I recommend national school to every member

The full breakdown of responses from those attending both as participants and tutors was carefully reviewed at the conclusion of the school and the feedback will be used for National School 2008 and 2009 which have already been booked and the details circulated to all officials.

The Executive Council would like to thank all speakers, tutors and students for making this an extremely successful and enjoyable school and place on record their thanks and in particular to Trevor Cave and Ron Oldfield for their assistance in the planning of the school and their active involvement.

H6 TUC Day Release and Extended Course

Officials and members throughout the regions have, for the period covered by this report, attended several Extended and Day release courses organised and run by the TUC. These range from courses on Fairness and Dignity in the work place to Pensions and European Employment Law.

The Executive Council note that there was on occasions a lack of feedback from such courses and that all attendees on course should make a brief report to their education officers so the quality of such courses can be monitored and improvements made where required.

All courses from the TUC are notified to all regional education officers and regional Secretary's both from head office and directly from the regional TUC offices and members are encouraged to attend all courses which will benefit them and other members as well as the wider trade union movement.

H7 Tutors

In accordance with the policy of the FBU all tutors used on courses should be TUC tutors except in exceptional cases where a TUC tutor is not available.

The Executive wish to place on record their thanks to all tutors and officials who have assisted in education provision throughout the period covered by this report.

The work of the ULF department and the project staff has also been very beneficial for the wider provision of education in and outside the ULF itself.

ULF coordinators have enabled the FBU to open many avenues of educational opportunity to members which they would otherwise have been denied and their work in arranging tutors and facilitating a huge range of courses cannot be underestimated.

The EC would like to thank in particular Trevor Cave of Park Lane College for his continued involvement in our educational opportunities for all members.

H8 Union Learning Funds

In 2007 the final resolution of Conference was Composite A Moved by London and Seconded by Fife:

> *"This Conference reaffirms support for and acknowledges the work of the FBU Learning Fund Projects in providing learning opportunities for hundreds of our members. This is another positive benefit of FBU membership and places the FBU at the forefront of lifelong learning within the UK Fire and Rescue Services.*
>
> *Conference recognises that the current funding is due to finish in April 2008 with no guarantee of further funding being made available post 2008. Conference believes that in order to sustain the spirit of Annual Conference 2004 Resolution 65 and to mirror the recent moves within the TUC Union Learn, we need to act quickly to ensure the sustainability of the Lifelong Learning agenda beyond April 2008.*
>
> *Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to set up a working group utilising Education Sub-Committee members, ULF Project Committee members and Regional Education Officers to look at how lifelong learning is mainstreamed into the FBU at all levels.*
>
> *To this end Conference instructs the Executive Council to form a working group from members of the Executive Council Education Sub-Committee, FBU ULF Project Committee and Regional Education Officers to produce a report for no later than 1st October 2007 for the Executive Council. This report should include proposed recommendations on how lifelong learning is embedded."*

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The Executive Council have carefully considered matters relating to all education during the last year and there have been many advances in our education provision for all members. It is pleasing to report that the working party was established, the recommendations made agreed by the Executive Council, and the work to ensure sustainability continues with full Executive Council support.

Since the passing of this resolution there has been a huge amount of work carried out by the Project Manager Trevor Shanahan, all the staff based at Morpeth, the ULF coordinators and reps within Regions, and the officials at Head Office.

Following several meetings and a workload which simply cannot be underestimated it is most pleasing to report that the FBU have been successful in obtaining funding for a further two year period from April 2008.

It is crucial that the aspirations of members are met and there is no doubt that the intention of the composite unanimously carried was that the concept of Lifelong Learning is given a permanent and prominent position within the Fire Brigades Union. There is little doubt that the mindset of the Officials involved in Union Learning, as well as those who have little day to day dealing with the issue, is that funding for the project is time limited even given the latest successful bid and therefore the whole project is time limited.

However, nothing could be further from the truth. The term 'project' is a redundant one and will be dropped.

Members will recall that in his speech to the TUC in September 2007 Gordon Brown stated: *"To expand Union Learning in the workplace and to meet our ambition, which is one million adults in learning, we are going to raise the money available from the Union Learning Fund from £12.5 million this year to £15.5 million next, and I call on all employers to join you in signing up to our skills pledge that every employee should have the right to gain basic skills, every employee the right, and I repeat, if we do not make sufficient progress over the next three years we will consider for employees in England who lack a good vocational qualification a legal entitlement to workplace training. Fifty unions are now engaged in what I believe is the biggest transformation since the growth of the shop steward movement"*

The education of all members has improved considerably during the last year and as part of the learning agenda we have an overview of all education planned.

The current education policy was passed at Annual Conference 2004 and is due for a review which will need to take into full account the advances and opportunities afforded to members by union learning if we are to meet the aims set out in 2004 for learning to be a lifetime activity.

We continue to work on ensuring continued funding for Wales Scotland and Northern Ireland and all officials will be kept fully informed of developments which occur during the period this annual report covers.

The aims and targets we have set are continually reviewed and updated. It is most pleasing to report that the service provided to members has been held up as a model for other unions to follow and the hub at Morpeth and the service we provide has received many awards in recognition not only of that service and its high quality but also the professional and dedicated work carried out by all the staff involved. It is an area of work and provision to members which the entire FBU can justifiably be very proud of.

The Executive Council should like to place on record their thanks to Trevor Shanahan, Adrian Slassor, all the staff based in the learning centres, and to the ULF coordinators and reps within each region for their determination in providing new opportunities to members, assisting in creating dialogue with new members, and increasing the opportunity of those who leave the fire service after a lifetime of service to do so with qualifications recognised in the wider workplace.

H9 Women's National Schools

The FBU held its 8th Annual Women's School at Wortley Hall, Sheffield from the 13th to the 15th April 2007.

The TUC Tutors used to deliver the school were:
Theresa Bennett, Lorene Fabian and Julie Weeks from Dunstable College .

This year's theme was **Enthusing Educating Empowering**

There were 62 students attending the school; 56 FBU students and 6 students from the United Firefighters Union Australia. A crèche (Playtimes) looked after 35 children of those attending the school.

Our International speaker was Lucia Matibengo from the Zimbabwe TUC, who gave an inspirational speech and who stayed for the whole school, where her insight and experience were second to none.

Other speakers at the school were:

Matt Wrack – FBU General Secretary, who gave students an overview of the national work of the FBU, current issues we face, and spoke of his support for the National Women's Committee and women in the fire service.

Megan Dobney – Regional Secretary SERTUC, who gave the women an oversight into her trade union activity up to now and her role as the Regional Secretary for the biggest regional TUC in England.

