

The Fire Brigades Union



Executive Council's

Annual Report **2011**

86th Annual Conference

17th, 18th, 19th and 20th May 2011

FBU – Campaigning For You



THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION

FOUNDED 1918

Affiliated to the Trades Union Congress
and trades councils

Executive Council's Annual Report to the 86th Annual Conference 2011

President: **Mick Shaw**
Vice president/President-elect: **Alan McLean**
General secretary: **Matt Wrack**
Assistant general secretary: **Andy Dark**
Treasurer: **Warren Gee**

National officers: **John McGhee**
Sean Starbuck
Paul Woolstenholmes
Dave Green

Bradley House
68 Coombe Road
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey
KT2 7AE

Telephone: 020 8541 1765
Fax: 020 8546 5187
e.mail: office@fbu.org.uk
website: www.fbu.org.uk



MICK SHAW
President



MATT WRACK
General secretary



ANDY DARK
Assistant general secretary



ALAN McLEAN
President-elect and Region 3 EC



WARREN GEE
Treasurer and Region 5 EC



JOHN McGHEE
National officer



SEAN STARBUCK
National officer



PAUL WOOLSTENHOLMES
National officer



DAVE GREEN
National officer (June 2010)

Executive council members



RODDY ROBERTSON
Region 1



JIM BARBOUR
Region 2



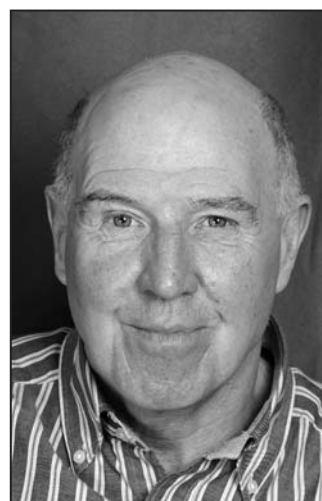
IAN MURRAY
Region 4



DAVE LIMER
Region 6 (June 2010)



ROSE JONES
Region 7



MIKE SMITH
Region 8



KEITH HANDSCOMB
Region 9



IAN LEAHAIR
Region 10



JIM PARROTT
Region 11

Executive council members (continued)



KARL HORAN
Region 12



TAM MCFARLANE
Region 13



MICKY NICHOLAS
B&EMM



SHARON RILEY
Control



TAM MITCHELL
National retained



VICKY KNIGHT
NWC (to Sept 2010)



JACK FORD
ONC



STEWART BROWN
LGBT



DENISE CHRISTIE
NWC (from Sept 2010)

Contents

President-elect's introduction

9

Section A

National Joint Council

A1	Introduction	11
A2	Report of the independent chair of the NJC/MMNB	11
A3	Pay and CPD 2010	15
A4	Protected pay 2010	17
A5	Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB)	18
A6	Car allowances	18
A7	Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)	19
A8	Resolution Advisory Panel (RAP)	19
A9	Ad hoc NJC joint working party of the NJC/MMNB	20
A10	NJC annual workforce survey 2010	20
A11	Health issues	21
A12	Maternity, paternity, childcare and dependency	21
A13	Part-time workers (RDS) – terms and conditions settlement	26
A14	National occupational standards	27

Section B

Fire and rescue service policy

B1	Introduction	29
B2	FRS policy – government responsibility – England	29
B3	FRS policy – government responsibility – Northern Ireland	30
B4	FRS policy – government responsibility – Wales	30
B5	FRS policy – government responsibility – Scotland	31
B6	Arson Control Forum	32
B7	BSI	32
B8	Fire safety	32
B9	Joint CFOA/FBU Warehouse Working Group	32
B10	National Fire Sprinkler Network	32
B11	Practitioners' Forum	32
B12	Fire and Rescue Service Statistics User Group	33
B13	Resilience Sounding Board	33
B14	Workforce development	33
B15	Federation of British Fire Organisations	34
B16	CLG Fire Futures review of the fire and rescue service in England	35
B17	FiReControl	64

Section C

TU and labour movement

c1	Introduction	81
c2	TUC 2010	81
c3	ICTU northern conference 2010	82
c4	STUC 2010	82
c5	STUC black workers' conference 2010	83
c6	STUC women's conference 2010	83
c7	Wales TUC conference 2010	84
c8	TUC women's conference 2010	85
c9	TUC LGBT conference 2010	86
c10	TUC black workers' conference 2010	87
c11	Institute of Employment Rights	88
c12	International	88
c13	FBU parliamentary group	88
c14	Affiliations	90

Section D	Pensions	91
------------------	-----------------	----

Section E	AIF 2010	95
------------------	-----------------	----

Section F	Legal report	97
------------------	---------------------	----

Section G	Internal administration	
G1	Executive council meetings 2010	101
G2	Executive council attendance record 2010	102
G3	Elections 2010	103
G4	Industrial disputes	104
G5	B&EMM national committee report 2010	107
G6	B&EMM national committee AGM report 2010	110
G7	CSNC report 2010	111
G8	CSNC AGM report 2010	111
G9	Final appeals committee	113
G10	Firefighter magazine and communications	114
G11	National LGBT committee report 2010	114
G12	National LGBT committee AGM report 2010	116
G13	National retained committee report 2010	118
G14	National retained committee AGM report 2010	119
G15	Officers' national committee report 2010	119
G16	Organising and recruitment	119
G17	Political fund	121
G18	RAFT	122
G19	Regional offices and officials	123
G20	Retired officials	130
G21	Membership statistics	131
G22	Union trustees	133
G23	National women's committee annual report 2010	133
G24	National women's committee AGM report 2010	136
G25	CRAG	138
G26	Reorganisation subcommittee	138
G27	IRMP board	139

Section H	Education	
H1	Introduction	141
H2	National School 2010	142
H3	B&EMM School 2010	144
H4	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) School 2010	145
H5	Women Members' School 2010	145
H6	National education grants	146
H7	TUC day release and extended courses	146
H8	Tutors	147
H9	Union Learning Fund	147
H10	Officer members' seminar 2010	148
H11	Control members' seminar 2010	149

Section I

Fairness at work

I1	Introduction	151
I2	ADAE representation	152
I3	Equality and diversity in the fire and rescue service	152

Section J

Health and safety

J1	Introduction	155
J2	Regional health and safety coordinators	156
J3	FRS health and safety group	156
J4	HSE proactive inspections	156
J5	Brigade safety representatives' training course	157
J6	Serious accident investigation	157
J7	CFRA operational guidance programme	157
J8	Generic risk assessment	158
J9	CFRA dynamic management of risk at operational incidents	158
J10	Operational guidance project – review of TB1/1997 BA command and control procedures	158
J11	The national coordination and advisory framework	158
J12	Marlie Farm, East Sussex	159
J13	Atherstone on Stour, Warwickshire	159
J14	Dalry Road, Edinburgh (Lothian and Borders)	160
J15	Shirley Towers, Southampton (Hampshire)	160
J16	SNSPP and FBU – Channel Tunnel	160
J17	Confidential stress helpline	162
J18	The Fire Service College	162
J19	Practitioners' Forum – reporting of firefighter injuries and fatalities task and finish group	162

Section K

Financial accounts

K1	Foreword	165
K2	Financial statement	165

Section L

Obituary

181



President-elect's introduction

The year 2010 saw the beginning of some of the most sinister political plans to affect working people in this country for many generations. The often ineffective and much maligned Labour leadership faltered into opposition and paved the way for a new government with a "coalition" veneer. Together with their Liberal Democrat accomplices, the Tories have begun vehement attacks on their long-term target, the public sector, with a joint cuts agenda that nobody in the country voted for.

The campaign to challenge the cuts agenda will need to involve every member of our union. We must fight against the destruction of our service. We must stand shoulder to shoulder with other trade unions in the labour movement.

The public sector cannot become the main victim of a problem it had no part in causing. We must concentrate our forces to make sure that we are ready for the biggest fight of all. Our union is making ready at all levels. Each and every member needs to examine their conscience and ensure that they are completely aware and behind the fight for our service. We need to present our genuine arguments for the alternative. We must ensure that our officials are well briefed and have the full backing of the membership.

The Fire Brigades Union has a long history of campaigning and winning. We must rise to this challenge. We must maintain our position of influence within the movement and fulfil the aspirations of our members both locally and nationally.

Jobs, pay and conditions must continue to be our priority. At the National Joint Council the union has once again proven that, as far as representation in the fire and rescue service is concerned, not only do we lead the way but we are the only effective representative body that can deal with the running of the service. Other organisations have been dismissed by our staunchest critics as irrelevant in national negotiations. The Fire Brigades Union is the voice of firefighters, officers, control, retained and wholetime – and will continue to be so.

Attacks on pensions in the public sector, long trailed by hardened Conservatives, are now forthcoming. Without effective opposition, the government will steamroll ahead with its plans. Such opposition must be sustained and come from

all quarters – not only from trade unions, but from the entire labour movement and all caring, compassionate people, no matter what their political affiliations.

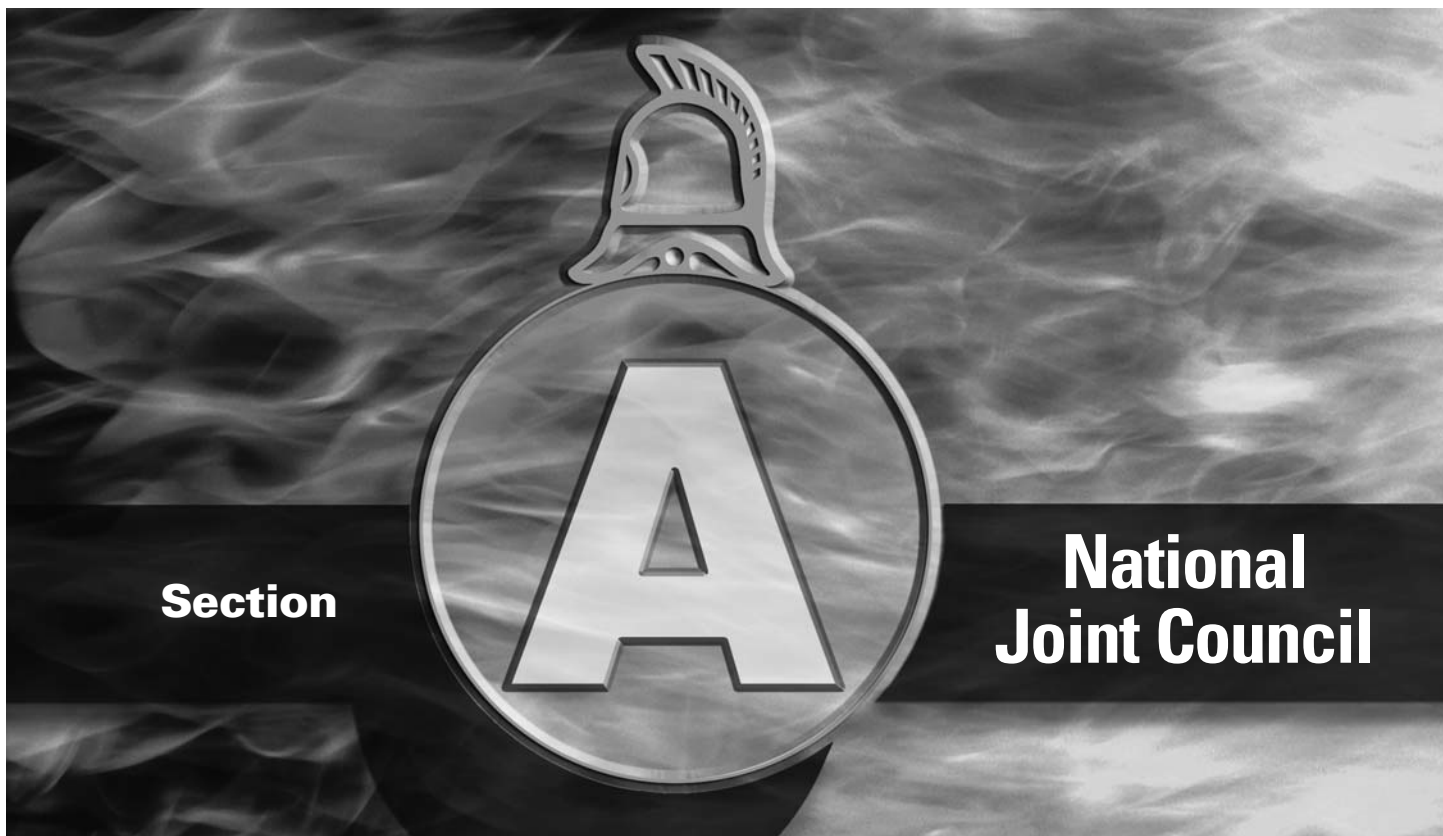
Our union and its members should take the credit after the FiReControl project collapsed. We were often the only voice articulating the flaws in this project for over eight years and we were vindicated. But we are not complacent. Our control members are still under assault from mergers and closures, and we still need to campaign for the resources to upgrade control rooms.

2010 has also seen major local disputes. The early part of the year was taken up by events in South Yorkshire and the latter part by the efforts of our members in London. I wish to take the opportunity to acknowledge the brilliant work of our members and officials in London. They have proven against major odds that solidarity, together with the correct political message, can triumph.

The executive council has begun to reorganise all aspects of the union and the way we function. This follows the instruction from the FBU's 2010 annual conference. Further measures will be brought before this year's conference to agree the way forward. It must be understood by all that we, as a national union, must work out the best strategy and obtain the necessary funds to continue in the best interests of our membership.

These are difficult times for us all in the movement and in this union. I am certain that together we will continue to challenge and triumph.

Alan McLean



Section

**National
Joint Council**

A1 Introduction

The union appointed the following representatives to the National Joint Council for 2010:

Bro M Wrack (Employees' side joint secretary)
Bro A Dark
Bro M Shaw (Employees' side chairperson
and NJC vice chair)
Bro A McLean
Bro R Robertson
Bro J Barbour
Bro M Smith
Sis S Riley
Bro J Ford
Bro T Mitchell
Bro W Gee
Bro D Green
Bro T McFarlane
Bro M Nicholas

The National Joint Council met on the following dates in 2010:

16 March
15 June
30 September

A2 Report of the independent chair of the NJC/MMNB

The report of the independent chair of the National Joint Council (NJC), Prof Monojit Chatterji, was tabled at the meeting of the NJC held on 30 September 2010.

The National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services, including the Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB), is the body responsible for the supervision, from a national point of view, of all questions affecting the conditions of service of employees (other than those in brigade management roles) of fire and rescue services established under the Fire Services Act 2004. The NJC handles issues that affect all employees. The MMNB has plenary powers to deal with issues which affect employees solely in the roles of station to area manager.

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

The parties to the negotiation are the employers' side comprising representatives of the Local Government Association, Welsh Local Government Association, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the employees' side comprising representatives of the Fire Brigades Union and the Fire Officers Association.

SECTION A — NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL

An independent chair oversees the work of the National Joint Council and the Middle Managers Negotiating Body and is supported by two vice chairs. Vice chair appointments alternate between the sides on an annual basis. In 2009/10 the vice chair of the NJC was held by the employees' side and the vice chair of the MMNB by the employers' side.

The independent chair works closely with the Joint Secretariat, which is currently provided by Local Government Employers and the Fire Brigades Union. Membership of the NJC and MMNB during 2009/10 is attached to this report.

Introduction

1. This annual report of the independent chair covers the period from 1 October 2009 to 30 September 2010.

What we do

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

Meeting dates in 2009-10

3. Since my last report the National Joint Council met on the following dates and considered a number of issues:
 - 29 September 2009
 - 15 December 2009
 - 16 March 2010
 - 15 June 2010

The Middle Managers Negotiating Body also met on each of the dates above with the exception of 15 December 2009. Both the NJC and MMNB will meet on the 30 September 2010.

Issues under consideration

4. The NJC and, as appropriate, the MMNB considered a number of issues over the course of the year. The main focus was on:

Rolemaps and national occupational standards

5. The rolemaps and national occupational standards subcommittee came into existence in July 2008. Its purpose is to consider any proposed changes to the NJC agreed rolemaps and/or national occupational standards put forward either by the external bodies responsible for the development of such issues or by either side of the National Joint Council, including the Middle Managers Negotiating Body.
6. Since my last report the subcommittee, led by the Joint Secretariat, has met on several occasions and considered changes to the firefighter rolemap, on this occasion put forward by Skills for Justice, in the interests of achieving compatibility between those operated by the NJC and

those used for purposes such as the award of National Vocational Qualifications.

7. In doing so, the subcommittee identified a number of amendments to the proposals which if also adopted by Skills for Justice and UKCES would ensure that the NJC documents remained clearly relevant to the work of the fire and rescue service but also take into account the needs of those bodies and all the parties they serve.
8. The subcommittee presented the outcome of this work to the NJC which subsequently accepted its recommendation to replace the existing firefighter national occupational standards, subject to a successful approach to UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) to ask them to amend the national occupational standards used for the NVQ process to reflect the wording adopted by the NJC in order to avoid inconsistency.
9. UKCES confirmed it was content to take such action and the firefighter national occupational standards were duly amended. (Circular NJC/1/10 refers.)
10. In addition, to the work above, the Joint Secretaries, assisted by appropriate advisers, have also worked with Skills for Justice through the chair of its national occupational standards and qualifications workstream, to agree a process which is intended to clarify and support the working relationship for the future and further support the aspiration for consistency.

Part-time workers (prevention of less favourable treatment) regulations

11. Following the introduction of these regulations many thousands of Employment Tribunal cases were lodged by retained duty system firefighters (supported by their trade union) across the UK.
12. Since then test cases drawn from Kent and Berkshire fire and rescue services have been subject to the Employment Tribunal, Employment Appeal Tribunal, Court of Appeal and House of Lords processes returning finally at the request of the House of Lords to the original Employment Tribunal again for re-consideration and determination.
13. Following that further determination the tribunal indicated that it believed the parties should endeavour to reach a negotiated settlement. Following discussion within the respective sides an approach was made to tribunal to allow the parties time for those negotiations to take place.
14. The Joint Secretariat, supported by respective legal advisers, has therefore spent a substantial amount of time this year working to identify both a negotiated settlement to the cases and appropriate amendments to the Scheme of Conditions of Service to ensure it complies with all the requirements of the regulations for the future.
15. This has been an extremely complex and difficult negotiation and I am pleased that it is now drawing to a successful conclusion with a settlement agreed in principle earlier this year and proposals to amend the Scheme of Conditions being presented to the National Joint Council at its September meeting.

Maternity, paternity and adoption provisions claim

16. Considerable work has also been undertaken in consideration of a thirty-one point employees' side claim seeking wide-ranging improvements to the maternity, paternity and adoption provisions contained in the Scheme of Conditions of Service.
17. Initial consideration took place within the employers' side following which work has been progressed through the Joint Secretariat, expanded as appropriate.
18. The current expectation is that this work will be concluded at the September meeting of the NJC.

National joint protocol for good industrial relations

19. The NJC plays a major role in promoting the benefits of good industrial relations and maintaining calm in what can be a difficult industrial relations climate.
20. As part of this in 2007 the NJC introduced a national joint protocol for good industrial relations intended to develop and improve upon industrial relations in the UK fire and rescue service as a whole.
21. This year the NJC decided to survey local management and union representatives to assess whether or not the protocol has improved local industrial relations and to explore whether there is anything more they felt could be done with national level assistance to further embed the protocol at local level.
22. The majority of responses were provided jointly and I am pleased to report the survey results revealed fire and rescue services are more confident in resolving local difficulties since the introduction of the protocol. Responses indicated most fire and rescue services found the protocol to be a useful reference tool to further improve local industrial relations processes with the majority of respondents' indicating that discussion based on the protocol had resulted in change to local policies, procedure or practices. Alternatively, it had been instrumental in starting a dialogue as a precursor to putting in place those formal processes.
23. A number of fire and rescue services said they would welcome a session on the protocol at local level, facilitated by the NJC's Joint Secretariat. Arrangements will be put in place to support those requests.

Pay claim

24. The employees' side submitted a claim seeking an increase on all pay points equal to the percentage increase in inflation as identified by the Retail Prices Index (RPI) and announced in June 2010. A figure of 5.1%.
25. Considerable discussion took place at Joint Secretariat level both in advance and post receipt of the claim in order to inform both sides positions.
26. At the meetings on 15 June the employers' side signalled its intention to respond formally to the claim following the budget statement on 22 June.
27. Accordingly, a formal response was provided to the employees' side on 27 June advising that having

considered the claim in the context of what is affordable and sustainable and mindful of the government's clear expectation that there should be restraint in respect of public sector pay and that public expenditure must reduce (both of which were emphasised in the budget) the employers' side had concluded that the financial position is such that they are unable to offer any increase for 2010/11. At the time of writing this report, the employees' side consider the matter of pay for 2010 to be unresolved.

Health and safety guidance

28. Section 5, part A of the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) makes reference to NJC guidance on a number of areas. Work is currently underway at Joint Secretariat level, expanded as necessary, to prepare up to date guidance.

Circulars

29. A number of circulars have been issued since my last report (issued on circular NJC/9/09):

***Car allowances* NJC/10/09**

Notification of an increase in the amount of VAT per mile in the petrol element of car allowances with effect from 1 January 2010.

***National Occupational Standards* NJC/1/10**

Substantial amendments to the firefighter rolemap and national occupational standards.

***Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations* NJC/2/10**

Update on complex negotiations to identify a settlement to the many thousands of Employment Tribunal cases registered across the UK following introduction of these Regulations.

***Car allowances* NJC/3/10**

Revised car allowances effective from 1 April 2010.

***Workforce Survey 2010* NJC/4/10**

Survey form and guidance notes.

***Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations* NJC/5/10**

Update on complex negotiations to identify a settlement to the many thousands of Employment Tribunal cases registered across the UK following introduction of these Regulations.

***Car allowances* NJC/6/10**

Advance notification of an increase in the amount of VAT per mile in the petrol element of the car allowances with effect from 4 January 2011.

General Joint Secretariat activity

30. Issues under negotiation within the NJC are in the main progressed through the Joint Secretariat acting within the remit of its respective sides.
31. On occasion lead members from each side of the NJC/MMNB may meet outside of the usual round of larger meetings but there was no need to do so this year.
32. The Joint Secretariat meets formally at least once a month

SECTION A — NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL

to exchange information and to progress negotiations.

These meetings are also an opportunity for either side to identify potential local industrial relations flashpoints and subsequently to raise those concerns with the local management or union side as appropriate.

33. The Joint Secretariat leads discussion in National Joint Council work parties which inform negotiations and respective side positions such as the discussions that have taken place this year around the maternity, paternity and adoption provisions claim.
34. The Joint Secretariat also leads discussion in the subcommittee on rolemaps and national occupational standards.
35. In addition to the above, the Joint Secretariat has a formal conciliation role when requested by both parties at local level to assist in resolution of local disagreements.
36. When jointly requested to do so, the Joint Secretariat can also provide support to parties at local level who wish to explore their current industrial relations relationships with a view to seeking improvement.
37. The Joint Secretariat has handled a considerable number of requests from local parties seeking interpretation or clarification of Scheme of Conditions of Service issues or early informal assistance where a matter is likely to prove difficult to resolve at local level.

Joint Secretariat – local conciliation

38. In circumstances where discussion has been exhausted without agreement on an issue or issues at local level the Joint Secretariat, when requested to do so, can provide a conciliation process in order to assist the parties in identifying a mutually agreeable outcome.
39. The Joint Secretariat has a good record of assisting the parties to either reach agreement at the time of conciliation or to develop the basis of an agreement which leads to a resolution following further discussion at local level.
40. Over the last year various fire and rescue services have referred a total of 16 issues to the Joint Secretariat for formal conciliation.

Other National Joint Council activity

41. At the invitation of the employees' side secretary, the employers' Secretariat attended a day of the Fire Brigades Union annual conference in May 2010.
42. The Employers' Secretariat and a national officer from the Fire Brigades Union spoke at a Fire Finance Network meeting.

Resolution Advisory Panel (RAP) and Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)

43. The Scheme of Conditions of Service negotiation procedure contains a number of options that local parties can explore to facilitate resolution to local issues where negotiation at local level has been exhausted. One of those options is the NJC's Resolution Advisory Panel whose remit is to endeavour to facilitate an agreement between the parties but where that is not possible the independent

chair will make a recommendation based upon the positions presented and discussed during the course of the meeting and which he believes can form the basis of an agreement.

44. The NJC also operates a Technical Advisory Panel which can consider whether or not a new duty system proposed at local level complies with the principles contained in Section 4 of the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) where it has not been possible to reach an agreement on its introduction. As with RAP, the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) endeavours to facilitate an agreement between the parties, but where that is not possible the independent chair can, in addition to commenting on the extent of compliance with the principles, recommend a proposal that he believes may form the basis of an agreement.
45. The Resolution Advisory Panel is chaired by Professor William Brown. The Technical Advisory Panel is chaired by Professor John Gennard. The services of neither body have been required this year.

Conclusion

46. There are several aspects to the role of the independent chair. Those utilised this year in particular have been:
 - the chairing of all NJC and MMNB meetings that have taken place;
 - consideration, with the Joint Secretaries, or items during the discussion through the NJC and/or MMNB at those meetings;
 - ensuring the NJC and MMNB are each aware of the work of the other and that an opportunity for comment is provided;
 - facilitating discussions between the parties on the employees' side;
 - provision of this annual report.

The NJC has had a productive year in an extremely difficult economic climate. I am pleased to say that despite those difficulties this year, the two sides remain respectful of each other and I am confident that we will continue to move forward with good industrial relations at national level which produces successful outcomes for both sides.

PROFESSOR MONOJIT CHATTERJI
INDEPENDENT CHAIR

MEMBERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL 1 OCTOBER 2009 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2010

Employers' side

Local Government Association

Cllr A Auty
Cllr C Bowden (to 05/10)
Cllr Brian Coleman (to 03/10)
Cllr S Comer
Cllr M Heaster (from 03/10)
Cllr R Hobbs
Cllr P Shannon
Cllr I Swithenbank
Cllr F Walker
Vacancy x 1
Vacancy x 1 (from 5/10)

Convention of Scottish

Local Authorities

Cllr M Bridgman
Cllr M Raeburn
Cllr B Wallace

Welsh Local Government Association

Cllr E Evans

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Mr W Gillespie (to 6/10)
Vacancy x 1 (from 6/10)

Employees' side

Fire Brigades Union

Mr J Barbour
Mr A Dark
Mr J Ford
Mr W Gee
Mr D Green (to 06/10)
Mr A McLean
Mr T McFarlane
Mr T Mitchell
Mr M Nicholas
Ms S Riley
Mr R Robertson
Mr M Shaw
Mr M Smith
Mr M Wrack
Vacancy x 1 (from 6/10)

MEMBERSHIP OF THE MIDDLE MANAGERS NEGOTIATING BODY 1 OCTOBER 2009 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2010

Employers' side

Local Government Association

Cllr A Auty
Cllr C Bowden (to 05/10)
Cllr Brian Coleman (to 03/10)
Cllr S Comer
Cllr M Heaster (from 03/10)
Cllr R Hobbs
Cllr P Shannon
Cllr I Swithenbank
Cllr F Walker
Vacancy x 1
Vacancy x 1 (from 5/10)

Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

Cllr M Bridgman
Cllr M Raeburn
Cllr B Wallace

Welsh Local Government Association

Cllr E Evans

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Mr W Gillespie (to 6/10)
Vacancy x 1 (from 6/10)

Employees' side

Fire Brigades Union

Mr J Barbour
Mr D Beverley
Mr A Dark
Mr J Ford
Mr A McLean
Mr P Moss
Mr M Pottinger
Ms S Riley
Mr R Robertson
Mr M Shaw
Mr M Smith
Mr R Troth (to 6/10)
Mr M Wrack
Vacancy x 1 (from 6/10)

Fire Officers Association

Mr G Morgan

A3 Pay and CPD 2010

The executive council submitted the pay claim for 2010 on 5 May. This claim for "an increase in all NJC rates of pay equal to the percentage increase in inflation as identified by the Retail Price Index (RPI) for June 2010" followed consultation with the FBU's internal committees and branches. This was reported to members in head office circular 2010HOC0316MW.

The employers did not respond to the claim at the NJC meeting held on 15 June, preferring instead to await the outcome of the emergency budget announcement to be made by the then new incoming Tory/Lib-Dem coalition. This development was reported to members via head office circular 2010HOC0408MW on 16 June 2010.

Following the emergency budget, the employers wrote to the FBU on 24 June 2010 stating that they would not be making any pay offer in respect of 2010 to the FBU. This matter was reported to members via head office circular 2010HOC0423MW on 25 June 2010.

As a consequence of this there have been no revisions to the NJC pay scales or continual professional development (CPD) pay table in respect of 2010.

The executive council has not agreed this pay freeze with the employers. Instead our position is that the matter of "pay" for 2010 remains unresolved.

Circular 2010HOC0316MW

5 May 2010

To: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

PAY CLAIM 2010

Members will be aware that the Union's position on pay has been to seek a long-term formula such as existed prior to 2002. This would avoid the potential of difficulties arising in relation to annual pay bargaining and would provide the stability which we think is necessary for delivering a first-class Fire and Rescue Service. Regrettably the Fire and Rescue Service Employers have consistently rejected such an approach.

The Executive Council has given consideration to the issue of pay for 2010. This has included consultation with Brigade, Regional and Sectional Committees. Following this discussion it was agreed to submit a pay claim for 2010 as follows: That there should be an increase in all NJC rates of pay equal to the percentage increase in inflation as identified by the Retail Price Index (RPI) for June 2010.

This is an extremely moderate claim but one which is based on the principle that Firefighters' pay should increase so as to ensure that living standards can be maintained. It is also clear to us any attempt to reduce real wages would have a dangerous and detrimental impact on the prospects for economic recovery.

SECTION A — NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL

Firefighters have seen significant changes to their roles and responsibilities since 2004 and they have the right to expect that their pay will not suffer real reductions after demonstrating such commitment to the development of an outstanding public service.

This claim has now been communicated to the Employers. Members will be kept informed of developments.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally



MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

CIRCULAR 2010HOC0408MW

16 June 2010

To: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

PAY – NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL 15 JUNE 2010

You will be aware from circular 2010HOC0316MW that we submitted a pay claim to the Employers in May. The claim was for a rise in all NJC pay rates equal to the percentage increase in inflation as identified by the Retail Price Index (RPI) in June of this year.

Since 2004 our pay settlement date has been 1st July. For most years since then pay has been settled prior to this date.

The claim for 2010 was based on our view that FBU members should not suffer real cuts in living standards as a result of below inflation pay rises. The RPI figure is published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the publication date was 15 June. RPI currently stands at 5.1%.

The National Joint Council met yesterday. The Employers' Side reported that they were unable to respond to our pay claim as they wished to give further consideration to pay in the light of the Government's emergency budget on 22 June.

This has obviously caused considerable alarm among the Executive Council. We have made clear to the Employers that we do not accept that Fire Service pay should be sacrificed as a result of decisions made by the new Government. We have insisted that the Employers respond to the claim as early as possible.

The Executive Council held a longer debate on pay at the June business meeting and the full details of this will be reported back through our Committee structure.

Members will have noted the difficulties on pay faced by our colleagues in other public services. It is clear that we face tough times as the Government and many employers attempt to utilise the economic crisis to make attacks on pay, on pensions and on other conditions of service. We made clear to the Employers that Firefighters and other public sector workers did not cause the economic crisis and should not be made to pay the price for it.

Members will be informed as soon as a response is received from the Employers. In the meantime Officials will report back to Branches on the discussion held on pay at the Executive Council.

Yours fraternally



MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES

National Employers

24 June 2010

Dear Mr Wrack,

FIRE SERVICE PAY 2010

I am writing further to your letter of 5 May 2010 and the meetings of the National Joint Council and Middle Managers Negotiating Body held on 15 June.

In your letter of 5 May you sought a pay rise for all on NJC rates of pay equal to the percentage increase in inflation as identified by the Retail Prices Index (RPI) for June 2010. That RPI figure, as announced on 15 June, is 5.1%.

At the meetings on 15th June the National Employers signalled their intention to respond formally to the claim following the Budget statement on 22 June.

The National Employers have considered the claim for an increase in pay of 5.1% in the context of what is affordable and sustainable. They have also been mindful of the government's clear expectation that there should be restraint in respect of public sector pay and that public expenditure must reduce, both of which were emphasised in the Budget.

I write to advise you that the National Employers have concluded that the financial position is such that they are unable to offer any increase for 2010/11.

The National Employers recognise that the recession has affected us all and that their decision will be a disappointment to your members. However, they have had to take into account the financial position of fire authorities including the impact the recession has had on income and expenditure and the further reduction in public expenditure sought by the Government. As a consequence fire authorities are faced with difficult choices.

As you know, fire authorities receive income from two main sources: government grant and council tax.

A significant amount of income comes from government grant. The level of grant for 2010/11 was set some time ago and, in calculating it, Government built in a requirement that fire authorities make significant efficiency savings. For many authorities the grant increase was little above zero. Fire authorities have therefore had to achieve those efficiency savings simply to maintain services at existing levels.

The Budget Report indicates that the majority of Government departments could see average real cuts to their budgets of

around 25 per cent over the next four years. This will have a significant impact upon fire authorities.

Council tax increases cannot provide the solution. Because of the complicated way that local government finance works, council tax would have to significantly increase to fund even a small pay rise. Not only would this be unfair on council tax payers in tough economic times, excessive council tax rises will be capped by the Government. The Government has also made clear in the Budget its intention that council tax should be frozen for 2011/12.

Whilst some income is generated from other sources, these have been under pressure too. For example, funding for work that the fire service does in the community on behalf of local authorities, charities and registered social landlords has been squeezed. There has also been a huge fall in interest payments from authority investments because of lower interest rates.

Salary increases should not be paid for from reserves because the money has to be found every year to cover the cost of a permanent rise. Reserves are held at a sensible level to meet medium-term financial commitments and risks – such as having to deal with the sudden cost of a flood or other disaster response.

Many employees in the public and private sector have already had their pay frozen this year, and some have agreed pay cuts to save their jobs. Other private companies are going out of business and many have lost their jobs. A pay increase for 2010 would lead to cuts in services that would adversely affect local people and put fire service jobs in jeopardy.

These are the difficult financial circumstances that have led the National Employers to conclude that they are unable to offer a pay increase for 2010/11.

In conclusion, I can only reiterate that the recession has affected us all and, though I am sure you will be disappointed by the National Employers' decision not to make a pay offer, it will help us protect vital services and reduce the risk of job losses in the fire service.

Yours sincerely



SARAH MESSENGER
EMPLOYERS' SECRETARY

Circular 2010HOC0423MW

25 June 2010

To: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

PAY – EMPLOYERS WANT TO FREEZE PAY

Members will be aware from circular 2010HOC0316MW that we submitted a pay claim to the Employers in May. Our claim was for a rise in all NJC rates equal to the RPI figure published in June. This claim was made, following consultation through our Committee structure, on the basis that anything less than a rise equal to RPI would amount to a real pay cut for members.

I further reported that the Employers were unable to respond to the claim at the meeting of the National Joint Council on 15th June. They stated that they would await the outcome of the Budget on 22 June.

We have now received the response from the Employers which states that they will not make an offer on pay for 2010/11. The Employers' letter is attached.

The Employers claim in their letter that they have considered what is affordable and sustainable. However, we are aware that many Fire and Rescue Authorities had already budgeted for pay increases for this year and we conclude that Authorities are in a position to increase pay. Regrettably they have chosen to use the Budget and the threat of major cuts to public services as an excuse to attempt a pay freeze at the earliest opportunity.

The Executive Council recently discussed the issue of pay and members should be informed of these discussions through Brigade Committees and Branches. It is now essential that all Branches meet to discuss this pay freeze so as to inform the Executive Council's discussion on our response.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally



MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

A4 Protected pay 2010

Whilst the matter of pay 2010 still remains unresolved, it was agreed at the NJC that in the light of the employers' announcement of a pay freeze that the protected pay agreement made in 2008 would be revisited to ensure that there was no reduction in pay during 2010. NJC circular 7/2010, circulated on 9 November 2010, reported this revised agreement.

Circular NJC/07/10

9 November 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

PROTECTED PAY

1. Authorities will recall that there is an existing agreement contained in circular NJC/2/08 in respect of protected pay points at Station Officer, Fire Control Officer, and Principal Fire Control Officer level that arose from the assimilation of ranks to roles on introduction of the current pay structure. A copy of the agreement is attached.
2. The agreement at Watch Manager B (Station and Fire Control Officer) level provided for:
 - "Application of the pay award minus £350 each year

for the next 3 years (2008 – 2010)

- Those remaining in one of the above protected posts on 1 July 2011 to receive a lump sum, non-pensionable, payment of £1050 and to be assimilated to the Watch Manager 'B'/Watch Manager 'B' (control) pay rate at that time."
3. There have been a number of approaches from local management and union representatives to their respective Secretariats seeking clarification of the impact on this group given the pay award situation this year. Hence discussion took place at Joint Secretary level in order to endeavour to identify a position for consideration by members of the National Joint Council.
 4. We write to advise you that at the most recent meeting of the NJC members agreed the following:
 - (a) that no reduction in pay levels should be applied for 2010 to the protected Watch Manager 'B'/Watch Manager 'B' (control) employees covered by this agreement;
 - (b) in recognition of this, the lump sum payment for the group referred to in (a) above, due under the agreement on 1 July 2011, will be £700;
 - (c) assimilation arrangements for the group referred to in (a) above remain unchanged i.e. those employees remaining in one of these protected posts on 1 July 2011 will be assimilated to the Watch Manager 'B'/Watch Manager 'B' (control) pay rate at that time.
 5. Authorities are reminded that the position of protected employees covered by this agreement in Group Manager 'B' control posts (previously Principal Fire Control Officer) is as follows:
 - "Assimilation to the Group Manager 'B' pay rate on 1 July 2010
 - Those remaining in a Group Manager 'B' post on 1 July 2010 to receive a lump sum, non-pensionable, payment of £700."

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER
Joint Secretaries

MATT WRACK

A5 Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB)

The union appointed the following representatives during 2010-11:

Mr M Shaw
Mr M Wrack
Mr A Dark
Mr J Ford

Mr J Barbour
Mr D Beverley (to August 2010)
Mr J Denvir (from September 2010)
Mr A McLean
Mr P Moss
Mr M Pottinger
Ms S Riley
Mr R Robertson
Mr M Smith
Mr R Troth

A6 Car allowances

Following agreement on the uprating of car allowances, NJC circular 03/2010 was issued by the NJC on 13 April 2010 detailing the changes.

Circular NJC/03/10

13 April 2010

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 2010:

	451-999cc	1000-1199cc	1200-1450cc
Essential Users			
Lump sum per annum	£846	£963	£1,239
Per mile up to 8500 miles	36.9p	40.9p	50.5p
Per mile over 8500 miles	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p
Casual Users			
Per mile up to 8500 miles	46.9p	52.2p	65.0p
Per mile over 8500 miles	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p
Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	1.400p	1.543p	1.681p

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
Joint Secretaries

MATT WRACK

As a consequence of VAT changes a subsequent circular (06/2010) was issued on 15 July 2010 with revised rates:

Circular NJC/06/10

15 July 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

Car allowances: VAT Increase (4 January 2011)

1. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Budget that VAT is to be increased from 17.5% to 20% with effect from 4 January 2011.
2. As a result, the amount of VAT per mile in the petrol element of the NJC Car Allowances will change. The new figures, applicable to the current NJC mileage rates until 31 March 2011, are shown on page 2, underlined in bold type.
3. Any new rates agreed with effect from 1 April 2011 will automatically take account of the new VAT rate.
4. Please ensure that all interested parties in your fire authorities (i.e. Finance departments) are aware of the new VAT increase figures applicable from the 4 January 2011.
5. For reference, please note that the previous circular detailing car allowances is NJC/3/10.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER
Joint Secretaries

MATT WRACK

CAR ALLOWANCES APPLICABLE FROM 1 April 2010

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 2010:

	451- 999cc	1000- 1199cc	1200- 1450cc
Essential Users			
Lump sum per annum	£846	£963	£1,239
Per mile up to 8500 miles	36.9p	40.9p	50.5p
Per mile over 8500 miles	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p
Casual Users			
Per mile up to 8500 miles	46.9p	52.2p	65.0p
Per mile over 8500 miles	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p

1 April 2010 figures:

Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	1.400p	1.543p	1.681p
--	--------	--------	--------

From 4 January 2011 figures:

Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	1.567p	1.727p	1.881p
--	--------	--------	--------

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.

A7 Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)

At the NJC meeting held on 30 September 2010 it was agreed to appoint Professor Willie Brown as an interim independent chair of the NJC Technical Advisory Panel as a consequence of the substantive chair, Professor John Gennard, suffering a serious illness.

There were no hearings of the panel during 2010.

A8 Resolution Advisory Panel (RAP)

1. RAP chair

At the NJC meeting held on 30 September 2010 it was agreed to appoint Professor Willie Brown for a further three year term as independent chair of the NJC Resolution Advisory Panel.

2. London

The Resolution Advisory Panel met on 16 November 2010 to hear a dispute between London (Region) FBU and London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) on:

- i) working patterns for operational staff; and
- ii) proposal to move uniformed non-operational staff to fire and rescue staff (FRS) terms and conditions.

The matters were not resolved as a result of the discussions. As a consequence the chair of the panel, Professor Willie Brown, made his conclusions known to both parties on 22 November 2010:

National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services

Resolution Advisory Panel

London Fire Brigade (LFB) and London Region Fire Brigades Union (LFBU)

RAP Meeting on 16th November 2010

Issues:

- i) Working Patterns for Operational Staff, and
- ii) Proposal to Move Uniformed Non-Operational Staff to Fire and Rescue Staff (FRS) Terms and Conditions

LFB Management Representatives

James Dalgleish

David Brown

David Atkinson

Dan Daly

Dominic Johnson

LFBU Representatives

Ian Leahair

Gordon Fielden

Joe MacVeigh

Paul Embery

Ben Sprung

The Resolution Advisory Panel consisted of William Brown (Chair), Gill Gittins and Andy Dark. After discussions over the course of ten hours, the parties were unable to resolve the issues and it was agreed that, according to the procedure, the Independent Chair should make a recommendation for resolving the matters.

i) Working Patterns for Operational Staff

The London Fire Brigade operates on a 2 days; 2 nights; 4 rota days shift system with a day shift of 9 hours, 09.00hrs – 18.00 hrs. The night shift is 15 hours, 18.00hrs – 09.00hrs. The Brigade proposed to amend this, within the same shift pattern, to two 12 hour shifts, 08.00hrs – 20.00hrs, and 20.00hrs – 08.00hrs. It argued that there would be scope for substantial productivity gains, with the proposed shift hours better meeting operational needs. The FBU was opposed to this change. Its principal arguments concerned the social and domestic disruption that so substantial a change in working hours would bring to operational staff lives. After informal discussions and negotiations over an extensive period, in the course of which alternative shift arrangements and other allied terms and conditions and productivity enhancing practices were evaluated and discussed, there was a failure to agree.

Recommendation

The London Fire Brigade has been clear that it needs to achieve increased productivity. In my view there are two options that give that increased productivity.

- 1) Within the 2; 2; 4 shift pattern, the day shift should be 11 hrs and the night shift should be 13 hrs, with start times of 09.00 and 20.00 respectively. In addition the following sections set out in the authority's draft proposals of 22 October 2010 should apply:

- allowances
- brigade medical appointments
- buying back of leave
- partial mutual exchange of duty and flexible relief from duty
- off duty personnel staying at stations

Alternatively:

- 2) Within the 2; 2; 4 shift pattern, the day shift should be 10.5 hrs and the night shift should be 13.5 hrs, with start times of 09.30 and 20.00 respectively. In addition, the position set out in the authority's draft proposals of 22 October 2010 in respect of Direct Standbys should apply, modified in respect of distance to 7.5 miles.