Terry Marsland – National Assembly of Women and ex Deputy General Secretary of TASS, who gave a political analysis of the Trade Union Movement and the feminist movement over the last 50 years. Terry drew on her many years of experience as a senior Trade Union Official and gave FBU women members much inspiration to get more involved within their own union.

Workshops:
- Workplace Bullying – Identify and challenge it
- Women in the Fire Service
- Finding Your Voice
- Pensions – Local Government and Firefighters Pension Scheme
- Know Your Rights – Family Friendly Legislation:
- Campaigning

The Plenary sessions covered
- FBU Women's Charter
- Moving Forward together

The feedback was very positive and women members left this very successful and well supported school educated, enthused and empowered.

H10 WEA/ILO Study Days

The Executive Council continues to review all opportunities to attend WEA and ILO study days.

Where the attendance at such initiatives are beneficial to members, and officials are available to attend, the Executive Council will agree such attendances taking all pertinent facts into account.

I1 Introduction

2007 started with the distribution of literature to Brigade Secretaries on the subject of Age Discrimination at Work. This was provided following the introduction of legislation in October 2006. Officials were given information to support their work in representation of all members. The Union continues to take a strong position on issues of equality and fairness at work.

The hard work of our three equality sections continued in 2007 and representatives from our Women's National Committee, Black & Ethnic Minority Members National Committee, and our Gay and Lesbian National Committee, attended many conferences presenting the views of the Union. One such event was that held by Avon Fire & Rescue Service on the issues affecting Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans people in the workplace. This was a well-attended event and the FBU took a prominent role throughout.

The work of all three sections continued to provide strength to the whole Union and together with the National Fairness at Work Committee sought to bring improvements for all members.

The National Fairness at Work Committee met on a quarterly basis during 2007 addressing many issues. In March the Committee finalised the draft of the rewritten 'All different All Equal' (ADAE) policy.

The Union published the new ADAE in May 2007. It was laid out in a manner that gave clear guidance to members and officials who may be involved in cases of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

The Executive Council agreed that the ADAE Policy should be distributed to all members' home addresses.

Within regions Fairness at Work Reps were involved in many issues of 'dignified facilities vehicles', challenging and fighting the BNP in elections, flexible working claims, reasonable adjustments under DDA, cultural audits (Scotland), campaigning against shift changes, Pride events etc.

I2 TUC Equality Audit

In 2001 the TUC agreed to rule changes committing affiliates to promoting equality. The rule changes imposed an obligation for Union's to report every two years on what they were doing to advance equality.

The first audit was carried out in 2003 then again in 2005. The Fire Brigades Union submitted a detailed response to the 2007 audit in January. The TUC reported the results of the audit to Congress in September 2007.

I3 Promoting Equality for disabled workers

From December 2006 the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) was significantly extended with major changes affecting public sector employees. Despite advances in disability legislation, many disabled people are still disadvantaged in their workplace. To this end, guidance was issued to Regional Fairness at Work Reps and Regional Secretaries in the form of a Labour Research Department (LRD) booklet, which explained the new legislation.

14 Equality Training Seminar

20 – 21 MARCH 2007
In line with the Unions education and 'All different All Equal' policies, and the expanding need to provide good, relevant education for officials, a training seminar was held at the Unions, Training Centre, Pencoed, Wales.

This dealt with changes in legislation, which directly affects negotiations at local level. Topics covered included;

- The Goods and Services (SORB – Sexual Orientation and Religious Beliefs) which were due to take effect from April 2007
- The DDA – Dec 2006
- Age Discrimination Legislation
- Changes to Family Law
- The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)

The seminar was aimed at Brigade Officials and Brigade Fairness at Work Reps. Thompsons Solicitors provided valuable input to the seminar and the Union thanked Vaughan Gething for his assistance.

15 Equality & Diversity Project Board

The Department for Communities and Local Government established an Equality & Diversity Project Board, which met for its inaugural meeting on the 25th October 2006.

The Board had initially excluded the FBU, however, following lobbying of the Minister by Head Office Officials and Sectional Officials, the Union were invited to make a nomination and participate in the Project Board.

John McGhee, National Officer for Fairness at Work, was nominated by the Executive Council, and played an active role within the Board throughout the year. The terms of reference for the Board were set out in a paper EDPB-1/1 and stated that the Board will "provide strategic direction and leadership to the development of a National Strategy to promote diversity". It was proposed that the strategy would be published in 2008. The Board worked throughout the year on developing a strategy.

Stakeholders, including the FBU Equality sections, were invited to attend a number of workshops.

These workshops discussed many aspects of a strategy, including;

- Vision
- Core Values and Business Case
- Aims
- Employment targets
- Levers and tools to create effective change
- Evidence of effectiveness of levers and tools – what works and who takes responsibility

The draft strategy document was published for consultation in 2007 and will be finalised for publication in 2008. The FBU have been involved in its development since the beginning of 2007.

16 Equality & Diversity Stakeholders Group (EDSG)

The EDSG was set up by the Practitioners Forum to provide a Forum for a wide range of internal and external Fire & Rescue Service Stakeholders to consider and advise on issues affecting equality and organisational diversity in the service. The Union has continued to be represented on this group by John McGhee, National Officer, Fairness at Work and representatives from the National Women's Committee, Gay and Lesbian National Committee and the Black & Ethnic Minority Members National Committee. During 2007, the stakeholders elected Stewart Brown, Executive Council Member of the Gay & Lesbian National Committee to take the position of Vice Chair. The Union has continued to take the opportunity to raise issues of equality & diversity through the EDSG and continues to play a major role in its work.

17 Maternity, Adoption and Paternity Rights Policy

During 2007, the National Women's Committee drafted a policy to assist officials with negotiating Maternity, Adoption and Paternity provisions for all FBU members. The document was to be presented to the December Executive Council meeting for approval. However, due to the timing of this meeting coinciding with the funerals of our members who lost their lives on duty in Warwickshire, the meeting of the Executive Council was rescheduled to take place in January 2008. It is anticipated that the policy will be agreed at that meeting and distributed soon afterwards. Once agreed the document will be available on the FBU website www.fbu.org.uk

The policy is designed to show officials the types of arrangements, which may be required, and a number of options, which the FBU believe, will improve conditions for all FBU members and their families.

J1 Health & Safety Report

Health, Safety & Welfare is a cornerstone of the Unions activity. Much work has been done by Safety Representatives along with other Union Officials throughout 2007 to improve the safety and welfare of our members. Provision of dignified facilities for all of our men and women remains one of the Unions priorities throughout 2007.

The Executive Council are committed to doing all that it can to bring about changes which make our members safer and improve their welfare conditions.

The death of five fire fighters, all FBU members, in 2007 is a stark reminder of the need for greater emphasis and commitment to health & safety in the Fire & Rescue Service. The deaths of Paul Mallaghan (Hertfordshire), Darren Yates-Badley, John Averis, Ashley Stephens and Ian Reid (Warwickshire) are all still under investigation.

The Union is cooperating with the HSE and Police, while carrying out our own investigations, to determine exactly what led to the deaths of our members. We will continue to pursue improvements in practices, procedures, training or equipment, that are necessary to protect our members.

Stevenage – Harrow Court
The reports from the investigation into the Stevenage (Harrow Court) incident and the East Sussex (Marlie Farm) incident have been progressed in 2007. The Coroners recommendations from the Stevenage incident have been raised by the Union within the TUC, the HSE and the Fire & Rescue Service Health & Safety Group, as well as the General Secretary raising appropriate issues at the Practitioners Forum.

The work to achieve the changes required continues and will be carried into 2008. Already however, BSI has agreed to establish a new committee to investigate the standards for 'tea lights'. The FBU, through region 9, produced a CD-rom with the Unions Health & Safety report and associated information to be circulated to the wider Fire & Rescue Services and politicians in order to raise awareness of the issues, which were identified after the Stevenage incident.

East Sussex – Marlie Farm
Following the East Sussex incident, which took place on Sunday 3rd December 2006, East Sussex and Region 11 officials have worked tirelessly on the investigation of the incident, which took the lives of two FBU members, Geoff Wicker and Brian Wembridge.

As a result, this saw the Union calling for a review of the Transportation and Storage of Fireworks Regulations. This call has received support from CFOA and CLG.

The first meeting between the HSE Explosives division and the FBU National Officer for Health & Safety, took place in December 2007. The issue of safety of ISO containers was discussed at length. The HSE will look into a number of issues raised in particular around notification, identification and 'housekeeping' issues. This work remains ongoing. CLG have also been asked to establish up to date guidance for the Fire & Rescue Service.

BUNCEFIELD – Emergency Planning – Major Hazard Sites
Following the fire and major explosion at the petroleum products storage depot at Buncefield in Hertfordshire, the Union commissioned a study to advise on the appropriate level of preparation and response for COMAH site incidents and review of existing emergency response planning documentation. The Union's Executive Council considered this

report at its meeting held in February 2007. It was agreed that the report should be referred to the IRMP Board to be incorporated within the overall IRMP Strategy.

This report was later circulated to the HSE special investigation team looking into the Buncefield incident and other key areas of the Fire & Rescue Service.

Regional Health & Safety coordinators received a briefing on the report from A.D. Little and John McGhee, National Officer for Health & Safety.

The Executive Summary is produced for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2005 a major explosion, followed by an extensive fire occurred at the petroleum products storage depot at Buncefield in Hertfordshire. Based on the subsequent event escalation and difficulties in dealing with incident management, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) asked Arthur D. Little to advise on the appropriate level of preparation for response to incidents of this nature.

These issues are closely linked to the development of Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs), and local authority emergency response planning, in relation to major hazard sites of this nature.

The final agreed objective of the study was:

To advise on the appropriate level of preparation and response for COMAH site incidents and review of existing Emergency Response Planning documentations.

The work itself was split into 4 main tasks:
- Review of Emergency Planning
- Review of Regulatory Position
- Technical Issues
- Review of 2006/7 IRMPs

The study was carried out in two main phases; firstly a literature review to understand and identify the main issues. This was followed by interviews with FBU staff members, Fire and Rescue Service personnel, Local Authority Emergency Planning Officers, Regional Government Resilience personnel and a review of 2006/7 IRMPs.

Our findings and recommendations have been arranged into six key areas. A summary of the key findings, and the recommendations, are given below.

1 IRMP Risk Modelling and Risk Assessment

- The demographic information used for risk modelling was based on the most recent census of 2001. It is not clear how potentially significant changes in the demographic are identified and taken into account between censuses
- The FSEC software produces outputs in terms of comparative risk against the average for the Fire and Rescue Service's area. Within the IRMP framework, there is no standard for acceptability of risk. This means that no effective scrutiny is possible which may lead to variable risk around the country
- Some model simplifications may be inappropriate. Assuming 100% availability of resources does not account for training, maintenance, illness, fire prevention work, attendance at another incident etc.
- With well established relationships between speed and level of attendance, and fatality rates, it would be expected that modelling of absolute risk, for comparison against targets, would be achievable
- National targets are set on reducing fire deaths; however the comparative risk output would not allow comparison of the modelled risk with these targets
- There are also some concerns regarding under reporting of death following a fire, as some delayed deaths may not be reported as a fire death, even when clearly attributable to fire

Recommendations
- The Fire and Rescue Services require guidance on how to account for significant changes in the demographics used in risk modelling between censuses
- Fire and Rescue Services should base risk modelling for IRMP on the actual availability of resources rather than an assumption of 100% availability
- IRMPs should be based on the modelling of absolute rather than comparative risk, with a requirement on the Fire Authorities and Fire and Rescue Services to demonstrate that the risk is ALARP for their area
- The Government should review guidance for reporting of death in or due to fire. In particular, the consideration of death which is due to fire, but is delayed by medical intervention should be clarified

2 Major Accident Emergency Planning

- Overall there is no evidence, that planning for Major Accident Hazards (MAHs) is not being carried out effectively, although the sample is limited
- Liaison/engagement between COMAH sites and planners in both F&RSs and LAs is good. Local focus groups appear to work well and involve the appropriate people
- The Regional Resilience teams have a potentially valuable role to play in many areas and their engagement in emergency planning and testing should be encouraged
- There does not appear to be a national overview of adequacy of resourcing and redundancy and no national view of capability for responding to major accident hazards

Recommendations

- The government should carry out a national or regional review of capabilities to respond to major accidents at COMAH or other high hazard sites. This review should also consider the resilience of Fire and Rescue Services attending such incidents

3 Audit and Review

- Auditing is now beginning to consider delivery of services as well as value for money, which is considered to be a positive step as long as good practices are followed in the audits
- Links between COMAH and IRMP are provided at high level by the Corporate Risk Management processes and use of the Community Risk Registers. Operational level links between the two processes appear to be informal at best
- Planning/testing is carried out and considers the relevant elements. The review cycle is formalised in COMAH and is well implemented. Efforts are also made to share good practice
- There are suitable review and QA/QC procedures in place, and there is evidence of review of plans following incidents or new evidence. There also appears to be adequate engagement with the HSE