Accordingly, I believe that there is a case for contractual change. But because it is a contractual change I further believe that in this instance employees should be consulted by the union through a robust mechanism on which of the two options is the most preferable.

ii) Proposal to Move Uniformed Non-Operational Staff to Fire and Rescue Staff (FRS) Terms and Conditions

A small number of uniformed 'non-operational' staff are currently covered by the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services although their roles are not specified within the Grey Book or the IPDS role maps. Some of these are members of the FBU. The Brigade wishes

them to convert to standard non-uniform, Fire and Rescue Staff terms and conditions, which would place them outside the Grey Book. FRS staff have their terms and conditions negotiated by GMB and Unison on the Joint Committee for Support Staff (JCSS). The FBU is not opposed to the conversion in principle but has requested a seat on the JCSS. The Brigade has offered the FBU individual representational rights but not collective bargaining rights through a seat on the JCSS on the grounds that FBU have only a diminishing 3% membership among FRS/non-operational staff.

Recommendation

The FBU should not be given a seat on the JCSS.

A period of three years pay protection should apply to employees in this group whose salaries would otherwise be adversely affected by the transfer.

Professor William Brown
Independent Chair RAP
22nd November 2010

A9 Ad hoc NJC joint working party of the NJC/MMNB

The ad hoc joint working party continued to have dialogue during 2010. Whilst a number of issues were the subject of discussion no changes to the rolemaps or IPDS method have been the subject of agreement.

A10 NJC annual workforce survey 2010

On 14 May 2010, the NJC's annual workforce survey was sent to fire and rescue authorities under cover of NJC circular 4/2010. The survey consists of an electronic spreadsheet which cannot be reproduced (for formatting reasons) in the annual report. The retrospective data is not yet fully collated.

Circular NJC/4/10

14 May 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

The National Joint Council is seeking your assistance in the provision of data for national negotiating purposes. The information will provide an accurate means of costing claims, offers and their consequences as well as answering negotiating questions about the operation of any new or existing structure.

This year's survey is in the same format as last years and will collect individual payroll and characteristic (age, gender and

ethnic origin) data for each employee. This format makes it easier and quicker for fire authorities to complete and was developed with the assistance of a sample group of fire authorities.

Authorities are asked to complete and return the **attached** survey by no later than **4 June 2010**.

Responses should be provided to Helen Wilkinson at Local Government Association Analysis and Research:
helen.wilkinson@lga.gov.uk

Guidance notes are also attached. Any queries in relation to completion of the survey should also be directed to Helen Wilkinson (020 7664 3181).

Fire and rescue services are reminded of the need for accuracy when responding to requests of this nature. Results of fire surveys will be used to inform national fire negotiations. Inaccurate returns may result in additional costs for your fire authority so please take care to check the accuracy of the information you supply before sending it to us

Yours faithfully



SARAH MESSENGER
Joint Secretaries

MATT WRACK

A11 Health issues

During 2010 there continued to be dialogue on changes to section 5A of the NJC scheme of conditions of service (the Grey Book) centred around providing best practice and guidance from the NJC. These discussions have not yet concluded.

A12 Maternity, paternity, childcare and dependency

Following a considerable amount of negotiation between the two sides, the NJC agreed changes to the maternity, childcare and dependency arrangements in the national scheme of conditions of service (Grey Book) at its meeting on 30 September 2010. The revised section 4D is shown below. In addition, the NJC agreed a joint statement, also shown below:

JOINT STATEMENT FROM EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE SIDE REPRESENTATIVES IN RELATION TO MATERNITY, PATERNITY, ADOPTION AND OTHER ASSOCIATED MATTERS

We recognise the importance of having terms and conditions that are affordable, but also attractive to the potential future labour market and sufficiently appealing to retain our existing employees. This becomes particularly important when we relate it to the business case for more diverse fire and rescue

services. We also recognise that arrangements relating to maternity, paternity and adoption (and consequential implications) can be significant to those who are, or may in the future be, considering having a family.

Whilst our national agreement forms the foundation for maternity, paternity and adoption provisions, clearly it may be amended by local agreement as per the Grey Book to meet the business needs of individual fire and rescue services. This may become more relevant where, for example, FRSs find they have specific local recruitment or retention problems.

We would encourage all FRSs to consider the business benefits of local agreements tailored to the individual circumstances of each fire and rescue service and would jointly recommend consideration of the following in the appropriate and relevant circumstances:

- Return to work programmes for individuals including refresher training and updating of skills
- Paid time off to attend postnatal clinics or parenting classes
- Encouragement to consider supporting activities related to fitness during pregnancy and on return to work
- In the case of miscarriage or stillbirth considering access to counselling or other necessary support
- Local arrangements for employees who are, or are seeking to become, foster parents either on a short or long term basis
- The lead adoptive parent to be treated in the same way as pregnant employees. The partner of the lead adoptive parent to be treated in the same way as the partner of a pregnant employee
- The provision of maternity wear designed specifically for that purpose taking into account the role and duties to be undertaken
- Making reasonable time off arrangements for employees undergoing fertility treatment

Individuals/line managers often have to discuss and/or seek advice about some very personal and sensitive issues that may be rarely encountered, (for example around fertility treatment; premature birth; etc.) and it is important that consistency of treatment is achieved. It may therefore be helpful for FRSs to nominate an 'expert' practitioner whose role is likely to involve understanding and interpreting local policies, listening and giving advice to individuals. It is recognised that an individual may also seek the support of their trade union representative.

None of the above is intended to be prescriptive. Employers are encouraged to make arrangements with their local trade union representatives in taking forward any considerations into a local agreement.



SARAH MESSENGER
Joint Secretaries

MATT WRACK

SECTION A — NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL

SCHEME OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

SIXTH EDITION 2004

PART D – MATERNITY, CHILDCARE AND DEPENDENCY

Maternity provisions

1. As equal opportunities employers, fire and rescue authorities acknowledge that more and more women are coping with the responsibilities of work and home. To this end fire and rescue authorities are committed to creating a positive working environment in which all employees are respected, provided with progression opportunities and can make the most of their abilities within a team.
2. Pregnant employees should expect to be treated in a way that is sensitive to their circumstances and should not in any way be singled out for inferior treatment. Pregnancy should be regarded as part of everyday life and any health and safety implications can be adequately addressed by the usual procedures for the management of health and safety.
3. Nothing in the following provisions, which are minima that may be enhanced locally, should be construed as providing anything less favourable than statutory rights.

Obligations on the employer

4. Fire and rescue authorities should have in place policies that reflect these provisions and any local enhancements. Copies of such policies should be openly available to employees.
5. Pregnant women and new mothers have a statutory entitlement not to be exposed to risks that could harm either themselves or their unborn child. Fire and rescue authorities are reminded that:
 - (1) The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require employers to provide suitable rest facilities for pregnant women and nursing mothers. This is expanded upon in the Health and Safety Executive guidance New and Expectant Mothers at Work: A Guide for Employers.
 - (2) The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to carry out a risk assessment in respect of new or expectant mothers. Temporary adjustments in working arrangements may be required as a result.
6. Fire and rescue authorities are advised that, when pregnancy is suspected, medical advice should be sought immediately as to whether the employee can continue to perform her current duties. If a point is reached where her doctor advises her that she can no longer perform her current duties, or work her current pattern of hours, the employee should be consulted immediately over appropriate changes. In either case she shall continue to receive her normal pay (for employees on the retained duty system this shall be calculated in accordance with paragraph 36 below). Similarly, on her return to work following the birth and maternity leave, there may be a period during which a change in duties or pattern of working hours would be appropriate, again depending on medical advice, in which case the employee's normal pay would continue to apply.

7. Pregnant employees will normally remain on their watch, or in their department, unless this is deemed inappropriate following an individual risk assessment.
8. On receipt of the employee's notification of the intended date of commencement of maternity leave, the fire and rescue authority shall, within twenty-eight days, inform the employee of the day on which the maternity leave period will cease and of the date of return to work.
9. Contractual benefits such as mobile phones where personal use is permitted and car allowances that are paid under the scheme of conditions of service will continue during maternity leave.

Obligations on the employee

10. In order to maximise the effectiveness of health protection through an individual risk assessment an employee should notify the fire and rescue authority as soon as possible after she becomes aware of her pregnancy. In any event, an employee shall notify the fire and rescue authority at least twenty-one days before her absence begins or as soon as is reasonably practicable:
 - (1) That she is pregnant and the expected week of childbirth (EWC). The fire and rescue authority may ask the employee to produce a certificate from a registered medical practitioner or a certified midwife stating the EWC.
 - (2) The date that her absence will commence, in writing if requested by the fire and rescue authority.
 - (3) That she intends to return to work, if that is the case. The authority may ask for this to be confirmed in writing. (This provision applies only to employees who qualify under paragraph 19 below).
11. As the pregnancy develops the employee should inform the fire and rescue authority, in writing if required, of any advice or recommendations received from her doctor. This may include advice that should be considered as part of the individual's risk assessment, such as night work being inadvisable for health and safety reasons.

Ante-natal care

12. Pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off to attend for ante-natal care, including relaxation and parentcraft classes. The fire and rescue authority may request evidence of appointments.
13. Fire and rescue authorities may wish to give sympathetic consideration, subject to the exigencies of the service, to reasonable time off for partners to attend ante-natal, relaxation and parentcraft classes.

Maternity leave

14. All employees shall be entitled to twenty-six weeks' ordinary maternity leave and twenty-six weeks' additional maternity leave, providing a right to one year's maternity leave in total, (the maternity leave period).
15. Maternity leave shall commence no earlier than eleven weeks before the EWC. Where maternity leave has not commenced by the time of the birth it shall start on the day following the birth.

16. Additional maternity leave commences on the day following the last day of ordinary maternity leave.

Keeping in touch days

17. Employees on maternity leave can return to work on a voluntary basis during their maternity leave for a maximum of ten days. These days are known as Keeping in touch or KIT days. Employees who attend work should receive their normal hourly pay for any hours worked on a voluntary KIT day in addition to their SMP for that week. Any such work must be by agreement between the fire authority and the employee.
18. Mileage and subsistence will be paid in accordance with local practice if KIT days take place away from the employee's usual workplace.

Maternity pay

19. An employee who has less than a year's continuous local government service at the beginning of the eleventh week before the EWC shall receive their entitlement to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP).
20. An employee who has completed at least a year's continuous local government service at the eleventh week before the EWC shall be entitled to the following:
 - (1) For the first six weeks of absence, nine-tenths of a week's pay offset against SMP, or Maternity Allowance (MA) for employees not eligible for SMP.
 - (2) (a) Where she has declared an intention to return to work, half a week's pay for the subsequent twelve weeks, without deduction except by the extent to which the combined pay and SMP (or MA and any dependants' allowances if she is not eligible for SMP) exceeds full pay. For the remaining twenty-one weeks, SMP if she is eligible.
(b) Where she does not intend to return to work, SMP for the subsequent thirty-three weeks.
 - (3) Payments under (2) shall be on the understanding that the employee shall return to work for at least three months, which may be varied by the fire and rescue authority on good cause being shown. In the event of her not returning to work, the fire and rescue authority may require her to refund all or part of the payments made. Payments made to the employee by way of SMP are not refundable.

Right to return to work

21. Subject to paragraph 22 below, the employee shall have the right to return to the job in which she was employed under her original contract of employment and on terms and conditions not less favourable than those that would have been applicable if she had not been absent. For this purpose 'job' means the nature of the work that she is employed to do and the capacity and place in which she is so employed.
22. Where it is not practicable by reason of redundancy for the authority to permit an employee to return to her work as defined in paragraph 21 above, the employee shall be entitled to be offered a suitable alternative vacancy where one exists, provided that the work to be done in that post

is suitable to her and appropriate to the circumstances, and that the capacity and place in which she is to be employed and her terms and conditions of employment are not substantially less favourable to her than if she had been able to return to the job in which she was originally employed.

23. Suitable alternative employment may also be offered if exceptional circumstances other than redundancy (such as a general reorganisation), which would have occurred if the employee had not been absent, necessitate a change in the job in which she was employed prior to her absence. The work to be done should be suitable to her and appropriate to the circumstances and the capacity and place in which she is to be employed and her terms and conditions of employment should not be less favourable to her than if she had been able to return to the job in which she was originally employed.

Return to work before the end of maternity leave

24. An employee shall notify the fire and rescue authority, in writing if requested, at least twenty-one days before she intends to return to work, if this is before the end of her maternity leave period. This notice period may be reduced with the consent of the authority.
25. Any further change of return to work date can only be made where more than eight weeks' notice of the intended date of return has been provided in the first place:
 - (1) Where the new date is before the previously provided return to work date an employee must give a fire and rescue service eight weeks' notice of the new date.
 - (2) Where the new date is later than the original or previously notified date the fire and rescue service requires eight weeks' notice prior to the original or previously notified return date.These notice periods may be reduced with the consent of the authority.

26. If an employee returns to work before the end of the maternity leave period without having provided the necessary notice under paragraph 24 or 25 above, the fire and rescue authority may postpone her return to a date that will ensure that the authority has received the relevant notice, or to the end of the maternity leave period if that is sooner.
27. Where, because of an interruption of work (whether due to industrial action or some other reason), it is unreasonable to expect an employee to return at the end of her maternity leave or on the date notified under paragraph 24 or 25 above, she may instead return when work resumes or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

28. An employee should attend a health check with the occupational health unit before returning to operational firefighting duties.

Relationship with sickness, leave and public holidays

29. Maternity leave will not be treated as sick leave and will not therefore be taken into account in calculating sick leave entitlement.
30. An employee who is unable to return to work on the expected date due to sickness will still be regarded as

SECTION A — NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL

having returned to work. The sickness should be notified and certified in the same way as any other period of sickness under paragraph 21 of Section 5 Part B. Any pregnancy-related sickness absence must be recorded separately and should not be included in the employee's total sickness absence for disciplinary or redundancy purposes.

31. Maternity leave shall be regarded as service for the purpose of calculating annual leave entitlement.
32. An employee who is on ordinary or additional maternity leave on a public holiday shall be granted a day's leave in lieu of that public holiday.

Premature birth

33. Where a baby is born prematurely the fire and rescue authority should consider the case on its merits and use its discretion to take any appropriate action, which may include extending maternity leave.

Death or still birth of a child

34. These maternity provisions continue to apply where a baby dies or is stillborn after twenty-four weeks' pregnancy. Where a miscarriage occurs before twenty-four weeks the fire and rescue authority should give sympathetic consideration based on the individual circumstances and grant special leave or sick leave as appropriate. The authority's decision should have regard to the needs of the employee and medical opinion.

Definition of a week's pay

35. For employees not on the retained duty system a week's pay means the amount payable to the employee under the current contract of employment for working her normal hours in a week.
36. For employees on the retained duty system a week's pay during a period of maternity leave shall mean the employee's average weekly remuneration in the previous twelve weeks (excluding any week in which they have been on sick leave or have received no pay), taking all payments into account.

Definition of childbirth

37. Childbirth means the birth of a living child or a stillbirth after a pregnancy lasting at least twenty-four weeks.

Maternity support leave (incorporating paternity leave)

38. An employee with less than twenty-six weeks' continuous local government service at the fourteenth week before the EWC and who is the child's father, the expectant mother's partner or the expectant mother's nominated carer shall be entitled to a week's paid maternity support leave (which shall equate to seven consecutive days free from duty). A nominated carer is the person nominated by the mother to assist in the care of the child and to provide support to the mother at or around the time of the birth.
39. An employee who has at least twenty-six weeks' continuous local government service at the fourteenth week before the EWC shall in addition be entitled to a further week's leave (to be taken immediately following the

first week). Where eligible this will be paid in accordance with Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP).

40. These provisions also apply to an adoptive mother or father who is not taking adoption leave.
41. Pay for maternity support leave shall be offset by SPP where applicable.

Adoption

42. Employees should try to make arrangements for placement and match meetings in their own time. However, where this cannot be accommodated up to three days paid time off will be allowed up to placement
43. An employee who meets the following criteria is entitled to up to twenty-six weeks' ordinary adoption leave followed by up to twenty-six weeks' additional adoption leave providing a right to one year's adoption leave in total (the adoption leave period):
 - (1) The employee has been newly matched with a child for adoption by an adoption agency.
 - (2) The employee has at least twenty-six weeks' continuous local government service ending with the week in which he or she is notified they have been matched with a child for adoption.
 - (3) Where a couple is adopting jointly, the employee is the adoptive parent (mother or father) chosen by the couple to take adoption leave.
44. During the first week of adoption leave the employee will be entitled to full pay, offset by Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP). For the following 38 weeks of the ordinary adoption leave period the employee will be entitled to SAP if eligible.
45. Leave may commence from either the date of the child's placement (whether this is earlier or later than expected) or a fixed date that can be up to fourteen days before the expected date of placement.
46. The employee shall notify the fire and rescue authority of his or her intention to take adoption leave within seven days of being notified by the adoption agency that he or she has been matched with a child for adoption, unless that is not reasonably practicable. The notification must state when the child is expected to be placed with the employee and when the employee wants the adoption leave to start.
47. The employee must advise the fire and rescue authority at least twenty-eight days in advance if he or she wishes to alter the adoption leave start date.
48. The fire and rescue authority will respond to the employee within twenty-eight days of receiving his or her leave plans, setting out the date on which the authority expects the employee to return to work if the full entitlement to adoption leave is taken.
49. The employee must provide documentary evidence of the adoption where requested by the fire and rescue authority and of his or her entitlement to SAP.
50. An employee who intends to return to work at the end of his or her full adoption leave entitlement is not required to give any further notification to the fire and rescue authority.

51. An employee who wishes to return to work before the end of the adoption leave period must give twenty-eight days' notice to the fire and rescue authority. If such notice is not provided the authority may postpone the return until twenty-eight days from the notice being received, or to the end of the adoption leave period, if sooner.
52. Contractual benefits such as mobile phones where personal use is permitted and car allowances that are paid under this scheme of conditions of service will continue during adoption leave.
53. Employees on adoption leave can return to work on a voluntary basis during their adoption leave for a maximum of ten days. These days are known as Keeping in touch or KIT days. Employees who attend work should receive their normal hourly pay for any hours worked on a voluntary KIT day in addition to their Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) for that week. Any such work must be by agreement between the fire authority and the employee.
54. Mileage and subsistence will be paid in accordance with local practice if KIT days take place away from the employee's usual workplace.

Parental leave

55. An employee who has successfully completed initial training (or has at least a year's service if that is sooner) and who is one of the following shall be entitled to up to thirteen calendar weeks' unpaid parental leave (eighteen weeks if the child has a disability) in parts or in a block following the birth or adoption of a child:
 - (1) The mother of the child.
 - (2) The father of the child if he was married to the mother at the time of birth or is registered as the child's father.
 - (3) The father (if not covered by (2)) if he has acquired parental responsibility under the Children Act 1989 or Children (Scotland) Act 1985. This is done either by a court order or an agreement between the mother and father that complies with legal requirements.
 - (4) A guardian appointed under Section 5 of the Children Act 1989.
 - (5) An adoptive parent.
 - (6) Any other nominated carer where the fire and rescue authority is satisfied that that person is taking parental responsibility.
 - (7) A step-parent if they have acquired parental responsibility under the Children Act 1989 either through a court order or an agreement between the mother (or mother and father) and the step-parent which complies with certain legal requirements.
 - (8) A special guardian as referred to in section 14C of the Children Act 1989.
56. The employee must give the fire and rescue authority reasonable notice (a minimum of twenty-one days) when leave is to be taken.
57. Where there are pressing operational reasons the fire and rescue authority may postpone parental leave for no longer than six months from the start of the period requested. (Pressing operational reasons include circumstances where a replacement cannot be found during the notice period for a post that has to be filled or where a significant number of

employees have applied for parental leave at the same time). Where the authority requires such postponement, the situation should firstly be discussed with the employee. The employee must then be advised, in writing, no later than seven days after giving notice to take leave, of the reason for the postponement and the new dates for leave. The length of leave should be equivalent to the employee's original request. If no agreement can be reached after consultation the authority will determine the appropriate dates. Leave cannot be postponed where the employee has given twenty-one days' notice prior to the beginning of the EWC to take the leave immediately after the birth. In the case of adoption, leave cannot be postponed (except in exceptional circumstances) where the employee has given twenty-one days' notice of the expected week of placement.

58. The periods during which leave must be taken are:
 - (1) In the case of leave following the birth of a child, by the child's eighth birthday.
 - (2) In the case of adoption, within eight years of the placement or before the child's eighteenth birthday, whichever is the sooner.
 - (3) In the case of a child with a disability, by the child's eighteenth birthday, though authorities may wish to give sympathetic consideration to extending this time limit and/or increasing the amount of leave that can be taken.
59. At the end of parental leave the employee is guaranteed the right to return to his or her current post if the leave was for a period of four weeks or less. If the leave was for a longer period or followed either additional maternity or adoption leave the employee is entitled to return to his or her current post or, if that is not reasonably practicable, a similar post that has the same or better status, terms and conditions as the current post.

Flexible working

60. In order to assist in managing the balance between work and family life, employees with children under the age of seventeen, or eighteen in the case of a disabled child, and carers have the right to apply to the fire and rescue authority to work flexibly. The authority has a duty under the Employment Rights Act 1996 to consider such requests seriously in line with a set procedure, and will be able to refuse requests only where there are clear business grounds for doing so.

Time off for dependants

61. For the purpose of these provisions a dependant means:
 - (1) The employee's spouse.
 - (2) A child of the employee.
 - (3) A parent of the employee.
 - (4) A person who lives in the same household as the employee, otherwise than by reason of being his or her employee, tenant, lodger or boarder.
62. In some cases, such as illness or injury or where care arrangements break down, a dependant may also be someone who reasonably relies on the employee for assistance or to make provisions for care, such as where the employee is the primary carer or the only person who can help in an emergency.

63. An employee is entitled to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off during his or her working hours in order to take action that is necessary to care for a dependant. Examples of such circumstances are:

- (1) To provide assistance on an occasion when a dependant falls ill, gives birth (this does not include taking time off after the birth to care for the child) or is injured or assaulted.
- (2) To make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured.
- (3) In consequence of the death of a dependant.
- (4) To deal with an incident that involves an employee's child and which occurs unexpectedly in a period during which an educational establishment that the child attends is responsible for him or her.
- (5) To deal with unexpected termination or disruption of care arrangements.

64. Where time off is taken in any of the above circumstances the employee is required to inform the fire and rescue authority as soon as is reasonably practicable of the reason for, and anticipated length of, his or her absence. There may be exceptional circumstances where an employee returns to work before it is possible to contact the authority. In such cases, the authority should still be advised of the reason for absence on return.

of Appeal and House of Lords processes returning finally at the request of the House of Lords to the original Employment Tribunal again for re-consideration and determination.

2. The judgement of the Tribunal on that occasion was:
 - (i) The Tribunal finds and declares that the Claimants were engaged in broadly similar work as their named comparators.
 - (ii) The Claimants were treated less favourably than their named comparators in respect of access to pension rights and payment for sickness absence.
 - (iii) The Respondent's arguments of justification are dismissed.
 - (iv) The Claimant's claim for increased pay for additional responsibilities is adjourned for 8 weeks."
3. The Tribunal indicated that it believed the parties should endeavour to reach a negotiated settlement. Following discussion within the respective Sides an approach was made to Tribunal to allow the parties time for those negotiations to take place. Tribunal's current expectation is that the matter will be resolved by 1 May.
4. Following what has been an extremely complex negotiation we write to advise you that a settlement in respect of the terms and conditions aspect of the case has now been agreed in principle with the FBU. Key points of the 'in principle' settlement are outlined below:
 - a. the compensation covers retained duty system employees employed for any part of the reference period, 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2009
 - b. the compensation payment is pro-rata to length of service, rank/role and level of cover based on a particular date - which for those holding employment status currently will be 30 June 2009. Cover pro-rata adjustment to be not less than 75% (which reflects the pay structure)
 - c. maximum levels of payment – firefighter £675; leading firefighter/crew manager £700; watch manager/sub and station officers £725. Minimum payment of £150
 - d. in full settlement of the wide range of issues raised through this legislation:
 - Sick leave
 - Acting-up allowance
 - Pay for public holidays
 - End of course leave
 - Trade union leave
 - Overtime
 - Spoiled meals allowance
 - Removals/lodging allowance
 - Recall to duty
 - Payment during suspension
 - Payment during maternity support leave
 - Special leave
 - All other claims or potential claims under the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations arising from the 6th edition of the Scheme of Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (and its predecessors) up to 30 June 2009.

A13 Part-time workers (RDS) – terms and conditions settlement

During 2010 work continued on finalising the details of the changes to the Grey Book arising from the successful legal challenge on behalf of members working the retained duty system to ensure parity in line with the part-time workers regulations and the compensation arrangements. The NJC issued two circulars on this matter, 02/2010 and 05/2010, on 13 April and 17 June respectively.

The terms of the settlement were subject to revision during the year, some advantageous, some not so advantageous.

Circular NJC/2/10

13 April 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

PART-TIME WORKERS (PREVENTION OF LESS FAVOURABLE TREATMENT) REGULATIONS – FIRE BRIGADES UNION EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL CASES

Settlement Negotiations

1. You will be aware that test cases in two authorities, Kent and Berkshire, were identified in 2001 under the above legislation. Those test cases have been subject to the Employment Tribunal, Employment Appeal Tribunal, Court

- In the case of those fire and rescue services that have introduced a local salary scheme since 1 July 2000, all other claims or potential claims under the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations arising from the 6th edition of the Scheme of Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (and its predecessors) and the local salary scheme up to 30 June 09.
 - e. the exception to the above simple process will be those retained duty system employees who can evidence 9 or more months continuous non-injury related sickness absence during the reference period. In such cases individuals will be entitled to payment in accordance with a revised Grey Book sick pay calculation.
5. It is anticipated that formal agreement will be reached shortly. Authorities will be advised when this has occurred and should take no action in the interim.
 6. Further information will also be provided at that time on how individual employees will be advised of the outcome as well as the mechanism to facilitate withdrawal of the remaining FBU cases that are currently stayed pending the outcome of these test cases.
 7. The remaining aspect is that of pension scheme access, which is being handled by CLG. Both CLG and the FBU are mindful of the current timescale within which all negotiations relating to both aspects of these cases are due to be concluded as referred to in paragraph 3 above.

Amendments to the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book)

8. A number of amendments need to be made to the Grey Book to reflect the requirements of the Regulations. The NJC is in the process of finalising that work, which has been carried out with the assistance of respective legal representatives.
9. Those amendments will also be issued shortly.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER
Joint Secretaries

MATT WRACK

Tribunal, Employment Appeal Tribunal, Court of Appeal and House of Lords processes returning finally at the request of the House of Lords to the original Employment Tribunal again for re-consideration and determination. The Tribunal found in favour of the Fire Brigades Union and asked the parties to the case to endeavour to negotiate a settlement.

2. Circular NJC/2/10 advised that a settlement in respect of the terms and conditions aspect of the case has now been agreed in principle with the FBU. The key principles of that settlement were also contained in circular NJC/2/10.
3. Since then further discussion has continued to finalise the settlement. Whilst formal agreement has not yet been reached we write to advise you that it has now been decided to amend one of the key principles of the 'in principle' agreement. Given the complexity of the negotiations and the time it has taken to overcome the problems caused by such complexity the compensation reference period has been extended by one year to cover from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2010 (previously 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2009).
4. As a consequence the proposed settlement figures will be amended as follows:
Firefighter – £750
Crew manager/leading firefighter – £778
Watch manager/sub and station officers – £806
5. It is anticipated that formal agreement will be reached shortly. Authorities will be advised when this has occurred and should take no action in the interim
6. You are reminded that further information will also be provided at that time on how individual employees will be advised of the outcome as well as the mechanism to facilitate withdrawal of the remaining FBU cases that are currently stayed pending the outcome of these test cases.
7. The remaining aspect of the Employment Tribunal case is that of pension scheme access. This is being dealt with by CLG and the FBU.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Messenger M. Wrack

SARAH MESSENGER
Joint Secretaries

MATT WRACK

Circular NJC/5/10

17 June 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

PART-TIME WORKERS (PREVENTION OF LESS FAVOURABLE TREATMENT) REGULATIONS – FIRE BRIGADES UNION EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL CASES

Settlement Negotiations

1. You will be aware that test cases in two authorities, Kent and Berkshire, were identified in 2001 under the above legislation. Those test cases have been subject to the Employment

A14 National occupational standards

On 24 February 2010, NJC circular 1/2010 was issued. This circular formally reported the changes to the firefighter rolemap agreed at the NJC at the end of 2009. Those changes were appended to the NJC circular (as appendices A and B) and are as reported in the executive council's report 2009. NJC circular 1/2010 reads:

SECTION A — NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL

Circular NJC/01/2010

24 February 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS

1. *At the last meeting of the National Joint Council (NJC) members considered a report from the NJC's joint sub-Committee on rolemaps and national occupational standards.*
2. *The joint sub-committee had received a request from FRSVSG to amend the national occupational standards relating to the role of firefighter in order to reflect the standards now developed by Skills for Justice.*
3. *The joint sub-Committee considered the proposed national occupational standards identifying a small number of amendments to ensure that, if accepted, the NJC documents would remain fire and rescue specific and take in to account the need to be mindful of the contractual situation.*
4. *The NJC accepted the recommendation of the joint sub-Committee contained within the report to replace the existing firefighter national occupational standards with those attached. However, this was subject to a successful approach to UKCES to ask them to amend the national occupational standards used for the NVQ process to reflect the wording adopted by the NJC in order to avoid inconsistency.*
5. *We write to advise you that UKCES has now confirmed it is content to take such action.*
6. *As such, the attached national occupational standards (Appendix A) replace in their entirety those currently in use by the NJC in relation to the firefighter rolemap.*
7. *Furthermore, the NJC agreed that given the new occupational standards no longer make individual reference to assessment, the attached table be adopted by the NJC in respect of use of simulation (Appendix B).*

Yours faithfully



SARAH MESSENGER
Joint Secretaries

MATT WRACK

Section



Fire and rescue service policy

B1 Introduction

Fire and rescue service policy is a matter devolved to the respective government bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In relation to English fire and rescue services, government policy remains the responsibility of Communities and Local Government (CLG).

B2 FRS policy – government responsibility – England

Responsibility for the fire and rescue service for England, and to some extent the UK through the provision of guidance advice, lies with Communities and Local Government (CLG). The secretary of state for Communities and Local Government is the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP. Ministers with a direct relationship with fire are Bob Neill MP as the parliamentary under secretary of state and the Rt Hon Grant Shapps, minister for housing and local government.

CLG's stakeholder bodies for the fire service in 2010 continued to be the Practitioners' Forum (PF) and the Business and Community Safety Forum (BCSF). Dave Sibert, the FBU fire safety adviser, represented the TUC on the BCSF until it was disbanded. The general secretary represented the FBU on the Practitioners' Forum. Late in the year it became apparent that the Practitioners' Forum would be disbanded early in 2011.

The chief fire and rescue adviser (CFRA), who heads the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser's Unit (CFRAU), provides ministers

with strategic advice and guidance on the structure, organisation and performance of the fire and rescue service. The current CFRA is Sir Ken Knight.

The principal functions of CFRAU are:

- the commissioning, quality assurance and publication of operational guidance;
- the coordination of national assets during catastrophic and major incidents through the Communities and Local Government Emergency Room and the National Strategic Advisory Team;
- the audit of the fire safety arrangements in Crown premises on a risk-assessed basis;
- providing a broader challenge to specific policy areas where necessary, particularly on equality and diversity;
- the maintenance and updating, together with the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), of the operational assessment of service delivery toolkit used by fire and rescue authorities for self-assessment and peer review;
- seeking to ensure that the government is able to engage influentially in debate on fire and rescue service issues and that the service's interests are effectively represented by the government both nationally and internationally.

CLG is divided into a number of departments which deal with matters which intersect with aspects of the fire service function in its widest sense. The primary directorate, however, is the Communities Group. The CFRA is one of two directors within the Communities Group with a direct relationship to the FRS, the other being Neil O'Connor, the fire and resilience director, who succeeded Shona Dunn in that role during 2010.

The Fire Brigades Union is represented at a number of key

committees and forums that fall under the various sub-departments of CLG and the subordinate agencies dealing with the major issues confronting the FBU, its members and the fire service.

B3 FRS policy – government responsibility – Northern Ireland

Fire and rescue policy in Northern Ireland is a fully devolved matter and is the responsibility of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS).

The fire and rescue service effectively makes up the public safety element of this, the largest local government department, which accounts for approximately 40% of the Assembly budget.

Currently, the minister responsible for DHSSPS is Michael McGimpsey MLA. As a minister, Mr McGimpsey forms part of the Stormont executive, in effect the local Northern Ireland cabinet. The five largest local political parties are represented at this level: the Democratic Unionist Party, Sinn Féin, the Ulster Unionist Party, the Social Democratic and Labour Party and the Alliance Party.

The minister reports to the Assembly, which in addition to the above political parties, also includes a number of smaller parties and independents.

There is also a scrutiny committee: the health committee. All the main parties are represented on this by their designated health spokespersons. The FBU has been able to utilise this unique and useful aspect of devolved government on a number of occasions.

Funding comes directly from the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP). The executive also has an important role here.

The Fire Brigades Union continues to enjoy involvement at all levels across the political spectrum.

There have been a number of issues in 2010 which have been dealt with or are ongoing at government level which are of import to the FBU. The main issues of concern during 2010 were:

- funding – implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2011-2015;
- pensions issues;
- the Audit Commission report; and
- an ongoing review of the fire service by the Delivery and Innovation Division (DID) team of the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Throughout 2010 FBU officials and members have met politicians from all parties on a number of different issues. We have sent delegations to Westminster and Stormont to lobby against cuts in funding and have also held meetings locally to discuss specific fire service matters.

In addition to these meetings, the FBU in Region 2 held a very successful political school in November which attracted senior politicians from all parties and gave officials and members the opportunity to speak directly to those in power about issues affecting the fire service.

B4 FRS policy – government responsibility – Wales

Region 8 has been extremely active within the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), including participating in a number of forums over the past 12 months.

WAG review of service standards – fires in domestic dwellings

The FBU is and always has been supportive of a single standard for Wales. In principle, notwithstanding the diverse geographical and topographical make-up of Wales, a single standard avoids the risk of the good reputation of the service being damaged by delivery standards dropping across the principality.

The review of the current service standard for Wales is now complete, and it would appear that there is a clear intent to remove the pan-Wales standard, agreed some four years ago, which required Welsh fire and rescue services to attend fires in domestic properties within 10 minutes on 80% of occasions.

WAG's proposal is that this standard is to be replaced with "The Welsh Fire and Rescue Service Guiding Principles for Dwelling Fire Response Standards" underpinned by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The consultation period on this proposal ended on 21 January 2011. The FBU Wales responded to this proposal.

National framework document

The FBU also secured a seat on the national framework scoping group during 2010. This scoping group however, was prematurely shelved. This was in response to the decision by Carl Sargeant, the minister for social justice and local government, to defer the production of the fire and rescue national framework 2011-14 and keep the current framework 2008-11 extant until March 2012. This decision was taken in response to the impending Comprehensive Spending Review, the fiscal climate, and the upcoming assembly elections in May 2011.

Whilst concerns were raised as to whether the commitments contained within the document could or should be maintained at this time, WAG, following a final meeting of the scoping group to discuss the impact of maintaining the current commitments, took the decision that this was possible.

Retained Duty System (RDS) Working Group

The RDS review was also completed during 2010. A report written by Paul Young, WAG's fire adviser, was produced and distributed to the three fire and rescue services in Wales and the Fire Brigades Union for response. FBU representation on this working group was provided by the regional retained representative and the regional secretary.

Fire and Rescue Consultative Forum (FRCF) – terms of reference

The constitution and terms of reference of the Fire and Rescue Consultative Forum (FRCF) was reviewed during 2010 with three options tabled for discussion. The three chief fire officers and the FBU opted for a slimmed down version of the forum for the future, to include the three CFOs, the FBU and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). It was felt that it was necessary to recognise the forum as an opportunity for the Assembly government and FRAs to maintain a regular dialogue, and retain only representation from the FRAs (CFOs), WLGA and the FBU (regional secretary).

Risk Reduction Planning (RRP) Guidance Working Group

The FBU in Wales currently also has a seat on the recently convened Risk Reduction Planning (RRP) Guidance Working Group. Work is ongoing in this area, and is planned to extend well into 2011.

B5 FRS policy – government responsibility – Scotland

2010 came to be dominated by one main issue – the dramatic and far-reaching budget cuts imposed from the UK government across all departments. The Scottish budget was consequently hit badly by a significant cut which will impact on all public spending in Scotland for many years to come. Whilst we can argue that this economic policy is damaging and will impact most on those who can least afford it, there seems little prospect of a change in strategy from London any time soon.

In Scotland the government has focussed much of its spending power on protecting services and jobs by minimising the cut to revenue budgets. However, it can still be anticipated that there will be large-scale job losses from both the public and private sectors over the coming years.

Against this backdrop, considerable discussion has taken place regarding the future of the fire and rescue services in Scotland. The service can expect a similar cut to other local government services and, whilst the 2011 budget cut of 2.6% may be manageable, it is still being forecast that by year four the service will need to function on just 80% of the current budget.

The stark choice facing the service is: what parts of it will continue to be delivered and what parts will not? We have debated this throughout the year and our belief is best

described as “protecting the ability to deliver the frontline”. We recognise that the service cannot function with just a frontline, nor can it continue to function by reducing that frontline. Almost every proposal that has been brought forward to date by management attacks the number of firefighters on appliances and in control of their conditions. We have taken the view that it is the protection of the delivery of the service to the public that will best protect our members.

We have over the past year done preparatory work around service restructure and in many of our previous briefing notes and consultation responses we have called for a more centralised approach to decision making. The governance of the service has not served our members or our communities well over the last five years. Our calls for commonality and consistency across Scotland have been ignored to the point where interoperability is now being damaged.

As conference meets, we will have completed a public consultation on the restructure of the service. Three of the four main political parties believe that one service will be the best option. Our position is that this will offer the best opportunity to provide a quality service that protects the maximum number of jobs in uniformed posts. We have over the past four years worked exceptionally hard at positioning the FBU at the heart of the service in Scotland. We are seen as the advocates for that service and as honest brokers for our membership.

We may well be moving into unknown territory but we go into the restructure strong, determined and so long as we maintain our unity and strength of purpose we can be the significant players in shaping the service of the future.

Our view looking ahead is that the restructure of the service is not just about spending less money providing it, but on providing a world-class service where our members can be respected as professionals and work in an organisation that they can be proud of.

During the year the FBU attended ministerial advisory group (MAG) meetings on the following dates:

1 March
1 June
29 September
14 December.

An FBU paper on “Welfare arrangements for specialist incidents” was noted by the MAG but again highlighted the difficulties of getting this implemented eight times over.

The region also produced a policy on fasting and abstinence in the fire and rescue service.

The MAG established a sub-group to consider the options around restructure. Regular meetings were held from October through to December with attendance by the FBU. Phase 2 of this work has progressed with more detailed consideration of the future shape of a Scottish service, with the FBU again being active in the process and advocating on behalf of members in Scotland.

Following the minister for community safety's announcement at conference 2010 that work would start on consideration of response standards, initial meetings have been held and work is ongoing. This work is now likely to feature in any restructure proposal.

Regional officials also attend meetings of the Scottish Operational Guidance Programme Board and the associated Scottish Operational Guidance Group.

Last year the region reported on the report by former HM chief inspector of constabulary Paddy Tomkins on inland water rescue, and during the year officials have attended the Water Strategy Stakeholder Working Group, looking into the recommendations made in the report.

The region has also responded to a number of consultation documents through the previous year including:

- the independent review of open water and flooding;
- draft Referendum Bill;
- review of the implementation of IRMP;
- Inland Water Rescue Stakeholder Group report;
- response to Public Petition Committee;
- response to Audit Scotland consultation;
- proposed Damages (Scotland) Bill; and
- Justice Committee scrutiny of the draft budget 2011

The FBU has attended both the SNP and Labour conferences and both parties' trade union groups where the opportunity to lobby backbench MSPs was taken on behalf of our members. We have attended the Scottish Parliament on a number of occasions and we held a very successful lobby of parliament on 25 November, where members from across the country had the opportunity to hear from the FBU general secretary, officials and politicians from across the political spectrum.

B6 Arson Control Forum

CLG's Arson Control Forum has been reinvigorated during 2010. The FBU continues to be represented on this body. During the course of 2010 the future of the ACF has been brought into question as part of the government's continuing review of centrally organised forums and groups.

B7 BSI

The FBU continues to be involved with the development of a number of fire-related BSI committees.

B8 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.

B9 Joint CFA/FBU Warehouse Working Group

This body continues to be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation into the fatal fire at Atherstone on Stour.

B10 National Fire Sprinkler Network

The FBU continues to support the work of the network, and holds a place on the executive committee.

The network works closely with other organisations, including the European sprinkler network and the FBU remains committed to increasing the use of sprinklers, which improve firefighter safety both domestically and within the commercial arena.

The network holds an annual seminar at Westminster, at which in 2010 the general secretary gave a presentation on firefighter safety. This presentation was very well received by the seminar attendees, which included members of both Houses of Parliament.

The officers' national committee continues to provide the FBU representation, as part of its fire safety support role, working closely with the union's IRMP and fire safety adviser, Dave Sibert.

B11 Practitioners' Forum

The Practitioners' Forum met four times during 2010 as follows:

- 19 January
- 27 April
- 13 July
- 5 October.

The union was represented by the general secretary, with support as required from the IRMP/fire safety adviser.

A key debate pursued by the FBU was the issue of flood preparation, including the call for a clear duty to be placed on

fire and rescue authorities to plan and prepare for major flood incidents. Other issues addressed of particular importance included:

- operational guidance;
- FiReControl;
- timber framed buildings; and
- fire service research.

The future work of the forum was debated in October following a decision by CLG to cease funding for the forum, despite FBU objections to this. At the close of year, this debate was continuing.

The Practitioners' Forum minutes and other papers can be found at: <http://www.pforum.fire.gov.uk/1>

B12 Fire and Rescue Service Statistics User Group

The FBU continued to be represented at the user group during 2010.

B13 Resilience Sounding Board

The union continues to attend the Resilience Sounding Board. John McGhee represents the union on this board.

B14 Workforce development

Review of the effectiveness of operational training and development in the fire and rescue service

The department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) commissioned consultants Greenstreet Berman to carry out research on the effectiveness of operational training and development in the fire and rescue service. Stakeholders were issued with a draft questionnaire on 29 April 2010 and asked for comments. The FBU sent detailed comments on 5 June 2010 raising serious concerns with the direction and content of this questionnaire.

Following the issue of a substantially revised questionnaire which addressed the concerns of the FBU, a meeting took place between Greenstreet Berman and the FBU at head office on 24 June 2010. At this meeting the FBU highlighted several concerns around workforce development issues including:

1. How inconsistently IPDS (integrated personal development system) was being applied around the UK and across different duty systems;
2. The lack of quality assurance and external verification;

3. The lack of understanding of IPDS;
4. The inconsistent use of development processes;
5. The safe person concept and incident command;
6. The apparent lack of underpinning knowledge and understanding;
7. Issues around rolemaps;
8. The lack of industry support and funding;
9. Concerns around selection systems, ADCs (assessment and development centres) and ITOPs (initial tests of potential);
10. The National Firefighter Selection Test and its use.

CLG has yet to issue a full report of the findings from Greenstreet Berman but the key issues from the meeting with the FBU were included in circular 2010HOC0536SS which was on the agenda of the executive council meeting in September 2010.

The FBU workforce development group

The full FBU workforce development group (WDG) met twice in 2010, on 29 April and 13 July, although much of the work was done by smaller groups throughout the year.

The fire minister Bob Neill's speech to the Fire and Rescue Conference 2010 on 29 June in Harrogate raised real concerns for the WDG as he indicated that employers best understood their workforce requirements and that they should not be told how to recruit and develop their staff. This statement was picked up by some employers who felt it was a green light to disregard things such as IPDS and the National Firefighter Selection Test. The FBU wrote to the fire minister requesting clarification on this statement.