Recommendations

- The Government needs to take steps to strengthen and formalise the operational links between IRMP and COMAH planning processes within Fire and Rescue Services, such that re-alignment of resources under IRMP triggers a review against emergency planning needs
- The operational delivery audit programme needs to be fully developed with Government guidance to ensure that is able to verify compliance, measure performance and ensure continuous improvement. This requires collecting additional evidence to demonstrate the implementation of procedures or policies, in a cascade approach in support of pre-audit evidence collection

4 Equipment and Appliances

- Mutual aid issues are well understood on a local basis with agreements between neighbouring services and those with similar capabilities
- The national "Fire Buy" scheme should be seen as a significant opportunity to address issues such as compatibility of RPE
- A number of IRMPs identify opportunities to rationalise equipment, specifically high-reach appliances. These, and combined high-reach/pump appliances remain useful, however, for attendance at warehouse and industrial fires, and at COMAH sites, where more remote attack and attack from height is a significant advantage. Any reduction in provision of this equipment must therefore be carefully justified

Recommendations

- Fire and Rescue Services should be provided with guidance on assessing the need for specialist appliances, particularly aerial attack appliances. This guidance needs to ensure that there is adequate focus on severity of hazard in the light of low utilisation. This approach is more closely aligned with current HSE expectation rather than basing decisions on utilisation alone
- Fire and Rescue Services must ensure that any decisions to rationalise specialist equipment are considered against the requirements laid out in any COMAH emergency plans or other major incident planning and that the basis for the decision is adequately recorded

5 Skills Management

- The engagement between planners, sites and emergency responders appears to be largely based on existing relationships built up over an extended period of time. There is little evidence in documents reviewed of appropriate succession planning to ensure that this knowledge is retained

Recommendations

- All Fire and Rescue Services need to ensure that suitable processes are in place to identify and retain key skills and communication links in respect of COMAH planning

6 Standards of Attendance and Occupational Health and Safety

- There is evidence of reduction in standards of attendance in some cases. This may increase the risk to both the public and fire fighters
- It is not evident in all cases that assessments of risk to employees have been reviewed following changes in attendance or crewing standards
- The same is also true regarding review of SOPs used by the Fire and Rescue Services, which may no longer reflect the current standards of service. Changing levels of attendance may affect the ability of fire fighters to respond in a manner defined in an SOP, and may increase the risk to fire fighters
- A number of IRMPs link response to risk. The scale of response at fire station level is unlikely to be appropriately matched to the measurement of risk on the basis of "sectors" of 100-150 dwellings and the likely variability in risk within the area served by a single fire station. It is also the case that changes in demographics within the area served by a fire station will affect the risk

Recommendations

- Fire and Rescue Services need to ensure that they have processes in place to identify and review SOPs and risk assessments that may have been affected by changing crewing levels, attendance standards and vehicle types
- Fire and Rescue Services need to ensure that any link between attendance and risk is based on the highest risk within the area served by a particular fire station. It is unclear whether this is currently the case

WARWICKSHIRE – ATHERSTONE ON STOUR

On Friday 2nd November 2007, Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service were called to a warehouse fire at Atherstone on Stour. Sadly the lives of four firefighters were lost at this incident, Ian Reid (aged 44), Stratford upon Avon Fire Station; John Averis (aged 27), Stratford upon Avon Fire Station; Ashley Stephens (aged 21), Alcester Fire Station and Darren Yates-Badley (aged 24), Alcester Fire Station.

An investigation is underway into all aspects of the incident, which is anticipated to last for a considerable time. National Officer, John McGhee, is leading this investigation on behalf of The Fire Brigades Union and will give regular reports to the Executive Council. The FBU will be representing all of the families and are working with Warwickshire Police and the Health & Safety Executive who are also investigating the incident.

Officials in Region 7 and Warwickshire worked tirelessly following the incident, to support all of our members throughout this very difficult time.

J2 Hazards Conference 2007

The 18th National Hazards Conference took place at the University of Manchester on the 27-29 July 2007. Over 500 delegates attended this year's conference including FBU Safety Reps from across our regions.

The Executive Council agreed to sponsor the event and the FBU Regional Safety Coordinators Committee organised a stall. The focus for the conference was 'Sensible Health and Safety'. The FBU stall was used to highlight the issue of 'Toxins – The Hidden Killer' and was supported by a number of FBU Safety Coordinators and representatives. Our stall attracted a great deal of interest and allowed our Safety Reps to have a focal point for networking opportunities. It is hoped that our support for the National Hazards Conference can continue to improve as this conference provides an excellent educational opportunity for Safety Representatives. Our thanks go to the organisers of the event, Greater Manchester Hazards Centre.

J3 Working Facilities

At the Union's 2007 Annual Conference held in May, resolution 5 – PFI was agreed.

Resolution 5 – PFI

This Annual Conference has seen first hand problems surrounding facilities for women at many new build PFI Fire & Rescue Service workplaces.

Examples of these problems include:

- *Unisex facilities – affording little privacy*
- *No floor to ceiling partitions on toilets and showers*
- *Joint locker rooms*
- *Lack of sanitary machines and sanitary disposal vestibules.*

This Annual Conference believes that the finances required to provide adequate facilities for women at these workplaces are being sacrificed in order to maximise profit for the private companies who have gained the PFI contract.

This Annual Conference believes that the above circumstances add further authority to the FBU policy of opposing PFI buildings within the UK Fire & Rescue Service and demands that the Executive Council produce an up to date record of all PFI buildings within the Service which lists the facilities provided for women at each.

This record to be produced by the 2007 Women's AGM.

NWC

The Executive Council gave a commitment not only to survey stations or workplaces built under PFI projects but also to survey all workplaces.

A sub group from the Regional Health & Safety Coordinators undertook this work.

A request for information was sent to Brigade Safety Reps on 5th July 2007. This included a questionnaire aimed at gathering information regarding facilities in workplaces. Returns were requested by 14th September 2007 and a good response was received from regions. The group of safety coordinators were working to input the information onto a spreadsheet in order to analyse the information. Unfortunately, the timescale for the National Women's Committee AGM was not achieved and a report should be provided in 2008.

J4 Health and Safety Information Service

Following a request from Region 1 of the Union for access to up to date information regarding Health & Safety, it was proposed and agreed by the Executive Council that the Union would subscribe to a service provided by 'Barbour'. This service provides access for Safety Reps to all related Health &

Safety/Fire Safety British Standards. This service is available through Regional Offices and is on a 3-year trial period. Branch Safety Reps can go through Brigade Officials or Regional Health & Safety Coordinators to access any relevant information.

This should be a valuable asset for our Safety Reps in their work for the members.