The WDG continued to work on resolutions that were either carried at the 2009 annual conference or were remitted for its attention. These included a resolution which demanded that the executive council work on developing national guidance to facilitate local negotiations to ensure retained duty system (RDS) personnel have the same opportunities as wholetime firefighters to apply for internal transfers. This resolution had been given qualified support and was dependent upon the information supplied from the national retained committee. Circular 2010HOC0326SS was issued on 10 May 2010 requesting information about the use of the National Firefighter Selection Test and the movement of RDS to WDS. There were 38 responses to this circular and the WDG is currently looking at developing national guidance based upon this information. A similar resolution was brought to annual conference 2010 which is being looked at as part of this ongoing work.

Other resolutions also included ones which related to assessment and development centres, promotions and initial tests of potential and asked that negotiations were initiated with appropriate bodies. A subgroup of the Fire and Rescue Sector Vocational Standards Group, the IPDS Workstream Group, was formed and held its first meeting on the 24 November 2009 with subsequent meetings held on 17 May and 23 November 2010 where these issues were discussed.

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

The workforce development group also continued to work on the relevant resolutions from annual conference 2010. These resolutions included:

Resolution 15

Specialist skills – which demanded that a survey of all brigades was carried out and that this information was distributed to brigade officials in the form of guidance to assist them in their local consultation and negotiation. This survey was initiated and circular 2010HOC0361SS was issued on 2 June 2010 and reissued on 22 July 2010. The production of the required guidance has not yet been completed as the response to the circular was disappointing.

Resolution 34

Recording of training – asked for a review of training standards and a report to be produced by 2011. This review was initiated and circular 2010HOC0362SS was issued on 2 June 2010 and reissued on 22 July 2010. The production of the required report has not yet been completed as the response to the circular was disappointing.

Resolution 23

National promotion standards – demanded that the executive council began negotiations to reach national standards for promotion. This resolution was remitted to the WDG and was included in the continued challenge to improper use of development pay upon promotion and in the interview with Greenstreet Berman. The WDG has also encouraged members to attend the qualifications and workforce development in the UKFRS course where the current national promotion standards which include a test of operational competence are explained in detail.

Resolution 35

ADC process – demanded that the executive council carried out further research into ITOPs and ADCs with a view to negotiating a national process of promotion that included a recognition that firefighting capabilities must be included in the process. The IPDS Workstream Group has been looking at all the components of IPDS within its review in 2010. This review has been looking at the content, structures and systems of selection processes. In addition to this review the FBU took part in research which was commissioned by CLG looking at the current processes for operational training and development in the fire and rescue service. This meeting took place on 24 June 2010 and the issues that were raised in the resolution were outlined as part of the interview. The FBU WDG is continuing to progress this work and is awaiting the full report from CLG.

Resolution 36

Recruit training – condemned the current trend of some FRAs towards training courses and demanded that recruit courses should be a minimum of three months and cover all health and safety and firefighting aspects. This resolution was remitted and work continued to look at producing information for officials on what the FBU believes should be included in a training course and how long it should be. The FBU has been working with the Fire Service College in Scotland looking at its foundation course for new recruits and is progressing this resolution.

Process for dealing with changes to rolemaps and national occupational standards

On 26 May 2010 circular 2010HOC0350SS outlined a process for dealing with changes to rolemaps and national occupational standards that ensured that there would be no changes without the agreement of the National Joint Council. This process was agreed at the executive council meeting held in June 2010.

Improper use of development pay upon promotion

The FBU continued to progress the challenge to the improper use of development pay and circular 2010HOC0265SS issued to executive council members on 16 April 2010 outlined the potential for a legal claim to be progressed on this issue. At the executive council meeting held on 20 and 21 April 2010 agreement was made to authorise a legal challenge, subject to a case conference with legal representatives. The FBU met with its legal team to discuss the challenge in more detail on 13 August 2010.

In addition to this the FBU met with exam board Edexcel on 16 July 2010 to discuss its understanding of the quality assurance process. The FBU wrote to Edexcel on 20 July 2010 to clarify the discussion which was given in a reply to the FBU on 26 July 2010.

Fire sector qualifications

During 2010 the FBU has been involved in consultation around developing fire sector vocational qualifications. The vocational qualifications included:

- incident command;
- fire safety;
- fire investigation;
- breathing apparatus wearer.

The FBU has raised concerns around the breathing apparatus wearer vocational qualification and this issue is ongoing.

High potential leadership programme

Circular 2010HOC0078SS issued on 26 January 2010 gave an update on the programme and included the equality impact assessment. It informed the executive council that 13 brigades (27 candidates) were involved in the pilot for existing operational staff, phase 1, and that phase 2, which deals with new entrants, was to be progressed later in the year.

B15 Federation of British Fire Organisations

The FBU continues to be affiliated to the Federation of British Fire Organisations (FOBFO), a highly influential body which is dedicated to the future of the UK fire and rescue service. During 2010 the FBU has been represented on FOBFO council by Dave Sibert (FBU fire and safety adviser) and, until his retirement in August 2010, Dave Beverley (former FBU official) who also was a member of the FOBFO executive board. The assistant general secretary has now replaced Dave Beverley as one of the FBU representatives.

B16 CLG Fire Futures review of the fire and rescue service in England

On 28 July 2010 the CLG fire minister, Bob Neill, addressed a workshop comprising chief fire officers, fire authority chairs, the FBU and other representatives from organisations in the fire and rescue service. He announced an intention to carry out an evaluation, based upon the views of the fire sector, to look at the appropriate level of involvement which the government has on the direction of the fire and rescue service in England.

Shortly afterwards a project was established to conduct this work. The project was known as Fire Futures. A project steering group, made up of the lead fire organisations and the chairs of the four workstreams' lead officials from the CLG Fire and Resilience Directorate, was established. Although this is a Westminster project, it has significant ramifications for all members across the UK in relation to UK-wide functions and arrangements such as resilience and the National Joint Council.

The following organisations were represented on the steering group:

- Local Government Association (LGA);
- Fire Brigades Union (FBU);
- Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA);
- Fire Protection Association (FPA);
- Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser's Unit.

The details of the four workstreams are:

- Role of the Fire & Rescue Service (Delivery Models), chaired by Cllr David Milsted, community safety lead member, Dorset FRA;
- Efficiency, Effectiveness and Productivity, chaired by Max Hood, CFO West Sussex;
- Localism and Accountability, chaired by Cllr Andre Gonzalez de Savage, cabinet member for protective services, customers and communities, Northamptonshire county council;
- National Interests, chaired by Brian Robinson, president of the Association for Specialist Fire Protection.

The terms of reference of the steering group were such that neither the steering group nor the component organisations would be endorsing or recommending any outcomes arising from the considerations of the workstreams. The steering group met on a number of occasions in 2010. Once the draft reports had been agreed by the workstreams, it was agreed that the individual reports would be presented to the minister by the workstream chairs on behalf of their groups rather than on behalf of the steering group. The reports were presented to the minister in December 2010 for consideration in March 2011.

The workstream chairs' forward and the four workstreams' reports are reproduced here in full.

Fire Futures – chairs' foreword: a series of options for the future of fire and rescue provision in England

1. INTRODUCTION

The fire sector has changed significantly over the last few years. The introduction of risk management planning, the increasing emphasis on prevention and growing public awareness of the risks of fire as a result of increased fire sector engagement with vulnerable groups have all contributed to the fall in fire deaths since 1981/2. The FRS has met delivery challenges, including an increasing number of road traffic collisions, whilst assuring a professional, effective response to national crisis situations such as 7/7.

Yet despite these changes a number of significant issues remain. These concerns are now merging with a new set of challenges facing the sector, generated by changing political, economic, social and environmental factors which will all impact upon the future of fire provision. To continue delivering the professional service that the public expects, the fire sector needs to proactively adapt in order to face these challenges.

Launching the Fire Futures Review in July 2010, the Fire Minister, Bob Neill MP, invited fire partners to take the lead to generate wide-ranging options for the future of fire and rescue provision in England.

The Minister set the challenge for a short, focussed review that drew in options from across the whole fire sector. Over a hundred partner bodies and volunteers have come together to devote resource and expertise to present the Minister with the options included in these reports. We believe we have met the challenge.

These reports mark the outcome of the first stage of the review. They present a series of short, medium and long term options which can stand alone or, in many cases, be combined. The reports are not a blueprint for the future of fire and rescue provision; rather they are a menu of options which merit careful consideration and further development.

The workstream Chairs have welcomed the new approach Fire Futures has taken to engage more widely with the sector, though shared concerns with the Steering Group over aspects of the process and timescales. Despite the clear intention from the outset that this was an options generating exercise and a wide range of views would be put forward, the four Chairs also share significant disappointment that some members of the Steering Group felt unable to sign off the work as a single report, even with the inclusion of appropriate disclaimers. This could give rise to the impression that some sector partners are unwilling to consider wider views.

2. PROCESS

To date, Fire Futures has been an innovative, all-encompassing strategic review which has placed the sector firmly in the lead in determining where and how

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

changes might be made to meet current and future challenges. At a launch workshop on 28 July 2010, fire partners came together and, with no issue left out of scope, identified a series of wide-ranging factors for consideration. These topics were grouped together and taken forward under four workstreams:

- Role of the FRS (Delivery Models);
- Efficiency, Effectiveness and Productivity (EEP);
- Localism and Accountability; and
- National Interests.

Four volunteer Chairs came forward to lead the workstreams, each responsible for coordinating the work of their groups and for ensuring that the whole sector had the opportunity to participate and present options. This was essential given the 232 volunteers and 53 representative bodies who devoted time and expertise to the review.

Workstream Chairs were as follows:

- Cllr David Milsted, Dorset FRA (from September 2010)
- Cllr Paul Shannon, Greater Manchester FRA, (to September 2010) (Role of the FRS (Delivery Models))
- CFO Max Hood, West Sussex FRS (EEP)
- Cllr Andre Gonzalez De Savage, Northamptonshire FRA (Localism and Accountability)
- Brian Robinson, Association for Specialist Fire Protection (National Interests).

The workstream Chairs were each members of the sector-dominated Fire Futures Steering Group established to oversee the review. Over five meetings, Chairs kept Steering Group members apprised of workstream activity and responded to member suggestions and challenge on the direction of travel.

With Chairs and volunteers in place, workstreams set about dividing their topic areas into a series of sub-stream issues overseen by volunteer leads. As sub-stream topics were taken forward, each workstream developed its own working style to generate options. The Role of the FRS (Delivery Models), EEP and Localism & Accountability workstreams developed sub-stream papers as initial prompts for discussion, and seven workstream papers were prepared in the first few weeks alone. The National Interests workstream expanded the remit of the group to include innovative thinking on decentralisation and its implications for the wider sector. As work progressed, the group commissioned eight working papers and a number of think pieces to inform their debate.

Organisations provided vital input into the review in two main ways; through providing submissions and through offering virtual sounding pool resource. A total of nineteen submissions were received from partner organisations, including the LG Group, providing organisational insight into Fire Futures which helped develop workstream thinking. In addition, 36 organisations offered ongoing support to workstreams, providing advice and challenge on emerging ideas via a virtual sounding pool.

Both the submissions and the virtual sounding pool formed part of much broader engagement activity including the whole sector. All along, the review sought to include as many different viewpoints as possible, and to this end a concerted engagement process began in October with a series of workshops hosted by Chairs and sub-stream leads. Designed to challenge emerging thinking, each workshop held lively debates on developing themes and the review's wider direction of travel. The robust challenge offered by the 136 attendees helped hone workstream ideas as initial sub-stream reports were written and developed for still wider discussion.

With the sub-stream reports in place, workstreams highlighted their key themes in a series of questions which were shared with the whole sector for comment and challenge. From 22 October until 2 November, a 'Have Your Say' period was held in which all Chiefs, Chairs, interested organisations and individuals were invited to give their perspectives on the workstreams via email.

All of the 'Have Your Say' responses, partner submissions and sub-stream papers were then gathered together and used by workstream Chairs to shape their final reports. Although received after sub-stream leads had developed their reports, CFOA's submission was also considered by Chairs in this way.

3. THE REPORTS

The Fire Futures reports are presented from the four workstreams. A brief summary of the topics considered by workstreams is as follows:

a) **Role of the Fire and Rescue Service [FRS] – Delivery Models**

Constituted to examine the extent and current applicability of the FRS' role, the workstream investigated barriers to delivery, governance models and alternative service combinations. The Role of the FRS (Delivery Models) report offers a series of short and long term options conferring additional powers and responsibilities for FRAs and FRSs to tackle the barriers faced by the sector and improve delivery. Looking towards the longer term, the report identifies a new Community Protection Authority governance model and outlines options for closer working between the FRS and some aspects of emergency medical response.

b) **Efficiency, Effectiveness and Productivity**

As its name suggests, the EEP workstream examined FRS resource balance and deployment, considering options to improve cost efficiency and the potential for alternative or additional areas of income generation. Through a series of sub-stream topics including funding, pay and conditions, balance of resources, delivery models and use of assets, the workstream report suggests efficiencies can be achieved by a series of measures including a new sector-owned procurement process, clear asset management strategies and a further consideration of charging and

trading mechanisms. In view of the recent Spending Review, the focus of this work was more short term than other workstreams.

c) **Localism and Accountability**

Established to reflect on how localism and accountability relates to the fire sector, the workstream considered mechanisms for firmly embedding both concepts in fire provision. Substreams considered transparency, accountability, assurance, decentralisation and localism; and the workstream report reflects a range of options to drive these agendas forward. It offers an assurance model based on a sector-led approach and a series of proposals to extend localism, transparency and accountability of fire and rescue provision by offering communities a greater role in determining and monitoring local services.

d) **National Interests**

Established to consider the role of the FRS within the national context and the respective roles of the FRS and government in national resilience, the National Interests Workstream undertook wide-ranging work to consider decentralisation, pan-FRA arrangements, risk, national functions, the National Framework, interoperability, knowledge management, the Fire Service College and the built environment. The workstream suggests empowering citizens through better information and a decentralisation approach that separates commissioning and service delivery, whilst ensuring that interoperability is assured through national response arrangements and a defined assurance mechanism. The National Interests report also considers how the sector can change in driving forward this agenda, proposing a more joined-up approach to knowledge management, a more resilient built environment and a coordinated approach to training.

During the course of their work, each workstream identified a series of key issues and challenges which are likely to affect the future delivery of fire and rescue provision. Workstream Chairs have outlined these challenges in the opening sections of the reports.

a whole may play a full and equal part, alongside other senior partners, in shaping and developing policy in the years ahead.

The challenges are immense, but England's fire and rescue sector has the professionalism and capacity needed to address them. By working together, both with partners and communities, we can deliver efficient, locally-driven services that meet the needs of the people we serve in a joined-up, proactive way.

David Milsted

Andre Gonzalez De Savage

Max Hood

Brian Robinson

4. **NEXT STEPS**

The Fire Futures Reports are just the beginning of the process to determine the future direction of fire and rescue provision. Outlined are a series of options which, either individually or in combination, are designed to address the challenges identified in the introduction, and we invite the Minister to consider the suggestions put forward.

The second phase of Fire Futures will begin when the Minister receives these reports. In his correspondence to the sector the Minister has called for reactions from sector partners on the options included in the reports while he considers them. The sector looks forward to working with the Government to develop these options as we shape the future of fire and rescue provision in England. We wish to see the Fire Futures process continue so that the sector as

Fire Futures: Role of the Fire & Rescue Service (Delivery Models) Report

CURRENT & FUTURE CHALLENGES

The immediate and greatest challenge to the Fire & Rescue Service (FRS) is that of funding. Financial support from the Government is set to reduce by c.30% over the next four years, while income from Council Tax is unlikely to keep pace with inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (while being roughly half that currently measured by the Retail Price Index). If this grant reduction is applied at the same level across all 46 FRSs it will prove particularly difficult for those that have already achieved significant budget reductions over the last few years, and which benefited least from the last Comprehensive Spending Review (which produced, in some cases, 3-year settlements that were cuts in real terms in a period when capping limits applied to Council Tax).

For many and perhaps most FRSs, these funding reductions will imperil their ability to carry out risk-based budgeting and implement their local Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs), let alone play an effective part in the National Framework. When all the frills have been removed, every spare ounce of fat burned off, and every possible efficiency saving identified and implemented, there will remain only real cuts to the core service and a real increase in casualties and property loss.

The FRS, along with other agencies in the field of Community Risk Reduction and Response, also faces an intensification of the challenges it already has. Principally these are:

Demographic

The coming years will see a continuing increase in the size of the 'vulnerable/harder-to-reach' population groups.

- The 60+, 70+, 80+ and 90+ population groups are growing; meanwhile the younger working-age population (18 – 45) has diminished. This phenomenon is particularly acute in some of the FRS areas that have received the lowest grant settlement awards in recent years.
- The number of non-English speaking residents is increasing, and this trend is likely to continue (the number of non-English speaking primary school pupils in England has nearly doubled in the last decade). Engagement with these groups will be very challenging, particularly as FRSs are obliged to freeze recruitment.
- Rural FRSs report increasing challenges in engagement with the various Travelling Communities as the number of Travellers' sites (both official and unofficial) increases, as prevention work in this area is very demanding of resources.
- Historically high levels of drug and alcohol abuse continue to lead to an increase in the number of people at risk to themselves and others.

Economic

In a period of continuing austerity household income (in real and/or absolute terms) is falling for many and will continue to

fall, particularly in those areas most dependent on the public sector for employment.

- People are likely to cut back on (so-called) 'luxuries' such as smoke alarms and other precautionary equipment, just as funding for FRSs to provide them free of charge is ending.
- There is likely to be a growing number of people, especially young people, living in Homes of Multiple Occupation, much of which is unofficial and falls outside current HMO regulation, hence is very difficult to identify.
- There will be an increase in the number of squats.
- The number of non-domestic fires (accidental and deliberate) is likely to increase.
- Income from Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates is likely to fall as businesses and householders go into bankruptcy.

Climatic

Climate change and general atmospheric warming is an irrefutable fact, irrespective of its cause. It leads to meteorological instability and greater extremes of weather.

- There will continue to be more (and more severe) heathland and forest fires, some of which will threaten property, particularly in the South. There is little the FRS, on its own, can do to prevent such fires and reacting to them is hugely demanding on resources.
- Floods will continue to be more frequent and more severe, their consequences exacerbated and in part created by several decades of building on land that is now effectively flood plain. The role of the FRS in such incidents is currently ill-defined and typically leads to a demand to pump water out when there is nowhere sensible to pump it to.
- 'Severe weather' of all kinds creates demands on the FRS to undertake rescue work.

Other

- Reducing budgets and a public sector pay freeze may put local strains on industrial relations.
- There is likely to be a short-to-medium term increase in civil unrest, of which the recent student demonstrations are a foretaste.
- Although it may have become more difficult for terrorist organisations to carry out major atrocities, the risk of smaller scale (but still serious) attacks on vulnerable targets may increase.

The impact of all these challenges will of course be borne by the whole Community Risk Reduction and Response sector, not just the FRS. At the same time it is unlikely that the high expectations the public has of the sector (particularly the FRS) will diminish. The public is more demanding than ever of public services generally, and as the sector finds itself facing mounting difficulty in delivering its services to a diminishing budget, a growing gap – even if it exists in perception rather than reality – between expectation and actual service delivery will make it harder to engage with communities, particularly those that are already hard to reach.

It is therefore essential that the whole Risk Reduction/Response sector be able to plan, deliver and account for its services in the most efficient and transparent manner possible, and that barriers to this be removed and an enabling framework created. The recommendations for delivery and governance in this Workstream report are intended to enable (but not compel) the sector to operate more efficiently and accountably in the ways that are best suited to the particular needs, aspirations and potential of their locality.

REMOVING BARRIERS, OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

● Choice in the creation of precepting FRAs

Outside London there are three FRA models: Metropolitan, Combined, and County, with the latter having no power of precept. Evidence from County FRAs and FRSs shows that, while some have evolved robust and sophisticated frameworks for developing their risk-based budgets, assuring the means of democratic accountability and scrutiny, and delivering a service across a wider field of risk reduction and response, (Gloucestershire, for example) others find they struggle unsuccessfully to compete for budgets with other services (Adult Care, Community Services, Libraries, Adult Education, etc.) within their County FRS portfolio. They are hence unable to provide more than the most superficial level of scrutiny and accountability to the community. This tends to compromise their ability to develop a realistic and defensible IRMP and to play a full part within the National Framework.

Clearly the latter group may have useful lessons to learn from the former, and the IDeA – through its Peer Review and Leadership programmes, for example – can be of great assistance in this effort. There is, however, a frustration in some quarters that the ability to create a separate, precepting FRA is restricted to those that are created by combining the FRSs of more than one Local Authority. They believe that the gains – in terms of budget freedoms, scrutiny, democratic accountability and partnership working – would more than offset the set-up costs and the marginal increase in ‘democratic costs’ of Members’ Allowances and expenses, particularly if (as is the case with most Combined FRAs) the ‘back office’ administration is shared with the County authority. Once created, such County FRAs would then be free to work in partnership with their neighbours, this freedom extending to full merger if that is what they want to do.

We recommend, therefore, that the power to create a precepting FRA should be extended to the Counties to use if they choose to.

● General Competence

We recommend that the power of General Competence, currently restricted to County FRAs, be extended to all FRAs. The arguments for this have been well rehearsed and, we note, form a key recommendation in the submission of the LG Group.

● Differential Precepting

The desire to carry out ‘differential precepting’ has been expressed by Combined FRAs and FRSs whose areas include (for example) a mixture of rural and urban communities. Rural FRAs tend to have a greater

dependency on council tax income than on Government grant: a 60:40 (council tax:grant) split is typical. They find that, while most of their council tax income comes from their rural local authority area, most of their expenditure is in the urban areas; again, a split of 60:40 (rural:urban) in council tax income and of 40:60 (rural:urban) in expenditure is common. This being the case, they ask for the ability – or the confirmation that they already have the ability; they have unsuccessfully asked for clarity on this issue – to levy a higher council tax precept in their urban local authority areas than in their rural area.

We suggest that a small differential to what is already a very small part of household council tax cannot be regarded as excessive, and that such ‘differential precepting’ be an option open to FRAs, whether combined or not, so long as the ‘top-up’ is justified by actual expenditure on the service within an area covered by a single Collecting Authority.

NJC: A Framework Approach

We are happy with the role of the NJC as negotiator of the national wage; however we should like to see it adopt a ‘framework approach’ to conditions that can be adapted to fit the needs of local IRMPs (with regard to public protection and national resilience), and to industrial relations.