J5 HSE Campaign – Slips and Trips

The Health & Safety Executive ran a campaign to reduce the accidents and injuries caused by slips and trips in the workplace. The Fire Brigades Union gave support to the campaign and in May 2007 issued to all Branch Safety Reps an HSE Mapping tool and aid. Safety Reps were encouraged to use this tool as a mechanism for increasing awareness of the dangers from slips and trips and to reduce the number of accidents. Statistics show that more than 1/3rd of all reported major injuries are caused by slips and trips. Our officials are working to reduce this figure.

J6 Toxins

At our 2004 Conference a resolution (No. 63) on the subject of Toxins was debated and carried. This called on the Executive Council to investigate the health effects of heavy metals and other toxins absorbed, inhaled or ingested by firefighters. In April 2005, Brigade Secretaries were asked to assist by identifying firefighters suffering from certain conditions that would be willing to participate in a pilot study. A further request was sent to Regional Secretaries in July 2005 for assistance in identifying volunteers. Both of these requests were unsuccessful and no volunteers were identified.

On the 2nd February 2007 a request, for assistance was sent to Brigade Health & Safety Reps. Additionally Regional H&S Coordinators were asked to encourage participation in the pilot study. This proved a bit more successful and approximately 20 individuals underwent some testing. These tests included tests of body fat, blood and urine. The collation of results indicated that those tested had in some cases up to 200% increase in the provisional limit of acceptability for substances such as PBB's (BDE) flame retardants and organochlorines. The results for these tests were collected from March until September. Those participating will be offered a further re test after approximately 6 months.

As well as the pilot study, information was sent to all members in August 2007 (007HOC0425JM) which gave guidance on methods to be adopted to protect against these toxin sources.

It is hoped that after following advice given by the Doctor who carried out the pilot study that the levels of toxins in the participants will have been reduced.

This work will continue into 2008 with a more substantial piece of research being anticipated.

J7 Auditory Health – Fire Controls

Following a preliminary study, which was, carried out in 1998/9 the Executive Council commissioned a full study into the effects of Acoustic Shock and Musculoskeletal Disorders within Emergency Fire Control Staff. These reports were presented to the Executive Council at their meeting in September 2007. The Executive summaries were also circulated to Brigade Secretaries, Brigade H&S reps as well as to CSNC members.

Brigade Secretaries were in particular, asked to raise the issues identified, which related to Acoustic Shock.

Both reports were available electronically to the Executive Council.

J8 Attacks on Firefighters

The Union commissioned the Labour Research Department (LRD) to carry out research into violence at work being experienced by FBU members. This was a follow up to a previous report which had been carried out in approximately March 2005. Brigade Secretaries were asked to complete a questionnaire and return it to LRD by the 9th November 2007. The results of the research will be provided early in 2008. It is anticipated that the levels of violence are far greater than those reported through brigades, and The Fire Brigades Union will seek to use the study to drive down this violence as far as possible.

J9 High Rise Procedures GRA

Following the Stevenage incident, Harrow Court, and the subsequent Coroners inquest, the CLG set up a review of the Generic Risk Assessment for High Rise Procedures. This was initiated without The Fire Brigades Union's input. Following representation to the CLG by the National Officer for Health, Safety & Welfare, the Union were invited to nominate a representative to be involved in the review. Bro. Graham Noakes, Regional Secretary Region 9, has been appointed to represent The Fire Brigades Union on this review and will report to John McGhee National Officer Health, Safety & Welfare.

J10 Diabetes

Following the extension of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in 2004, the FRS now have to consider whether and how to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that fire-fighters and recruits with diabetes can be fully operational, as opposed to whether they can do the job at all. In April 2007 a 'Survey Report' produced by a number of stakeholders within the FRS along with the Disability Rights Commission and led by Diabetes UK, was issued to Brigade Health & Safety reps to assist with negotiations on 'reasonable adjustments'. (As per Head Office circular 2007HOC0208JM). This report makes a number of recommendations. Officials were asked to give this consideration and act upon them during negotiations.

J11 TUC Union Health & Safety Specialists

This group, which includes John McGhee, National Officer for Health, Safety & Welfare, meets quarterly at TUC, Congress House. Throughout the year issues such as ; European H&S Week, Directors Duties; Safety Reps Rights; Safety Reps Training; Flu Pandemic; Support to Affiliates; have all been discussed. The TUC has also coordinated a response on behalf of affiliates to a number of government consultation documents such as Employers Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regs 1998 and Directors Duties. Reports of these meetings are given to the Executive Council.

J12 Fire and Rescue Service Health & Safety Group

This group met on four occasions during 2007 and The Fire Brigades Union continues to play a substantial role within it. The June meeting was hosted at The Fire Brigades Union's Head Office, where Jim Parrott, Region 11, attended to give a report on the East Sussex (Marlie Farm) incident. Throughout the year issues such as: Drug & Alcohol Policy; Resilience Programmes; Welfare Issues' Significant Safety Events; Flu Pandemic; HSE-CFOA Protocol for Inspection of FRS's; Legalities of sharing information; Tetra Radios; False Chimneys; Buncefield; Exposure to Toxin's; DSU Design and Specification; Dignified Facilities etc were agenda items.

These meetings are attended by John McGhee, National Officer for Health, Safety & Welfare and reported to the Executive Council.

J13 Confidential Stress Helpline

The Executive Council agreed to continue to provide members with the free confidential stress helpline. Following increased publicity for the helpline in 2006, it was hoped that more members would take up the service.

During 2007, 33 members accessed counselling through the helpline and a further 117 calls were taken for onward referral. The Executive Council continues to believe that this is an important service for members and have renewed the contract up until November 2008 when a further review will take place. Officials are encouraged to publicise this service to all members.

HELPLINE: 0800 783 4778

K1 Foreword

National Treasurer's and General Secretary's Foreword

The union's Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account details a 2007 surplus for the year after pension scheme actuarial gain/(loss) of £1,789,567 compared to a 2006 surplus of £416,933.

The General Fund details a surplus for the year after pension scheme actuarial gain/(loss) of £1,246,396, whilst the Accident and Injury Fund details a surplus of £182,705.

Contributions income has increased by £345,625, however, grants have decreased by £269,385.

Expenditure has decreased by £512,310, which is mainly due to lower benefits, union learning and depreciation expenditure, however, administration expenditure has increased.

The 2007 consolidated carried forward surplus is £4,565,660, however, the General Fund carried forward deficit is £324,880 (2006 £1,571,276).

M. Wrack

Matt Wrack
General Secretary

WAGee

Warren Gee
National Treasurer

K2 Financial Statement

Accounts for the Year Ended 31 December 2007

Statement of the Executive Council's Responsibilities

Trade Union Law requires the Executive Council to prepare financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the union's affairs and of the surplus or deficit of the union for that year. In preparing those financial statements the Executive Council is required to;

a) Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

b) Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

c) Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the union will continue to operate.

The Executive Council is also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the union and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. It must also establish and maintain a satisfactory system of control over its accounting records, its cash holdings and all its receipts and remittances. 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.

Independent Auditors' 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 2007 which comprise the Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the union's members, 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 those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' 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 union's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Executive Council and auditors

The Executive Council's responsibilities for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and relevant United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) are set out in the Statement of the Executive Council's Responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the National Treasurer's and General Secretary's foreword is consistent with the financial statements, if the Union has not kept proper accounting records or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Executive Council in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the union's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with relevant United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the union's affairs as at 31 December 2007 and of its surplus for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, and the information given in the National Treasurer's and General Secretary's foreword is consistent with the financial statements.

HARD DOWDY
a trading style of
Chantrey Vellacott DFK LLP
Chartered Accountants
Registered auditors
London
Date 15 April 2008

Consolidated Income And Expenditure Account

For The Year Ended 31 December 2007

	Note	2007 £	2006 £	General Fund £	Accident & Injury Fund £	Political Fund £	Officials Pension Fund £	Union Learning Fund £
Income								
Contributions	1a	11,963,989	11,618,364	10,023,671	1,633,593	272,064	34,661	—
Investment Income		126,476	95,568	—	86,082	26,277	4,282	9,835
Grants		639,141	908,526	—	—	—	—	639,141
Sales of Publications and Merchandise		4,650	6,280	4,650	—	—	—	—
Support Fund		128	—	—	128	—	—	—
VAT Recoverable		5,290	3,612	5,290	—	—	—	—
		12,739,674	12,632,350	10,033,611	1,719,803	298,341	38,943	648,976
Expenditure								
Benefits	2	1,827,152	2,656,105	453,478	1,373,674	—	—	—
Conferences and Meetings		400,288	224,334	400,288	—	—	—	—
Affiliations		141,316	152,647	138,234	—	3,082	—	—
'Firefighter'		206,798	217,185	206,798	—	—	—	—
Commissions		146,240	156,107	58,496	58,496	29,248	—	—
Union Learning Costs		648,976	915,216	—	—	—	—	648,976
Administration	3	8,045,343	7,485,196	7,499,039	104,928	159,515	281,861	—
Depreciation and (Profit)/Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets and Investments	1b	143,994	265,627	151,991	—	—	(7,997)	—
Transfer of Funds		—	—	340,891	—	—	(340,891)	—
		11,560,107	12,072,417	9,249,215	1,537,098	191,845	(67,027)	648,976
Surplus for the year before pension scheme actuarial gain/(loss)		1,179,567	559,933	784,396	182,705	106,496	105,970	—
Pension scheme actuarial gain/(loss)		610,000	(143,000)	462,000	—	—	148,000	—
Surplus for the year after pension scheme actuarial gain/(loss)		1,789,567	416,933	1,246,396	182,705	106,496	253,970	—
Surplus/(deficit) brought forward		2,776,093	2,359,160	(1,571,276)	3,216,304	936,761	194,304	—
Surplus/(deficit) carried forward		4,565,660	2,776,093	(324,880)	3,399,009	1,043,257	448,274	—

Consolidated Balance Sheet

As At 31 December 2007

	Note	2007 £	2007 £	2006 £	2006 £
Fixed Assets	4		2,352,184		2,523,130
Investments	7		965,083		980,725
Current Assets					
Stock		13,114		—	
Debtors and Prepayments		1,072,383		829,435	
Mortgages repayable after more than one year		431,316		556,378	
Deposits with Solicitors		46,014		30,451	
Cash at Bank and in Hand and with Stockbrokers		2,838,142		1,777,390	
		4,400,969		3,193,654	
Less Current Liabilities		2,154,576		2,187,416	
Net Current Assets			2,246,393		1,006,238
Total Assets before Pension Liability			5,563,660		4,510,093
Pension Liability			(998,000)		(1,734,000)
Total Assets after Pension Liability			4,565,660		2,776,093
Financed By					
Total Funds			4,565,660		2,776,093

M. Wrack

M. WRACK – GENERAL SECRETARY

M. Shaw.

M. SHAW – PRESIDENT

Cash Flow Statement

For The Year Ended 31 December 2007

	2007 £	2006 £
Reconciliation of Operating Results to Net Cash (Outflow)/Inflow from Operating Activities		
General Fund Surplus	1,246,396	768,945
Accident and Injury Fund Surplus/(Deficit)	182,705	(694,907)
Political Fund Surplus	106,496	73,488
Officials' Pension Fund Surplus	253,970	269,407
Depreciation Charges and (Profit)/Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets and Investments	143,994	265,627
Decrease in Pension Liability	(736,000)	—
Increase in Stock	(13,114)	—
Increase in Debtors	(242,948)	(8,960)
Decrease in Mortgages	125,062	14,571
Decrease in Creditors	(32,840)	(495,756)
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	1,033,721	192,415

	2007 £	2006 £
Cash Flow Statement		
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	1,033,721	192,415
Purchase of Fixed Assets	(263,985)	(103,876)
Sale of Fixed Assets	262,200	25,350
Purchase of Investments	(157,719)	(311,174)
Sale of Investments	202,098	318,307
	1,076,315	121,022

	2007 £	2006 £
Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movement in Cash		
Increase in Cash in the year	1,076,315	121,022
Net Cash as at 1 January 2007	1,807,841	1,686,819
Net Cash as at 31 December 2007	2,884,156	1,807,841

Notes to the Accounts

For The Year Ended 31 December 2007

1 Accounting Policies

a) Contributions include those amounts collectable from members in respect of the year under review.

b) Depreciation has been provided on fixed assets at rates sufficient to write them off over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Buildings	2.5% per annum
Computer Equipment	25% per annum
Fixtures and Fittings	10% or 20% per annum
Motor Vehicles	25% per annum

2 Benefits

	2007 £	2006 £
Legal Fees	198,523	181,435
Education	226,260	218,093
Accidents and Injury Claims	1,373,674	2,182,008
Payments for Support	7,289	49,339
Victimisation Payments	21,406	25,230
	1,827,152	2,656,105

3 Administration

	2007 £	2006 £
Salaries, National Insurance and Pension Contributions	2,090,640	2,112,374
Honoraria	20,732	19,186
Travelling	740,853	765,934
Hotels and Subsistence	811,188	738,720
Motor Expenses	534,071	518,501
Other Organising Expenses	207,230	169,985
Trade Union Leave	1,041,049	1,026,852
Reports, Journals and Subscriptions	82,373	100,986
Ballot Expenses	20,068	51,986
Donations	120,912	110,596
Goods for Resale and Presentations	56,818	17,894
Repairs and Renewals	96,646	66,045
Office Expenses	484,292	385,962
Communications	634,785	671,075
Printing and Stationery	501,504	345,844
Advertising	66,646	33,502
Insurance	39,767	47,944
Bank Charges	23,067	19,925
Audit and Accountancy	27,459	24,254
Professional Fees	390,099	257,631
Computer Leasing	55,144	—
	8,045,343	7,485,196