Flood and Water Rescue

As intimated above, the role of the FRS in flood and water rescue incidents is ambivalent and ill-defined, with unsatisfactory outcomes in terms of operational efficiency and public perception. We recommend that the Minister make attendance at such incidents (as with road traffic collisions) a statutory duty of the FRS; that it should be funded through New Burdens (not be an additional duty to be paid for out of diminishing budgets), and that the FRS be granted the statutory power to control the inner cordon at these events.

Fire Risk Assessors

We wish to see a unified scheme of accreditation and registration of Fire Risk Assessors to create assurance and resilience in risk assessment across the whole Risk Reduction sector.

Military Assistance

Unnecessary bureaucratic delay was experienced during the Cumbrian floods in requesting military assistance in the provision of a temporary bridge. We recommend that FRSs be granted the power to request military assistance (including helicopter support) directly, and not through another agency.

Place-Based Funding and the Big Society

We fully support the ethos and principles of place-based funding, for example in support of FRS initiatives and partnerships that involve other local public and voluntary organisations and the full integration of the FRS and its sister services into the life and work of the community.

FRS/EMS: INTEGRATION OF FRS AND EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICE

A merger of the Fire and Rescue Service and the Emergency Ambulance Service has been considered in the past but never

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

implemented beyond an ad hoc local level: in some FRAs, for example, there is a degree of co-responding on a cost recovery basis; while in others some fire stations also serve as ambulance stations. Our recommendation is to enable full integration to be made, subject to local choice, to provide a seamless and efficient Community Risk Reduction and Response Service using shared facilities. Such a Service would benefit from the best aspects of FRS and EMS training (with a potentially enhanced role for the National Fire Service College), mutual support, and (for the EMS) greatly enhanced local democratic accountability and scrutiny.

The elements of the EMS most apt to be merged are those of urgent care provision and emergency response, including Hazardous Area Response Teams and Urban Search and Rescue. Co-location of assets would be essential and, in the short term, the extension of existing co-responding schemes is an obvious first step: this would be particularly beneficial in rural areas where emergency ambulance cover is patchy but there are Retained Firefighters permanently on call. Across the service, FRS/EMS merger would produce a more efficient and more flexible emergency response service while enhancing the role of ambulance crews beyond that of being 'merely responsive'.

Major incidents, such as 7/7, highlight the need for close working between FRS and EMS at all levels, and a thorough mutual understanding of operational procedures.

We note that the most recent study (Audit Commission, Coordination and Joint Delivery of Fire & Ambulance Services, October 2010) records that fewer than half of all Ambulance Trusts are meeting their response time standard. In an FRS, such a shortfall would be the subject of public scrutiny by democratically accountable elected Authority members which would lead to a programme of improvement; in the ambulance service it appears to pass without public notice. Our suggested governance model of a Community Protection Authority (CPA) would remedy this deficiency.

Making integration a realistic option at the local level will require agreement between the Department of Health and DCLG in order to enable local structural change. This must include the potential dissolution of existing Ambulance Trusts in order to enable (for example) a CPA to be set up.

While integration would, as stated, be a matter for local choice, we see the virtue in setting up pilot schemes to test its feasibility and evaluate the outcomes; a full business case and exemplar model for integration could then be drawn up. CFO McGuirk's paper suggests three specific FRS areas for such pilots; we suggest that willing FRSs nominate themselves for this work.

There is not, of course, 100% agreement on what model (or what degree) of integration would be best; hence the need to ensure local choice in these matters. However there is widespread frustration, across the sector, that the real but limited gains that have been made in some Authorities cannot be taken further and built on, particularly as local integration has an obvious part to play in National Resilience.

Governance

FRAs – some more than others – operate on the basis of democratic scrutiny and accountability; functionally, Ambulance Trusts do not. They are not locally based, provide no public forum for decision making, and cannot be held to account by the people and communities they serve (other than, theoretically, through the Courts). While FRSs are required to meet their locally-grown IRMPs, Ambulance Trusts are expected to meet centrally-imposed targets and thus (in theory) progress to 'Foundation Status' – a concept most people do not understand. Set up to replace the old Ambulance Authorities, they are the product of a top-down ethos that is the antithesis to all that is implied by 'localism'.

Our recommended Community Protection Authority (CPA) model would enable existing FRAs to become accountable for the governance of the integrated Community Risk Reduction and Response Service. Locally this may be found to necessitate the transformation of a County FRA into a separate, precepting one; this would be a matter of choice, not compulsion.

Similarly, and by local negotiation, a CPA could expand its remit to take on other aspects of Risk Reduction and other local services, for example Building Control (which District and Borough Councils in particular struggle to deliver), Environmental Health and Trading Standards. It may be found advantageous for them to take over Traffic Control from their local Police Authority. Again, legislation in this area would be required to enable, not to compel.

A CPA would thus encompass response, prevention, protection (including legislative enforcement) and co-ordination of activities from a range of services. It would have full oversight of local civil contingency arrangements and have a single, unified, democratic governance structure. It would be able, through place-based budgeting, to harness effort and expertise from across its local community, including the voluntary sector.

There would, of course, be set-up costs in creating a CPA and a potential increase in running costs as compared with an FRA, for example with regard to its elected members' allowances and expenses. These, we believe, would be more than offset by the savings achieved by the abolition of expensive and democratically inefficient ambulance trusts.

Required government legislation to enable implementation of the CPA model would include: creation of enabling legislation for services to come together under a CPA; developing appropriate funding mechanisms, eg through place-based budgeting; granting CPAs legal responsibility and general powers of competence for services under their control; liaising with the Home Office on inclusion of specified Police Services; and adaptation of the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) to adopt a role similar to that of Federal Emergency Management Agency in the USA.

FIRE FUTURES: THE FUTURE

We are grateful to the Minister for this unprecedented opportunity for the Sector to play a real and direct part in the

shaping of policy and, despite the compressed time-frame and its associated logistical problems, we believe that we have made the most of it. We are convinced that this should be the beginning, not the end, of whole-sector involvement in policy, and that the Fire Futures programme must continue into the future and take its place alongside other senior partners to help deliver, in partnership, an effective, efficient, flexible, transparent, resilient, and fully accountable service across the whole spectrum of prevention, protection, and response.

David Milsted
FRS Role Workstream Chair
November 2010

Fire Futures: Efficiency, Effectiveness and Productivity Report

1. CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND PROPOSALS

The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) in England faces a significant challenge over the next few years. Overall an average of an 11% reduction (DCLG figures) in spend needs to be found, although some individual authorities will need to find significantly more than this. At the same time there are some underpinning issues that create major obstacles:

- 1 The FRS in England consists of 46 independent fire authorities and there are no established cross sector bodies with a mandate and sufficient capacity able to take on the general functions or activities better delivered collectively.
- 2 Fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) vary significantly in size and capacity to deliver savings and are affected very differently by funding reductions. This is due both to the different proportions of council tax and grant contributing to individual budgets and that the grant distribution system has no regard to capacity to make savings in how it makes funding available. This is further exacerbated by historical funding and savings patterns which have resulted in an uneven funding base across the Service.
- 3 Change in the FRS can be difficult to achieve for a number of reasons – lack of local political will, difficult industrial relations and a reluctance to erode operational independence.
- 4 At the same time changing demographics, the impact of recession and climate change will all increase the pressures on services to communities over time.

Looking at the range of submissions and options generated during the Fire Futures work on efficiency and productivity, it is clear that proposals to address the challenge in themselves are neither radically new nor innovative – unless a national consensus supports an agenda for significant overall change in the structure or delivery model as considered elsewhere in Fire Futures. This is not surprising in that all authorities have had efficiency programmes in place over recent years, external scrutiny bodies have had a strong focus on challenging and supporting improvement in this area and on learning from wider local service models. However it can be argued that only a relatively small number of authorities have made difficult decisions to change models of delivery to achieve significant savings.

The wider delivery of these and other savings needing significant change quickly and effectively is the real challenge for FRAs individually and the sector collectively. This workstream has identified that savings in the order of magnitude needed in the coming Spending Review period will not be achieved through the usual approach of year on year budget trimming in the costs of existing services and

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

supporting structures. Indeed this work has identified general consensus that the worst approach the FRS in England could take to the challenge would be to continue to “salami slice” individually.

The “big ticket” items are of course wholetime staff costs and the management and democratic overhead of having 46 different services. It is important to note that several more factors have a bearing here in terms of government’s aspirations for public services:

- 1 Government has been clear that individual authorities are sovereign and that achieving the savings and looking at areas such as the number of authorities and the degree to which joint working is undertaken is a local matter. Indeed savings are to be achieved while at the same time enhancing the role and involvement of communities and citizens in decision making and being more responsive to the needs and desires of individual communities.
- 2 Employers are equally clear that individual authorities’ sovereignty is paramount and that local choices will determine approaches to how savings are achieved.

This at least gives a consistent view of where decision making is to be taken. What seems clear at the moment however is that this is leading generally to the “salami slicing” approach being taken. Some authorities are having to look at almost nuclear options to achieve savings, likely to have a disproportionate impact on prevention and protection, whilst those not affected to anything like the same degree are looking at much more modest change. What is arguably lacking is the collective motivation or will to look at making some of the changes that would drive out the existing inefficiency and duplication that exists across the Service, to the collective benefit of all. Principally this is looking at much more meaningful collaboration locally, the possibility of fewer authorities and an over-arching approach to delivering work that would be much better done collectively (but are not necessarily national functions).

So the catalyst for change the Service might expect the Spending Review to be is actually diluted by the very uneven impact of funding reductions and the issues already covered. What might change this and produce a more consistent and progressive approach to meeting the Spending Review challenges?

- 1 Removing barriers to change and giving authorities greater freedom to act will certainly help deliver local change.
- 2 But this needs to be combined with incentivising more consistent change and change on a larger scale, addressing issues cooperatively with partners or collectively at a national level. The Service has previously responded well to this approach. Given the scale of the challenge, incentivisation should be targeted at things which will have the biggest impact. Incentivising local initiatives to build one new station to replace two existing stations, however beneficial

locally, is not the right order of magnitude. Schemes which tackle bigger underlying inefficiencies, service-wide should be the focus.

- 3 The Service itself needs to own this agenda and show a new level of cohesiveness.

I am convinced that the Service can make the necessary change to deliver real savings and maintain or even improve the really excellent work it currently does in prevention and protection as well as emergency response. To do this local leadership and the workforce must be open to significant change in how services have been traditionally organised and delivered. The Service’s principal constituent bodies, supported by government, must generate the will and create the necessary structures for the Service to act together where it needs to do so. Those for whom the Spending Review outcome is less challenging must be incentivised to act collectively. If we fail to do this it may result in a minority of Fire and Rescue Authorities being forced into front line service cuts of a scale which could threaten the safety of communities. The sector and government has a joint responsibility to ensure that this does not happen.

Early priorities

- Government should ensure FRAs have the necessary powers to deliver efficiencies through the adoption of new local models including through joint delivery of services with other local providers;
- A sector owned joint procurement process should be developed;
- The FRS should fully engage with the LG Group Productivity Programme to drive down costs as well as supporting harmonisation in approach with other local public services;
- The Service should develop a VFM benchmarking and peer review model drawing on existing examples in other local government services;
- An invest to save fund for the FRS should be considered.

Balance of resources

- The latent resource capacity of the FRS should be maximised and used to extend the productivity of the Service – either through local models or enabling national change.

Alternative models

- If a local choice model is pursued this should be combined with a harmonised approach on some issues at an appropriate spatial level to deliver savings and maintain/enhance inter-operability.

Asset management

- Each FRA should ensure its Asset Management Strategy is clearly defined in the strategic responsibility

of the authority and in principal management – drawing appropriately on private sector expertise;

- A further sector-led study should be undertaken to assess how well the FRS meets the principals suggested by Sir Michael Lyons in 2004 and in Audit Commission reports and the potential benefit of encouraging a cross border and more collaborative view of property and other assets;
- That the FRS should ensure all fixed assets are included in wider strategic cross service reviews to encourage greater rationalisation and reduction in duplication of assets between partners at a local level;
- The FRS should actively use the OGC Benchmarking Tool and establish some norms on building performance.

Charging and trading

- Options to extend charging more broadly should be considered as well as evaluating the merits of applying charging in areas such as response to road traffic collisions;
- The potential of revenue raising through a levy on home and/or motor insurance policies should also be explored more fully;
- The opportunities for FRAs to extend trading activities should be explored more fully with the wider sector.

Workforce, skills and training

- A collective funding mechanism for the work of the Skills for Justice programme should be retained;
- A sector-led national training review should be undertaken encompassing both efficient provision and options to ensure effective inter-operability.

Volunteering

- Options for expanding the role of volunteers within the FRS should be pursued, and a model for changing emergency cover to a local community based voluntary run station accounted for within the IRMP should be developed.

Pay and conditions

- Change in the current NJC mechanism would most appropriately be driven by change in the way FRAs function.

2. KEY QUESTIONS POSED TO THE WORKSTREAM BY THE FIRE FUTURES REVIEW

We are in a tight fiscal environment where the Fire and Rescue Service is likely to be expected to do more or at least the same with less. Are there changes in how fire and rescue services are provided which would enable improvements in cost effectiveness while improving or at worst having a neutral impact on effectiveness? And are there opportunities to improve productivity?

Q1: Is the balance of where the FRS spends its resources correct?

Q2: What alternative options for providing FRS could be considered?

Q3: The local government funding system (including that for the FRS) is to be reviewed in 2011 – however are there additional funding mechanisms which could contribute to FRS resourcing?

Q4: How could FRAs make better use of their assets?

Q5: Are the current arrangements for pay and conditions delivering value for money?

The Fire and Rescue Service faces significant challenges – it must find new models of delivery locally that give effect to the Government's ambitions for a greater role for citizens, enable the Service to absorb the funding reductions announced in the recent Spending Review and contribute to the overall public spending reductions required. Change in the FRS can be challenging to deliver – communities and staff can find this difficult. The FRS will need to be able to continue to respond to local service pressures from an ageing population as well as the need to maintain effective regional support for neighbouring FRAs and national capacity to respond to large scale incidents and risks from climate change, terrorism and other sources. Other sections of the Fire Futures review have addressed the potential for significant change in the structure or delivery model which could deliver step change in addressing the Government's reform agenda and the cost of delivery of fire and rescue services. This workstream has therefore focused on how to deliver improved value for money (VFM) and productivity broadly within the context of the current national structure as savings are needed in fairly short timescales.

Annual spending on the FRS in England amounts to around £2.3 billion and services are delivered through 46 FRAs. The main sources of funding are government grant and council tax, although the relative proportions vary quite significantly both geographically and between different categories of authority. Within England there a range of governance structures (Counties/unitaries; Combined Fire & Rescue Authorities (CFAs); Metropolitan Fire & Rescue Authorities (Mets); London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (as part of the GLA group)), each with their own distinct funding arrangements. The Service also generates some limited income from charges, and to a minor extent trading activities. Taking all this into account means that the Spending Review will affect different authorities in different ways.

The largest area of spend for FRAs is staff costs. Whilst this is common to all FRAs, there are big variations in the efficiency of staffing structures and this significant current variation in response planning to address similar risks suggests some authorities could deliver early savings from adopting or adapting the leaner models in use by others.

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

This is not a new conclusion, but the challenge for local leaders and for the sector collectively is to deliver the efficiencies available in this area consistently at their own initiative.

The other big area of spend is in functions in place to support front line service delivery. These include functions such as development of operational policy, health and safety teams, senior managers on flexi duty systems, risk teams, HR, finance, IT, democratic services and training. Due to the current structure of the Service in England it is generally accepted that resources are not used as efficiently as they might be and there is significant duplication of effort. Collaboration between Services is fairly limited and since the de-nationalisation of the Fire Service in 1947 there has only been one voluntary combination, Devon and Somerset. This lack of change has resulted in many functions that might be done better collectively, continuing to be undertaken within each FRA.

Full combination is not the only answer to a better use of FRS resources. Full scale, structured collaboration can drive out much of the duplication that exists currently, whilst maintaining local identity and democratic control. This is an approach which has been adopted successfully elsewhere in local government and is gaining in popularity. There are a range of activities that should be examined by individual FRAs with neighbouring authorities in considering scope for local savings:

- Streamlining management teams – this would include CFO/CE and principal managers;
- Training, this would include all aspects of operational training, trainers and training managers;
- Health and Safety services;
- Fleet services including workshops;
- Operational officer rotas;
- Operational planning/risk teams;
- Media/Communications;
- Special appliances, eg Command Units, Water Carriers and Operational Support vehicles;
- Logistical support and resource management;
- Control room (dependent on future of Regional Control Project);
- Fire Investigation;
- Arson Task Force and dog handlers;
- Fire Safety enforcement;
- Community Safety teams;
- Hydrant inspection.

The above list consists of generally FRS-specific functions. Other support functions such as finance, HR and IT could also be shared or sourced externally. Some Services already do this, particularly those part of County Councils. The list above is not exhaustive, and the sector should consider collectively the scope for larger scale savings through joint action at a spatial level above the local. This is discussed further under “Alternative Models” below.

There is both a broad consensus and clear evidence that collective delivery of services and support functions will deliver savings. Many FRAs have been planning or actively

exploring options for closer integration within the FRS sector, across the wider emergency services sector, and with other parts of both the public and private sector anticipating the need for savings to be delivered. Government must encourage and enable FRAs to take forward these opportunities for cost saving through integration or merger or enabling the FRS to take on new roles as a commissioned body. Key to this is removing legislative or other barriers and broadening the powers of competence available to FRAs as proposed elsewhere in Fire Futures. Government should review these with the sector to ensure all potential barriers or obstacles to local solutions are removed.

3. EARLY ACTION FOR THE FRS SECTOR

There are many examples of good practice across FRAs in England and the Service should continue to share these and actively promote their uptake. Part of developing this further must be greater accuracy and commonality in costing. This allows better comparison with private sector options (something the Service as a whole has been cautious in exploring.) This should be a first step in the Service developing a robust model for benchmarking of costs and outcomes which can be used within a peer review process, built upon the peer methodology already used in the area of operational performance. This peer review model should also offer challenge in the area of adoption of the leaner staffing models which are already tested within the Service. Effective VFM peer review models are already in use in other local government service areas and the FRS should borrow from the best of these rather than re-inventing the wheel. The LG Group Productivity Programme provides a ready made means to take this forward.

4. LG GROUP PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME

The LG Group Productivity Programme is addressing many of the areas covered in this section of Fire Futures and the FRS should fully engage with the Programme. The programme has nine workstreams and with the exception of the two on adult social care and children’s services, all have resonance for FRAs. Key workstreams are:

- Procurement, capital and shared assets;
- Shared services across areas, tiers and partnerships;
- Data and transparency;
- Shaping markets and new models for service delivery;
- Democratic leadership;
- Workforce and skills;
- Tackling central government barriers and burdens.

Learning from other parts of local government and sharing good practice from the FRS as part of this programme will help drive better value for money and drive down costs, as well as supporting harmonisation in approach with other local public services.

5. BALANCE OF RESOURCES

VFM in the funding of the FRS is essentially about making sure existing capacity costs are reduced whilst making more effective use of that capacity. The FRS is almost unique within the public sector in being resourced on risk

rather than demand. Resources are placed largely responding to this identified risk, though centres of population do generally receive greater resourcing in part due to higher demand levels. This in practice establishes a lower limit on FRS resourcing below which it would be unable to respond either to local needs based on agreed IRMP requirements or national resilience requirements. Assuming this risk based resourcing approach continues, effective management of capacity is a primary objective for the FRS in delivering VFM. It has implications for the way that services are funded, managed and delivered and it creates opportunities to increase productivity and extend the Service's role. In isolation, taking forward these opportunities will not alter the risk based resourcing level for the Service, but they could create scope, through more effective use of capacity, to generate financial benefits and savings for the FRS and/or other local services.

Risk resourcing means the Service has a "latent resource" capability (although the size of this resource is not easy to quantify) over and above that required in normal circumstances for response, training and community fire safety work. This latent resource is currently utilised, to different levels locally, in fire prevention and protection and other partnership activities. There is scope for this latent resource to be maximised and used, improving efficiency and productivity, in a number of different ways. For example:

- Expanded emergency response capability into new areas eg meeting the rising demand on the ambulance service through provision of appropriately trained staff as outlined in the EMS model suggested elsewhere in Fire Futures;
- In helping address wider community issues and building social capital in line with the aspirations of the Big Society;
- Accepting commissions from other public service providers to deliver services eg taking on wider community safety roles on behalf of the police;
- Expanded trading in fire prevention/protection activities to provide additional income.

The latent resource capability could potentially be expanded to facilitate new roles by better evaluation of current activities and alternative approaches to provision of prevention/protection services including fire safety enforcement eg commissioning, pooling of resource and provision of services across FRA boundaries and scope for Big Society community/volunteer action.

6. ALTERNATIVE MODELS

The effectiveness of the FRS cannot be measured solely in financial terms. Any evaluation of the future direction of the Service, or the opportunities for alternative approaches, must take into account the socio-economic costs and benefits. However, the national delivery model is not optimal from an efficiency perspective but it has clear and strong advantages in terms of localism and accountability to communities. Economies of scale and improved

efficiency and effectiveness can be delivered by better integration and collaboration, harmonisation of practices across FRAs and delivery of services across FRA boundaries.

However centrally driven change to the delivery model would not fit well with a localism approach and the evidence from the last few years of imposed national or regional solutions is that they may not deliver best outcomes in VFM terms and in improving efficiency and effectiveness of FRAs. This suggests a more appropriate approach in the short to medium term may be local collaborative models developed by FRAs, and potentially other delivery partners, driven by local will and priorities between authorities best suited through culture, organisation and geography to do so.

Government would need to facilitate this by removing or reducing any legislative or other barriers. Change growing from the local level could potentially be reflected nationally in the longer term. However this approach would need to be combined with a harmonised approach by authorities on some issues at an appropriate spatial level to deliver savings and maintain/enhance interoperability.