Notes to the Accounts

For The Year Ended 31 December 2007

4 Fixed Assets

	Land & Buildings £	Fixtures Fittings & Equipment £	Motor Vehicles £	Total £
Cost				
1 January 2007	2,769,406	982,694	151,797	3,903,897
Additions	100,000	138,344	25,641	263,985
Disposals	(197,500)	(326,847)	(36,680)	(561,027)
31 December 2007	2,671,906	794,191	140,758	3,606,855
Depreciation				
1 January 2007	607,004	709,437	64,326	1,380,767
Charged	51,824	158,266	35,190	245,280
Disposals	(18,500)	(326,844)	(26,032)	(371,376)
31 December 2007	640,328	540,859	73,484	1,254,671
Net Book Value				
31 December 2007	2,031,578	253,332	67,274	2,352,184
Net Book Value				
31 December 2006	2,162,402	273,257	87,471	2,523,130

5 Investments at Cost

	2007 £	2006 £
Quoted Equities and Unit Trusts		
Newton Investment Management Ltd – Market Value – £515,028 (2007), £515,460 (2006)	425,940	429,208
Newton Investment Management Ltd – Market Value – £332,125 (2007), £332,628 (2006)	275,578	287,952
Unquoted Equities		
240,000 Unity Trust plc Ordinary Shares	240,000	240,000
Labour Education, Rec. And Holiday Homes Ltd.	530	530
Loans – Co-op Societies		
CRS London Ltd.	35	35
Peoples Press Printing Society Ltd.	20,000	20,000
Loans		
Scottish TUC	3,000	3,000
	965,083	980,725

Notes to the Accounts

For The Year Ended 31 December 2007

6 Pension Scheme Contributions

The union operates two defined benefit schemes in the United Kingdom, the first in respect of national officials' and the second for clerical staff. A full actuarial valuation was carried out at 1 November 2005 and 1 July 2005 respectively on each scheme and updated to 31 December 2007 by qualified indpendent actuaries.

The major assumptions used by the actuary for the National Officials' Scheme.

	At 31.12.07	At 31.12.06	At 31.12.05
Rate of increase in salaries	5.5%	5.3%	5.0%
Rate of increase of pensions in payment	3.4%	3.2%	3.0%
Discount Rate	5.8%	5.2%	4.8%
Inflation Rate	3.5%	3.3%	3.0%
Loading for mortality improvements	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%

The assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return for the National Officials' Scheme.

	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.07 £'000	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.06 £'000	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.05 £'000
With Profits Fund	3.5%	1,237	5.6%	886	3.5%	656
Secured annuities	4.8%	3,384	5.2%	3,520	4.8%	3,983
Total market value of assets		4,621		4,406		4,639
Present value of scheme liabilities		(4,500)		(4,553)		(4,998)
Surplus/Deficit in scheme being net pension liability		121		(147)		(359)

The major assumptions used by the actuary for the Clerical Staff Scheme.

	At 31.12.07	At 31.12.06	At 31.12.05
Rate of increase in salaries	5.0%	4.8%	4.4%
Rate of increase of pensions in payment	3.5%	3.3%	2.9%
Discount Rate	5.8%	5.1%	4.7%
Inflation assumption	3.5%	3.3%	2.9%

The assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return for the Clerical Staff Scheme.

	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.07 £'000	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.06 £'000	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.05 £'000
Cash accumulation policy	7.0%	2,065	7.0%	1,934	6.5%	1,443
Secured annuities	5.8%	1,125	5.1%	1,025	4.7%	943
Total market value of assets		3,190		2,959		2,386
Present value of scheme liabilities		(4,309)		(4,546)		(3,761)
Deficit in scheme being net pension liability		(1,119)		(1,587)		(1,375)

The union is only subject to corporation tax in line with note 7 and does not therefore account for deferred tax. As a consequence, there cannot be a deferred tax asset related to the above pension liability.

Notes to the Accounts

For The Year Ended 31 December 2007

6 Pension Scheme Contributions (continued)

	2007		2006		2005	
	National Officials £'000	**Clerical Staff £'000**	**National Officials £'000**	**Clerical Staff £'000**	**National Officials' £'000**	**Clerical Staff £'000**
Analysis of amount charged to expenditure						
Current service cost	143	258	139	204	186	224
Past service cost	—	—	—	—	—	—
Curtailments	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total operating charge	143	258	139	204	186	224
Analysis of amount included as income						
Expected return on pension scheme assets	236	194	216	151	189	121
Interest on pension scheme liabilities	(237)	(234)	(240)	(182)	(219)	(155)
Negative return	(1)	(40)	(24)	(31)	(30)	(34)
Analysis of actuarial amount recognised as loss						
Actual return less expected return on scheme assets	(159)	(161)	(515)	101	447	172
Experience gains and losses arising on scheme liabilities	367	(28)	494	19	(177)	(83)
Charges in assumptions underlying the present value of the scheme liabilities	(60)	651	197	(439)	(473)	(498)
Actuarial profit/(loss) recognised	148	462	176	(319)	(203)	(409)
Movement in deficit during the year						
(Deficit) surplus in scheme at beginning of the year	(147)	(1,587)	(359)	(1,375)	(195)	(900)
Movement in the year:						
Charge to expenditure	(143)	(258)	(139)	(204)	(186)	(224)
Negative income return	(1)	(40)	(24)	(31)	(30)	(34)
Actuarial gain/(loss)	148	462	176	(319)	(203)	(409)
Contributions	264	304	199	342	255	192
Deficit in scheme at end of the year	121	(1,119)	(147)	(1,587)	(359)	(1,375)

The full actuarial valuation at 1 November 2005 of the National Officials' scheme showed a deficit of £258,000. The trustees agreed with the employer that the union's rate of contribution would be 71% to 31 October 2006, thereafter 66.7% plus £4,400 per month. The employee's rate of contribution would remain at 11%.

On the Clerical Staff scheme, the full actuarial valuation at 1 July 2005 showed a deficit of £1,254,000. The trustees agreed with the employer that the union's rate of contribution would be 38.1% to 30 June 2006, thereafter 42.8%. The employee's rate of contribution would remain at 5%.

Notes to the Accounts

For The Year Ended 31 December 2007

6 Pension Scheme Contributions (continued)

	2007		2006		2005	
	Officials' £'000	Staff £'000	Officials' £'000	Staff £'000	Officials' £'000	Staff £'000
History of experience gains and losses						
Difference between expected and actual return on assets	(159)	(161)	(515)	101	447	172
Percentage of scheme assets	(3.4%)	(5.0%)	(11.7%)	3.4%	9.7%	7.2%
Experience gains and losses arising on scheme liabilities	367	(28)	494	19	(177)	(83)
Percentage of the present value of scheme liabilities	8.2%	(0.6%)	10.8%	0.4%	3.5%	(2.2%)
Amount of recognised actuarial gains and losses	148	462	176	(319)	(203)	(409)
Percentage of the present value of scheme liabilities	3.3%	10.7%	3.9%	(7.0%)	(4.1%)	(10.9%)

	2004		2003	
	Officials' £'000	Staff £'000	Officials' £'000	Staff £'000
History of experience gains and losses				
Difference between expected and actual return on assets	119	86	(118)	(67)
Percentage of scheme assets	3.0%	4.5%	(3.2%)	(4.2%)
Experience gains and losses arising on scheme liabilities	(95)	(111)	75	73
Percentage of the present value of scheme liabilities	2.3%	(3.9%)	2.2%	3.0%
Amount of recognised actuarial gains and losses	(285)	(71)	(185)	(477)
Percentage of the present value of scheme liabilities	(6.9%)	(2.5%)	(5.3%)	(20.0%)

Under FRS17 the operating costs of providing benefits, the service costs, and the interest cost and expected return on assets are included in the income and expenditure account in the period in which they arise. Market fluctuations are set out as recognised gains and losses. The cash flow required to meet any deficit relates to future pension contributions and in the long term this is expected to rise. However the amount of any deficit is subject to considerable variation as it depends on a number of both demographic and financial assumptions.

7 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.

8 Commitments – Operating Leases

As at 31 December 2007 the Fire Brigades Union had annual computer leasing commitments of £59,804 expiring between one and two years (2006 – nil).

Analysis of Officials' Salaries and Benefits

For The Year Ended 31 December 2007

Salaries

Name	Office Held	Gross Salary £	Equivalent Rank	
Matt Wrack	General Secretary	66,389	Area Manager	Competent "B"
Andy Dark	Assistant General Secretary	62,626	Area Manager	Competent "A"
Sean Starbuck	National Officer (from 15 October 2007)	12,661	Group Manager	Competent "B"
John McGhee	National Officer	57,808	Group Manager	Competent "B"
Dean Mills	National Officer	57,808	Group Manager	Competent "B"
Paul Woolstenholmes	National Officer	57,808	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	7,835	44,281	5,134
Andy Dark	Assistant General Secretary	7,354	41,772	4,565
Sean Starbuck	National Officer (from 15 October 2007)	1,509	8,445	228
John McGhee	National Officer	6,737	38,558	17,357
Dean Mills	National Officer	6,737	38,558	3,619
Paul Woolstenholmes	National Officer	6,737	38,558	4,104

Note: All National Officials pay a pension contribution of the amount specified in the Firefighters' Pension Scheme of 11% and receive a pension comparable to equivalent Officers of the Fire Service.

Members of the Executive Council

Benefits

Name	Office Held	Honoraria £	Car Allowance £	Car & Fuel Benefit £	Car Maintenance £
R. Winters	President (to 27 February 2007)	360	—	1,735	—
M. Shaw	President (from 27 February 2007)	1,080	—	5,445	—
A. McLean	EC and Vice President	4,779	—	—	1,200
M. Smith	EC and Acting National Treasurer	4,779	—	—	1,200

The following Executive Council members were paid a car maintenance allowance at the rate of £1,200 per annum and a car allowance at the rate of £4,779 per annum:

R. Robertson	P. Miller
J. Barbour	T. McFarlane
J. Pagan	M. Nicholas
W. Gee	S. Riley (formerly S. Eames)
D. Green	T. Mitchell
D. Whatton	V. Knight
K. Handscomb	J. Ford
I. Leahair	S. Brown
E. Thornton	M. Shaw (to 27 February)

Note: The Union made reinbursement to local Authorities of £1,041,049 in respect of Trade Union Leave in connection with Trade Union duties by certain Executive Council Members and Regional Officials.

"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 Executive Council records with deep regret the deaths of the following members:

Gary Sommerville	4/7/2007	Central
Garry Telfer	17/7/2007	Dumfries & Galloway – *ON DUTY*
Michael McNamara	24/9/2007	Fife
Nicholas Dunford	21/6/2007	Highland & Islands
Thomas Brown	2/5/2007	Strathclyde – *ON DUTY*
Stuart Wark	13/8/2007	Strathclyde
Bradley Tosh	24/2/2007	Tayside
Samuel Corbett	19/4/2007	Northern Ireland
Stephen Hunter	19/7/2007	Northern Ireland
William Stewart	3/8/2007	Northern Ireland
Amanda Wilson	12/3/2007	Northern Ireland
Anthony Burton	11/7/2007	Cleveland
Douglas Wright	29/3/2007	Cleveland
Michael Waite	24/10/2007	Northumberland
Michael Murray	17/8/2007	Tyne & Wear
Philip Tweddle	29/4/2007	Humberside
Timothy Tasane	10/1/2007	North Yorkshire
Norman Charnley	14/8/2007	South Yorkshire
Devlin Kelly	10/1/2007	South Yorkshire
John Ruddell	24/5/2007	Greater Manchester
David Standing	2/10/2007	Lancashire
Raymond Dring	16/4/2007	Derbyshire
Kim Dunk	10/2/2007	Derbyshire
John Day	6/8/2007	Nottinghamshire
Michael Calder	15/8/2007	Staffordshire
Kevin Bowcock	28/4/2007	Staffordshire
Christopher Poole	11/4/2007	Staffordshire
Antony Bratt	7/3/2007	Warwickshire
Clive Byrom	6/3/2007	Warwickshire
John Averis	3/11/2007	Warwickshire – *ON DUTY*
Darren Yates-Badley	3/11/2007	Warwickshire – *ON DUTY*
Ian Reid	2/11/2007	Warwickshire – *ON DUTY*
Ashley Stephens	3/11/2007	Warwickshire – *ON DUTY*

Victor Darrell	10/1/2007	Mid & West Wales
Martin Hodgkiss	4/1/2007	South Wales
Douglas Hewett	23/11/2007	Essex
Paul Mallaghan	18/6/2007	Hertfordshire – *ON DUTY*
John Sessions	4/6/2007	London
Robert Turner	22/4/2007	London
Michael Daniel	1/11/2007	Buckinghamshire
Neil Parsons	5/3/2007	Avon
William Corin	18/6/2007	Cornwall