Areas for ensuring continued/increased harmonisation at appropriate spatial levels include:

- Vehicles – acquisition, disposal, maintenance;
- Equipment – acquisition, disposal, maintenance;
- Fuel – procurement and storage, resilience;
- Buildings – acquisition, disposal, maintenance;
- Electricity and gas – spot pricing, hedging;
- PPE – interoperable – full maintenance package;
- BA – the best with communications and telemetry – full maintenance;
- Work-wear – massive buying power;
- Payroll – just one system;
- HR – same policies and procedures;
- Training – facilities and packages designed with interoperability in mind;
- IT of all kinds – resilient with fall back arrangements;
- Communications – resilient with fall back arrangements;
- Mobilising – dependent on future of RCC project though; an opportunity to make large savings?
- Consumables – single supplier;
- Occupational health – single supplier.

Limited evidence is currently available on alternatives to direct delivery of FRS local services but these should be explored further as they may well provide further opportunities for financial efficiencies through creating a greater diversity of supply. These include:

- Commissioning services direct from the private sector
- Arms length joint FRS/private sector companies
- Opportunities for the FRS to operate more closely with the Fire industry, particularly in the areas of inspection and assessment, and the joint use of data and analysis
- Mutual based arrangements.

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

Procurement

Centralised procurement is one of the functions that arguably should remain at the national level to help make local resources go further. However, the agency “Firebuy” has recently been abolished as part of the Government’s policy of reducing NDPBs and hence a new approach will be necessary for this function.

Theoretically, centralised procurement should be able to acquire goods at a lower cost than individual FRAs. However, with Firebuy this was not always perceived to be the case. FRAs may have contributed to this by demanding too wide a variety of specifications for products they were requesting, which reduced the scope for economies of scale in bulk purchasing. Government has made it clear that procurement is a matter for the sector to take forward and FRAs will need to act together effectively to agree common specifications and new joint procurement mechanisms. A catalyst for this could well be collective development of operational procedures which would encourage harmonisation. Areas listed earlier highlight some of the opportunities both for savings through collective purchasing and, in many cases, areas where standardisation will enhance inter-operability.

Research and development capacity is not collectively harnessed in the sector and there is a strong case that this would be better delivered on a collective basis which would in turn promote a more coherent dialogue with suppliers.

7. FUNDING STRUCTURES

The FRS is a front line emergency service, which serves all parts of the public, private, and personal sectors. This suggests perhaps that the current funding structure based on government grants funded by national taxation, business rates, and council tax, with a small amount of recharges and income generation is broadly right as a concept. The issue therefore is whether changes in the relative balance between the individual elements would more accurately reflect the incidence of costs and benefits.

8. AGGREGATE FINANCIAL PROVISION

The present aggregate national provision for FRS spending has been arrived at incrementally, and not through a bottom up assessment of the cost of resourcing local patterns of risk. For many years, the Service has argued that total provision has not kept pace with the expansion in the role of Service, or the addition of new expectations in areas such as RTCs, water rescue, and cliff rescue. This has been compounded by authorities receiving unequal settlements, based on a limited and outdated funding formula, which fails to reflect key resource drivers for some FRAs such as geographical sparsity. The recent debate about flood response is a good example of where there is lack of clarity about the Service’s statutory requirements and their resourcing. The picture is complicated by national initiatives such as New Dimensions, which are well intentioned in terms of recognising new needs, but even the funding for that initiative lacks permanence in a number of important areas.

In reviewing aggregate funding provision, a reliable base position is essential. A national risk assessment, looking at risks facing the nation, but not providing a national standard for emergency cover, might provide the basis for this, from which authorities could then build local services through local choice. Differential precepting could make local choice even more tailored and would also facilitate combination of authorities where previously council tax differentials have provided an insurmountable obstacle. At present, the Service lacks a robust mechanism for modelling the financial requirements of each FRA’s risk-based resourcing. The more localised approach which came with the introduction of IRMP has in some ways made it more difficult to generate a nationally applicable model.

Protection of capital funding streams is a central theme of the Service’s development plans:

- Investment in new stations is often the catalyst to achieve efficiency savings, either in running costs or from two-into-one initiatives, this could be looked at cross service and from a locality perspective, rather than just within the FRS;
- Similarly, new types of vehicles, in particular combined aerial/pumping appliances, can enable the Service to operate with a smaller workforce;
- Delayed replacement of buildings and equipment may save investment in the short term, but can be very quickly offset by increases in repair and maintenance, or lower reliability;
- Jointly used community safety facilities, or combined emergency service sites, are likely to require new investment.

If capital grant availability is restricted, there would be merit in a national Invest to Save Fund dedicated for the FRS, under which initial funding could be made available from the centre on the basis that part of the future revenue savings would be redirected back to the Treasury. This could also be linked to delivering change in specific areas and may well be better targeted at schemes which deliver wider involvement and therefore have the potential to deliver wider benefits and bigger savings.

Specific grant funding is under pressure within the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010. In a situation where all sources of funding will be restricted, there are advantages to the service in securing as much as possible through non-hypothecated funding streams, which allows maximum local flexibility.

The introduction of area based funding would of course have a major impact in changing the nature of local services and might drive service provision away from a risk resourcing basis. However, it would also provide a significant driver for change at a local level towards more integrated service provision and it is recommended that the implications of such an alternative funding approach are fully explored for fully or part funding local Fire and Rescue Services in the longer term.

In the longer term there may be benefit for the FRS in maintaining access to specific grant funding in circumstances where a national initiative needs to be rolled out across the Service. The most recent example is Home Fire Safety grants, which met a need at a particular time, and which moved the whole service forward significantly over a relatively short period, helping improve public safety and change culture within the service.

9. SHARING OUT THE NATIONAL FUNDING POOL

There are wide variations in costs per 1000 of the population and also in the workload of the FRS in terms of calls and fire safety workloads. This is partly driven by the way in which the service is resourced; in tightly condensed areas, a predominantly whole time service is often the most cost effective approach, whereas in less densely populated areas, part time working is often the norm, and this generates totally different cost structures not currently reflected in the funding formula. The very localised risk patterns across the 46 FRA areas make it very difficult to arrive at a grant formula what can be applied fairly and consistently.

Risks are not the same as workload, and to use workload factors in the formula was dismissed some years ago as a perverse incentive. But in the short term, workload arising is a reasonably good indicator of the scale of the risk; in other words the propensity for the risk to turn into an incident or call.

The present formula seeks to identify factors which explain the levels and variations in spending between different areas. Intuitively one would expect these factors to be the same as the ones used by the service in preparing its risks assessments for IRMP and resourcing. However the funding formula is only as good as the data which supports it, and lack of reliable or consistent data is a limitation on developing the formula as a mirror image of the risk assessment process. There may be scope to develop the FSEC model in this direction, using national indicators and values established independently to measure potential risk, likelihood of impact, cost/benefit implications of different risk patterns, and variations in unit costs which arise due to different structures and local characteristics.

Any model to be used as a substitute for the current funding formula has to be capable of identifying a figure representing the minimum resource threshold, because this establishes the baseline costs before any action is taken to utilise capacity in a way that generates income.

Change in the FRS will be driven by the financial challenges all authorities face supported by strong political leadership; the challenges will not however be the same for all and changing behaviour in the Service has often been achieved through incentivising change rather than mandating it. An invest to save scheme linked to delivering significant change in specific areas using properly costed options should promote further change and help deliver longer term savings.

10. CHARGING AND TRADING

Charging and trading, whilst providing some income, are never likely to go anywhere near meeting the current financial challenges FRAs are facing. Greater freedom to trade, and thus to generate income to support FRS activity is supported, though parts of the sector have expressed concerns about possible conflicts of interest and the possibility of an unfair competitive advantage existing. Wider trading by FRSs would need to be carefully managed to address these concerns. Options to extend charging more broadly should be considered as well as evaluating the merits of applying charging in areas such as response to road traffic collisions in line with the existing health service charging regime in this area. The potential of revenue raising through a levy on home and motor insurance policies, where a precedent model already exists in London, should also be explored more fully – although there would clearly be significant sensitivities in pursuing such an option as insurers have already indicated they would be against this. Similarly some further explicit linkage to FRS funding through business rates could be explored.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT

Public services are evolving in the context of rising public expectation, increasing focus on improving efficiency and value for money, and the continuous emergence of new technologies. For the FRS, with an asset base estimated to be worth around £5 billion underpinning services, how we use these assets needs to develop to reflect and support their evolution. The Government's strategy for increasing efficiency in the public sector gives further impetus to these developments.

FRAs have a range of opportunities to use their current asset base more effectively. Fire stations provide in many instances a valuable community asset that could be used more widely, this already happens in many instances but there is scope for considerable extension and linkages to taking forward the localism agenda. Properly developed asset management strategies are needed to support this; integrating and rationalising assets across FRA boundaries and with other local public service providers.

The range and number of fire appliances is considerable across England and there is significant scope for more sharing of specialist vehicles and to utilise smaller, bespoke vehicles to address specific risks and to harness new technology. The Fire Futures review would propose a number of actions in this area for FRAs and the sector collectively:

- Each FRA should ensure an Asset Management Strategy is clearly defined in the strategic responsibility of the authority and in principal management – drawing appropriately on private sector expertise;
- For a further sector-led study to assess how well the FRS meets the principals suggested by Sir Michael Lyons in 2004 and in Audit Commission reports, and the potential benefit of encouraging a cross border, more collaborative view of property and other assets;

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

- That the FRS should ensure all fixed assets are included in wider strategic cross-service reviews to encourage greater rationalisation and reduction in duplication of assets with partners at a local level;
- The FRS should actively use the OGC Benchmarking Tool and establish some norms on building performance.

12. WORKFORCE, SKILLS AND TRAINING

The approach the Service takes to delivering a competent workforce is an increasingly important area. The engagement of Skills for Justice as the Sector Skills Council has been successful and continued collective funding of this is vital to the sector as a whole. The maintenance of occupational standards and the development of a qualification framework, specifically focusing on risk critical activities is vitally important. From an efficiency perspective the relationship with Skills for Justice has enabled the service to tap into additional funding and other development programmes. However, training capacity and resource is inefficiently deployed nationally and would benefit from better coordination and a national review could provide an appropriate driver for change. Large capital investment facilities such as real fire training units and other specialist training could be provided by the private sector. There is general consensus that how FRAs train locally, with neighbours and at the Fire Service College is not the optimal model from an efficiency perspective.

13. RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM

The retained duty system (RDS) already provides the FRS with a resource that is drawn directly from the communities it serves, exemplifying Big Society objectives, and which can provide a highly cost effective means of service delivery. The RDS model has significant potential, currently largely unused, for expansion including within an urban environment and in providing, for example, night time cover. To secure and expand the willingness of employers to allow their staff to participate, the Service must build stronger links with the business community both locally and collectively on a national basis.

Where RDS stations work well they provide a very cost effective operational option; however, there are issues which need to be addressed in the Service's reliance on RDS in some localities. Firstly staffing costs are rising due to changes nationally and also local moves to part time contracts. In some areas recruitment and retention is very volatile and maintenance of competence is an ongoing issue. Managerial overheads to support and sustain retained/part time staff have risen over recent years to address some of the issues listed above so overall the utility and economy that retained/part-time staffed stations provide is not as compelling as it once was for a number of FRAs.

14. VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is already used in a number of FRAs to support and enhance the delivery of services. The Fire and

Rescue Service as a whole is ideally placed to build on this, through its presence in fire stations in many communities, its highly regarded brand and its ability to broaden out what it does, depending on local choice. Volunteering has significant scope to improve the core Fire and Rescue Service offer, through functions such as after the fire support, translation, penetration of harder to influence groups and delivering community safety initiatives. Whilst there is a need to make a modest investment in developing and delivering volunteer schemes, the potential benefits are big and linking what FRAs do with the Big Society agenda on a more structured basis could help broaden and embed volunteering in the Service. Another aspect of this is the use of volunteers to undertake fire and rescue response work. There are many overseas examples of this and some UK experience too. Big Society may provide an opportunity to develop this further, however, there are significant risks attached to this which would need to be effectively managed.

- Volunteering in the FRS should be developed, further building on existing good practice;
- In the area of FRS response services, a model for changing emergency cover to a local community based voluntary run station accounted for within the IRMP should be developed.

15. PAY AND CONDITIONS

Since the paybill is the biggest single cost for all FRAs, this workstream has considered whether existing arrangements for determining pay and conditions are cost effective and flexible enough for the future challenges facing the Service. It was important to consider this in the context of three closely related issues: the process for negotiating and agreeing terms and conditions, the right balance between local and national determination, and the industrial relations climate in the FRS. The current model has a number of significant strengths but the alternative would be greater local negotiation with some or no central support.

The consensus view from contributors to the Fire Futures review has been that change in the current mechanism would most appropriately be driven by change in the way FRAs function – i.e. if localism drives local change in the function of FRAs then this might argue for greater local determination of pay and conditions. The impact the constitutional changes have had raised the issue of separating out an English NJC, though the case for this change was not widely supported. Options therefore are that any change should reflect change in the way FRAs function and are:

- Retention of the current system broadly as it stands;
- Greater local flexibility within a continuing national framework;
- A system based on locally negotiated terms and conditions;
- Establishment of an England-only NJC.

ANNEX**List of contributing policy papers coordinated and written by the listed author with wider sector contributions**

Ellison-Bunce, S., London Fire Brigade. Balance of resources [EEP-SEB]

Hobbs, R., Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, Pay and conditions [EEP-RH]

Pearson, R., Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, Delivery models [EEP-RP]

Thomas, M., Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service, Use of assets [EEP-MT]

Wilkinson, W., South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Future funding of the FRS [EEP-VWW]

Fire Futures: Localism and Accountability Report**1. FIRE FUTURES – LOCALISM AND ACCOUNTABILITY CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION**

The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) has changed significantly over the last decade, embracing with great enthusiasm and considerable success new roles in prevention and partnership working, which has seen it at the heart of many communities working with vulnerable people. As with all local public services the FRS has significant further challenges to meet, and maintaining the status quo is not an option. The Service must deliver more with less resource and most importantly it must meet the evolving risks to communities and the changing needs of citizens. This cannot be done without bringing decision making and accountability much closer to citizens and communities.

The sector must demonstrate that it can collectively deliver these objectives better without central government direction and that it has the confidence to reshape political institutions and engagement processes whenever or wherever necessary in order to do so. The sector will need to develop new and effective collaborative mechanisms to achieve this and in return government must dismantle the components of a centrally controlled performance management system for the Service and remove legislative or other obstacles to local innovation and delivery. This is not to suggest, however, that the active engagement and support of ministers and government is not both welcome and necessary to enable this to be achieved and to ensure the continued effectiveness and capabilities of the Service at a local and national level. Contributors to this workstream have also stressed the importance of a direct channel of communication to ministers via an independent professional route as currently provided by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser. The independence and stability of the role in a professional capacity is essential in maintaining the equilibrium of advice on a professional basis between the Fire and Rescue Service and government. This role needs to exist independently of the professional associations and there would be merit in it being filled by a currently serving Chief Fire Officer on secondment.

This workstream report offers three broad options for the sector and government to support the delivery of the localism and accountability agenda in the Fire and Rescue Service. It also describes various local delivery mechanisms to support the reform agenda which have been proposed by contributors to the Fire Futures work on this topic; and offers a potential model for assurance and data transparency.

In undertaking this work, the Fire Futures review has had regard to the essential inter-relationship between the various components of the reform agenda. Papers developed during the course of this work have sought to express this inter-relationship and its objectives as follows:

- The key practical issue in taking forward the localism and decentralisation agenda is in identifying measures

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

to move decision-making processes to the lowest level possible and enable citizens to have an appropriate influence in the way Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) determine and deliver public services to communities;

- FRS work on the Big Society agenda should help in developing and capitalising on the will and capacity of citizens to take on the roles in shaping public services envisaged through localism and decentralisation;
- Transparency should help provide the understanding and information that citizens need to take on these roles effectively whilst accountability should provide the platform for public engagement with the services provided by their local FRS; and
- Both the assurance and transparency agenda should help equip citizens with the tools and information to hold local services to account in terms of delivery of outcomes and value for money. Within a Fire and Rescue context, the assurance function also needs to be able to provide, to the public and ministers, confidence about the Service's ongoing capability to respond to emergencies beyond the local level, to deliver national resilience and interoperability across FRAs and with other public services.

2. LOCALISM, DECENTRALISATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

To decentralise, government power should be given to the lowest level possible. This can be achieved by eliminating central targets and heavy-touch central control mechanisms whilst giving power over local budgets to people and communities instead. Central government can support this through cutting back on reporting requirements and inspection and eliminating direct intervention in all but the most exceptional circumstances.

Creating the Big Society is about re-prioritising government so that individuals and groups are in the driving seat in their communities, with government playing an enabling role. The state is smaller but still has a role to play in strengthening the ability of people to look after themselves and others. Big Society is about everyone playing their part rather than always turning to the state for solutions to problems.

Avoiding a mismatch between improved opportunities for citizens and their ability to use them is crucial. Mechanisms which empower localism must ensure fair and even access to new rights and opportunities for all individuals and communities.

There are a number of ways local democratic accountability can be improved such as strengthening the electoral process, enhancing citizen participation in governance arrangements or spending decisions, polling local people directly including through better use of IT, or local public service providers putting in place more transparent and informative information systems. Other work within the Fire Futures review has focussed on major changes to the Fire and Rescue Service structure or delivery model, and

some of these models would potentially significantly drive forward these objectives if implemented. The following proposals under this heading have therefore focussed on how these issues can be addressed broadly within the existing national structure – with the exception of Option 3 which raises the potential of a longer term option for provision of FRS services within a wider reformed local delivery model.

In developing options, contributors needed to consider these areas in terms of the potential role citizens could play at different spatial levels, eg FRA decision making, at perhaps a borough command or other area based level, and at a local station level. It was also helpful to consider options in terms of the possible scope of their application, eg:

- **Universal** – the same systems or structures are put in place in all areas, with limited variation – to be applied where, for example, equity considerations demand similar levels of service between localities;
- **Permissive** – local areas have the ability to develop their own approach within a set of centrally set parameters that apply everywhere – to be applied where, for example, change is needed everywhere but success depends on tailoring services to local circumstances;
- **Bespoke** – areas agree a specific approach for their locality with the centre or public service provider, often in response to an initiative from the area itself – to be applied, for example, where areas want to tackle an issue specific to them but need local or central government to unblock specific barriers for them;
- **Rights** – all communities or individuals are given rights to exercise as and when they wish – to be applied where, for example, there is most to gain from harnessing the energy and ideas of local communities and individuals.

Contributors to the Fire Futures review have helped identify a broad consensus on some of the key principles which should be adopted in taking forward this agenda and two overall options (1 and 2 below) in how government and the sector could support the FRS in doing so.

Option 1: Locally driven change

Individual FRAs can assess the needs and will of local citizens for additional, new and different levels of engagement, designing their own local processes to meet these needs and with effective practice spreading “organically” across the sector. The risks with such a completely unstructured approach is that it would be likely to lead to very little universality and variable pace of change – little or no change potentially in some localities, different local processes and levels of citizen involvement in services and decision making. This could be addressed to some extent by (i) incorporating clear citizen rights and expectations which FRAs would be expected to meet in a new FRS National Framework (if this document is retained) and/or (ii) active promotion by the sector and government of the most effective models developed locally.

Option 2: Supported locally driven change

To ensure faster and more consistent transfer of decision-making processes to a level closer to communities, and to provide a greater degree of citizen involvement, local measures could be reinforced through appropriate national or co-ordinated changes. These could be directed at the FRS governance structure, community engagement processes, and/or the way in which IRMP and resourcing decisions are made. They could be effected either through legislative change, concerted development action to be taken forward by the sector or other means, eg reflecting a revised National Framework approach.

Option 3: New structural parameters

These measures would require a significantly different framework for delivery of local services across the board empowered by government. They could potentially liberate services and might have three elements:

- **Integrated service commissioning** – for a locality this could cover a range of local services, not just FRS, through pooled funding, with services commissioned shaped by local citizens and with a clear commissioning/provider split.
- **Supply pluralism** – both in terms of encouraging active citizen involvement in lower tiered interventions, and a plural supply of professionalised, reactive services, with varying geographical reaches and technical specialisms. For provision of FRS this might perhaps provide for supplier bodies under the ownership of firefighters themselves.
- **Negotiated mechanisms for strategic coordination**, arising from the needs of both local commissioning and national government, so that local control of services can be reconciled with other policy objectives.

3. DELIVERY MEASURES FOR THE FRS

In taking forward this work, contributors have identified a wide range of specific potential measures to enable FRAs to deliver this agenda. These are the types of measures FRAs may wish to consider locally in developing their own models and, within the context of Options 2 and 3, some might be considered for universal change to support the agenda more coherently at a national level. These have focussed particularly on the areas of:

- The way in which decisions on spending/resources are made;
- The planning of services;
- The governance structure; and
- The delivery of services.

Examples included:

Spending/Resources

This area can be split between funding and expenditure.

- Funding could arrive at the body from a number of sources, eg precept, grants or pooled funding. The most important issue here is transparency so that the community is aware of where it comes from and how it can be used. This will enable local accountability and

so public engagement in determining the level of resources needed.

In terms of how funding is spent the same accountability and transparency agenda must equally apply, so:

- Some funding could be pooled into area-based funding streams with other public services. The level of pooled funding could be set by local engagement;
- The service must consult with communities, potentially collectively with other public services, to consider the current nature of provision and determine whether it is still possible/desirable to offer the services they currently provide;
- Some portions of funding could be delegated at a locality or even station level with communities directly involved in decisions on its use.

Planning

- IRMP is just one method of planning but it could be developed to become a core tool used in collective local public service planning, while also addressing national risk. FRAs could use it to engage with local citizens and develop a 'place map' of community risks, aims and priorities. The IRMP could potentially incorporate/recognise specific rights for citizens and include service level agreements with communities;
- Key to engaging local people is to encourage them to think beyond the provision of emergency response and how to reconcile what they want with what they need. Engagement needs to be an iterative process in itself in facilitating public awareness of fire service functions and these need to go beyond passive consultation exercises. But it is recognised that there are some areas where public decision making would be inappropriate, such as risk assessments.

Governance

- An option for combined/metropolitan FRAs might be to develop nationally/adopt locally an alternative structure with a smaller number of authority members overall together with the inclusion of independents to give a clearer voice to local priorities in line with other public service models;
- County FRAs could look at other mechanisms to increase local community and independent involvement in scrutiny and governance structures;
- An alternative for all types for FRAs would be to create a single form of governance within which they can work together in the national interest, whilst also meeting the localism agenda. The different governance arrangements currently in existence do not enable the widest opportunities for collaboration, as has been seen through the operation of Regional Management Boards;
- Such an alternative approach could incorporate better representation for all tiers of local government and the private, third sector and even service management or

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

the representative bodies. This would bring further local accountability as well as specific expertise to the governance arrangements;

- There are alternative mechanisms for appointing members of the governing body that are worthy of consideration. Such systems could include directly elected bodies or commissioners. Consideration should also be given to sharing the structures of this with the Government's plans for elected Police commissioners. Indeed, one might suggest that there should be one local Commissioner covering the entire area of Public Protection within a locality, not only are the responsibilities best co-ordinated together but it would also demonstrate good and responsible use of public funds;
- Citizen panels are a mechanism available to assist all forms of governing body structures.

Delivery

- The potential role of community volunteers in the delivery of prevention, protection and response services must be taken forward;
- It is recommended that a local volunteer station model is developed to respond to community wishes similar to those successfully used elsewhere in the UK;
- Greater collaboration in delivery between services could be achieved by placing a selected number of organisations that all deal with safety related matters within the same governance arrangements. The three blue-light services are an example, but this could be expanded to cover all the preventative or legislative enforcement areas. Other models put forward as options elsewhere within Fire Futures propose placing a selected number of organisations that all deal with safety related matters within the same governance arrangements.

4. TRANSPARENCY AND ASSURANCE

The objective is for information about local institutions and public services to be transparent to people to make them more democratically accountable. By publishing information, taxpayers and users will be able to judge whether productivity is improving and government is delivering on its ambitions for better services for less money.

There are four key types of information on public services where the Coalition Government has indicated it would like to see transparency which supports the objectives of localism:

- Financial data (eg costs and expenditure, salaries, organograms)
- Performance information (eg impact/outcome indicators)
- Service information (eg library opening hours)
- Decision making (eg meeting agenda and minutes, planning and licensing applications).

Assurance processes need to support the provision of information by FRAs to their service users on the quality and value for money of their services. It also needs to provide for appropriate assurance about FRS performance, both locally and nationally in a decentralised environment.

There is a risk that some FRAs retrench into silo-based thinking focussed exclusively on the blue-light operational aspects of service delivery. Appropriate transparency and assurance measures covering the range of FRS functions will help provide external challenge to help authorities avoid this risk and provide communities with the tools and information to hold authorities to account for the services they provide.

The Localism and Accountability workstream of the Fire Futures review, in considering an appropriate new model to provide assurance and transparency, has built upon the existing work undertaken by the LGA and CFOA on a sector-led framework. This model would need to meet the objectives of:

- Helping equip citizens with the tools and information to hold local services to account in terms of delivery of outcomes and value for money; and
- Within a Fire and Rescue context to be able to provide, to the public and ministers, confidence about the Service's ongoing capability to respond to emergencies beyond the local level, to deliver national resilience and interoperability across FRAs and with other public services.

The proposed model builds on existing peer support structures to provide effective assistance and assurance and to maintain the positive performance trajectory of the FRS. This reflects shared principles of what a sector-led improvement framework should look like in recent iterations of the CFOA sector led improvement framework and the LG Group's consultation documents *Setting the Pace*, *Freedom to Lead* and *Sector Self Regulation and Improvement*.

There is already strong agreement for the development of a sector-led framework underpinned by the principles set out above. The framework will have to be robust, with a consistent methodology and an agreed set of performance measures which allow local citizens to compare service costs and outcomes with those of other comparable authorities as well as reporting on key issues of local concern. The framework will promote higher levels of self awareness through peer reviewed self assessments, and recommended best in class diagnostic and improvement tools. Peer review teams can incorporate local community representatives to improve local challenge and accountability.

The challenge for this model of assurance would be for it to successfully develop and apply mechanisms to robustly identify and support those at risk of failure in meeting local community and national expectations. It will also need to provide appropriate assurance on resilience capabilities,

interoperability and value for money in functions where this is best served through collective action at a spatial level above that of an individual FRA. The National Resilience Board may provide a potential model which could be developed further. This may require central government input and/or resourcing and, in view of the national risk critical role of the FRS, for the purposes of assurance of the public and ministers on these functions the Government may alternatively wish to have this function undertaken by an independent body.

In these challenging, resource-constrained times, consideration needs to be given to the frequency and the resource requirements of these processes linked to the initiation mechanisms. There needs to be a balance struck between the needs of all stakeholders.

The sector-led model also proposes that National Performance Measures to deliver transparency in the costs and outcomes of Fire and Rescue Services should be an integral part of a sector-led framework. These should be high level, not reinventing Best Value or National Indicators. They should drive outcomes not merely compliance activity. They should be adaptable to local context and allow for local differences in needs and priorities.

The merits of a government-sponsored alternative assurance model are explored within the decentralisation section of the National Interests Fire Futures report.

5. SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND PROPOSALS

Localism

Three broad options are proposed to enable the localism agenda to be firmly embedded in the work of the FRS.

- **Option 1: Locally driven change** – encouraging a diversity of local approaches but reflecting within a revised FRS National Framework a clear set of citizen rights and expectations and the roles of FRAs, sector and government institutions in meeting these.
- **Option 2: Supported locally driven change** – reinforcing local approaches with a number of changes in national structures drawing on those highlighted above under Delivery measures for the FRS and others.
- **Option 3: New structural parameters** – a possible model for future local service delivery encompassing FRS.

Transparency and Assurance

- The development of a community and sector-led model of assurance and transparency measures for the sector.

Fire Futures – National Interests Workstream: Decentralisation in the fire sector – Empowering and protecting the citizen

FOREWORD

At its first meeting, the National Interests working group which I chaired agreed that, having in mind the Government's localism agenda and anticipating the Localism Bill, our thinking needed to develop around the following broad key questions: *How do we empower citizens for active community participation?*

And, crucially, how do we secure national resilience and civil emergency services capability to defend the interests of the State? How do we ensure that national threats are effectively handled at the local area? How do we ensure that the service is interoperable across the United Kingdom? And how do we continue to provide an effective service at a time of constrained public expenditure?

The group strongly believed that improvement to the work of the sector could only happen if those fire organisations outside the Fire and Rescue sphere were effectively part of this process. For this reason, I invited colleagues to participate with their knowledge and expertise to contribute on matters of built environment, knowledge management, the fire service college and procurement.

Throughout this work, my group has taken great care to ensure that the outcome was not only well informed and thought provoking, but was also widely consulted on. As a result, we produced eight working papers and commissioned a number of think pieces which I have listed at the back of this paper.

To understand what the Big Society could mean to the sector of the future, I contributed with a paper in which I explored a new structure for the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) shaped around the government's vision of localism and decentralisation. To achieve this, I ensured that key contributors added innovative and cutting edge thinking on decentralisation, and identified what this new vision which is currently being explored across public sector services could mean to the fire sector as a whole.

To support this vision, I made sure that serious consideration was given to the important issues of interoperability, national threat and risk management, knowledge management and the future of the nationally based training at the Fire Service College. We have also taken a close look at the built environment in which the fire and rescue service works and effectively determines the nature and the level of risk it faces. That key part of the sector, the industry involved in protecting the built environment from fire, have produced a seminal paper on the built environment.

In essence this overview argues for decentralisation of the responsibilities of the fire and rescue service to the lowest level, empowering local communities and individuals. It argues for separating delivery from commissioning, to provide a more

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

efficient service which directly addresses local needs. It calls for greater choice in the nature of provision, including employee mutuals, and the ability of communities to consider fire amongst the other priorities they have in determining resources. Underpinning this, we need a new and in some ways more professional approach from the service in dealing with the built environment, reducing risk, fires, and property loss.

To support increased localism, there will need to be assurances regarding interoperability, a collective and responsive understanding of national threat and risk, and transparent standards. Until the sector is fully mature enough to take responsibility for these aspects itself, there will be a need for continuing central government involvement in these areas. These issues need to be addressed in the global context of the decentralisation agenda.

The fire and rescue service faces many challenges. It consists of many highly dedicated and professional people working hard to protect the communities they serve. But much more needs to be done to ensure that the service can adapt to a rapidly changing society, and a demanding financial climate. The hard work provided by the workstream leads gives you a road map for the future, and I commend their reports to you.

Finally, at a meeting held on 8th December involving the wider industry to discuss issues arising from Fire Futures, those attending agreed to proceed with a number of commitments at no cost to the Government. At their request, I have added their commitment at Section 9 of this report. Notably, the wider industry has committed to resource and publish guidance on the built environment; to disseminate knowledge through structured learning programmes; to lead an independent research panel with sector organisations voluntarily contributing with expertise; and to provide a Fire Knowledge website with free access to available data.

Brian Robinson
10 December 2010

1. INTRODUCTION

Current Situation

The fire sector, or more precisely 'Fire UK', encompasses a vast array of talent and vocations across the breadth of the public and private sectors. It must be taken to include a variety of participants including the fire safety industry, building control bodies, government departments, design specialists, architects, professional bodies, insurance, BSI standards, testing and research organisations.

This diversity represents a great strength. The fire sector as a whole has made great strides in recent times to prevent fire deaths which have continued to a fall since 1981/82. At a ratio of about 8 deaths in building fires per year per million of population performance can be said to be amongst the best in Europe (where the number lies generally in the range 4 to 20 per million inhabitants)¹.

Fire safety in the UK can point to a relatively good record of improvement over the last twenty years in particular. This has been achieved, in the main, by a progressive and

accumulative process of evolutionary development, partly in response to significant events and partly in tune with developing fire safety concepts.

However, there are signals from a variety of sources that, when taken together, caution against complacency. A good fire safety performance in the past is no guarantee for continuing that performance into the future.

- a) The five years from 2003 to 2007 show more firefighter deaths than for any previous consecutive 5 year period since the 1970's (even excluding four deaths in the Atherstone fire).
- b) The numbers of large loss fires reported by the Fire Protection Association (FPA) are increasing and the Association of British Insurers (ABI) quote insured losses in 2009 of £1.3 billion, increasing at 16% on the previous year on a rising trend. Figures for uninsured losses are variously estimated to be several times the insured loss.
- c) Rising levels of arson continue to cause concern, not only in domestic situations but also affecting public buildings such as schools and care homes.
- d) The ABI reference research by AXA Insurance which suggests that 80% of businesses that suffer a major catastrophe fail within 18 months, 69% of SMEs have no contingency plan to cope with serious incidents that could affect their business, and 41% have no business interruption or loss of earning insurance. The ABI also notes that approximately 50% of national income and employment comes from SMEs.
- e) Regular reports from the fire safety industry provide a disturbing picture of an increasing tendency at large to think that fire safety can be relegated to a lower order of priority, even substantially dispensed with as specifications are modified and pared down in a search for the minimum rather than the optimum.

There is also significant evidence of deterioration of the inbuilt fire protection in buildings, coupled to a lack of effective enforcement arrangements. There is also indication of a fundamental inability to co-operate across the sector and indeed argument has been raised in Fire Futures reports that the current fire and rescue service cannot operate as a joined up service.

Key concerns are:

- There are differences in training, assessment and operational capability.
- Operational doctrine has not been updated, and it has been left with central government to take this forward.
- Interoperability and risk protocols applying to national, local and generic risk have no common understanding.
- The linkages between national threat and FRS risk planning are neither clear nor consistent.
- The existing arrangements do not provide the coherence and authority to co-ordinate national functions effectively.

- There has been a proliferation of training institutes, while the central training school at the Fire Service College, remains underutilised and in need of on-going state subsidy.
- Centrally operated collaborative procurement has all but collapsed.
- The service's approach to the built environment varies from place to place, as do shift systems and response times, apparently unrelated to local conditions.
- There is little evidence that IRMPs are either fully costed or based on the needs of the citizen, but more often reflect the interplay between the interests of the workforce, the service itself, and the authority.
- The service and its leadership bodies have shown little capacity to work together without central government encouragement, support or resources.
- Fire safety provisions in buildings need to be based on a consistent and connected process, but the process as it currently operates is fragmented and disjointed and the guidance is either absent or disconnected from one stage to the next, significantly lacking consistency and profile.

These concerns have been freely expressed over several years.

On top of these difficulties, we have identified areas where increased pressure will emerge over the coming years. These include:

- Economic: lower levels of funding, while not as severe as those facing other services, will require the fire and rescue service and supporting industries to look for innovative ways to deliver the service and to develop financial architecture which will enable the reconnection of finance with purpose.
- Social: changing risk profiles through an ageing population and changing living patterns and reflecting a change from social dependence to social accountability and involvement.
- Structural: public services will need to be more closely shaped around the lives of individuals – decision making and commissioning should be brought much closer to citizens and communities, with political institutions and accountability reshaped to support this.
- Environmental: added stress caused by increased CO2 emissions and the possibility of an increase in long hot summers and wetter spring and autumns.
- Leadership: the sector must become more cohesive and coherent. It has to be more diligent in overcoming internal boundaries in a more collaborative manner, also in looking outwards towards the development of an improved fire safety culture.
- Terrorism, instability and hostile technology are an ever present and growing threat which will require national arrangements for effective technical and process interoperability.

In meeting these challenges the fire and rescue service in particular is expected to meet public expectations on localism, accountability, and transparency through strengthening the means to empower citizens. Fire UK is well placed to deliver on this and has the ability to become fully outward looking whilst providing services that are genuinely citizen shaped.

2. DECENTRALISATION, COMMISSIONING, MUTUALISATION AND THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Moving power closer to the citizen, creating a split between commissioning and delivery and reconnecting finance with purpose. A new model for the Fire and Rescue Service.

The government's localism agenda seeks to take power away from the centre and disperse it to a level as close to the citizen as possible. Centralisation prevents innovation and makes citizens too passive. Independent observers have advised that this is the case with the FRS in which the sector operates in too narrow a silo which is overly focussed on emergency response to the detriment of fire prevention.

Commissioning and Delivery in the Fire and Rescue Service

We propose that the first and the most important step in citizen empowerment, is to break the link between the commissioning of a fire service and its delivery. While the model presented under this option is innovative in terms of the FRS, these arrangements are common in the health service, the prison service and overseas – for example in fire services in Denmark, and ambulance services in Sweden. In the modern world the current arrangements whereby fire and rescue authorities both commission the service, and deliver it, are increasingly untenable and unsustainable. They undermine effective accountability and transparency, frustrate innovation, and over duly focus on those who deliver the service rather than those who receive it.

To achieve full accountability and responsiveness the commissioning agent must be separate from the delivery agent. The service itself must be actively commissioned, and must be fully accountable to the commissioning authority. The commissioning authority must set out key standards it expects to be met, and should seek the best value in achieving them. The service, separate to the commissioning authority, will be responsible for delivering to contract, producing transparent key performance indicators, and seeking and sharing savings wherever possible. The commissioning authority should be free to obtain the service from wherever it likes, although separate arrangements will exist where the establishment of mutuals is proposed.

Effective Governance in Decentralisation

The key to effective governance is bringing the service as close as possible to the eventual user. In the decentralisation paper it is indicated that district level or borough level is appropriate for this type of work. Where desired, districts and boroughs should break away from the

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

existing FRA, and become their own commissioning unit. We would expect that many of the smaller new FRAs would band together with others in the locality, to procure services from a single service provider. Each FRA would maintain its statutory responsibilities both to the local community, and its wider responsibilities to society at large. It will also be essential that appropriate standards are maintained. In this respect, ensuring that an FRA continues to fulfil its own local and national obligations will be a key function of the National Framework.

Required government action to enable implementation of this model include: possible legislation to enable a shift in powers and structures to take place – although the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 offers the ability to transfer functions. It is hoped that the Localism Bill will enable people to take these powers into their own hands.

We believe that the difficulty in bringing services together to act co-operatively arises from the lack of separation between the commissioning and delivery roles, where clear expectations have not been clearly set out. In awarding services the commissioning authority will need to ensure that the delivery agent has adequate training and operational procedures. These will need to be underpinned by requirements under the National Framework.

The Government would need to establish, under the framework mechanism, appropriate standards for fire commissioning, and in particular it will need to ensure the appropriate mechanisms for national resilience are maintained.

Finally, and of considerable importance, the Government will need to maintain an independent assurance mechanism ensuring the effectiveness of the whole system, particularly in relation to interoperability and national resilience, and the ability to intervene in the case of service failure. It would make absolute sense to have this final assurance role placed with the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser. This role would focus on light touch assurance, but would have the capacity to intervene in cases of possible service failure. The role of the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser would be supported in this by a regime of self-assessment and peer review, led by the sector. However, we also feel that there is a role for consumer based involvement in this process similar to HealthWatch, that proposed by the Department of Health for the National Health Service. We would expect both individual citizens and the industry to contribute to this.

Introducing Mutualisation and Social Enterprises into the Fire and Rescue Services

A mutual, mutual organisation, or mutual society is an organisation which is owned by its members and with no outside shareholders who need a cut of the profits. Mutualised public services, in contrast to centralised state funded services save money in many cases because they are able to generate income and raise private finance, including grant and social investment. Mutuals are also by their nature social enterprises.

In August, the Minister for the Cabinet Office, Francis Maude, announced the first wave of Pathfinder mutuals, to be run by public sector staff. These pathfinders will be trailblazers for the rest of the public sector – helping government to establish, by learning from the front line, what type of support and structures will best enable the development of employee-led mutuals on an ongoing basis. We understand that some fire services have already expressed an interest in this agenda.

To further inform this thinking, we have engaged with the Office of Public Management (OPM), the Cabinet Office and Public Services 2020 to discuss emerging policy and practical opportunities related to employee mutuals and joint ventures. Recent studies by the OPM suggest that alternative ownership models offer three potential benefits for public services:

- Improved organisational performance and efficiency
- Employee and user engagement, with its resulting influence on service improvement
- Wider benefits to society resulting from a greater sense of citizen empowerment and responsibility.

For potential commissioning authorities and policy makers, or for provider organisations considering a transition from existing public services to new ownership forms, three models are likely to be most relevant:

- Employee-owned organisations
- Community ownership
- Employee plus.

OPM suggest that the transition to shared ownership has four main stages, which we can think of in terms of the whole system and the local systems. These are:

1. Options appraisal
2. Negotiating the terms of the transition
3. Transition
4. Post-transition.

At each of these stages, there will be issues about supporting change, developing the business model, engaging with staff and dealing with HR issues like pensions, legal forms of ownership and governance structures, and leadership.

We think that mutuals should be encouraged in the fire and rescue service. We consider that this would be of particular interest to the retained service, where there is a view that the current arrangements have not served them or their communities well. By allowing communities to once again be responsible for their own stations, not only will there be a renewed sense of pride in the services offered, but a new focus for the community, ensure an adequate supply of firefighters, make full use of the station facilities and raise funds for future development.

However, these proposals are not limited to the retained, and there are significant opportunities for wholetime staff to take control of their own destinies, and operate their own fire and rescue services. On this basis we think that it

should be a requirement for FRAs to consult their staff on the formation of mutuals. We also think that FRAs should be required to consider commissioning their fire and rescue service from other providers. This will help to act as a catalyst for this and other important changes, and may spark alternative forms of delivery, such as management buy-outs based on a social enterprise philosophy.

Decentralisation and localism to be underpinned by a new National Framework

The need for the National Framework to underpin standards has already been mentioned. We have given considerable thought to the role of a National Framework, within a decentralised sector.

We see a strong case for retaining the National Framework and the national and government roles should be more about enabling public accountability to flourish by facilitating better local leadership, well designed public engagement, and integration of effort with other local public services and the private sector. Service delivery should also consider what the public can reasonably expect. This means matching the roles of public safety organisations with community risks, making sure that those risks are managed by working collaboratively.

The starting point for any change would be an understanding of public expectations about the service that is delivered to them and there are a set of reasonable expectations that appear time and time again. The expectations include:

- A quick and effective high quality response and an expectation that all services can work together at emergencies;
- Being resilient and deal with threats to national security – to respond effectively and work together with other safety services so our communities and our way of life, including our important infrastructure is protected;
- Helping them understand how to prevent incidents, by being educated, informed and involved in improving their own safety;
- Being cost effective and deliver value for money. They expect that local leaders are held to account for the quality and cost of the service;
- Helping them to influence their public services and exercise a degree of choice and to do this in an informed way through knowing and understanding the level of local risk and what this means for them.

The implications of this paper for the role of government primarily include:

- The removal of prescribed tasks from the National Framework;
- A review of the funding architecture for FRAs to place fairness and choice at the heart of commissioning services that meet the needs of all communities;
- Governance arrangements should be changed to strengthen the role of its members;

- Government should clarify its expectations of what local services should do to ensure the security and resilience of the UK;
- The Government should have a role working with the sector to identify signs of service failure, working with the sector to intervene only as required.

Objectives for the sector are primarily to:

- Further develop engagement with local people and give them a say in the services provided and enable them to make informed choices;
- To demonstrate that fire and rescue services deliver services that meet citizens' need;
- Involve people more in their own safety through the concepts of localism and the Big Society;
- Move service provision from direct ownership towards a commissioned approach involving a wider group of providers;
- Revitalise IRMP – including the contribution to national resilience requirements and the wider local community safety agenda;
- Engage with the fire safety industry to improve skills, knowledge and competence;
- Take a holistic view of value for money and evaluate the cost to society of fires and emergency events to develop a better business case to improve fire protection to buildings and infrastructure.

Changing the Financial Architecture

The financial architecture by which budgets are allocated needs to be reformed to place budgets as close to the citizen as possible, and to free those budgets, as is the case with county FRAs, to spend them as they see fit. Any funding will need to take account of national responsibilities that the FRA would be expected to undertake. The physical contribution to these national services will be determined through a revised National Framework.

Freedom and power emerges with the devolution of funding. Districts or boroughs should be free to remain within an existing FRA and simply make the funds available, or they could seek to break away and negotiate the level of service they require from the existing supplier or alternatives. Some may wish to procure from existing fire and rescue services, others may seek to involve the private sector. For fire and rescue services to receive funding directly they need to have the functions to them transferred which can be achieved under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007, as was proposed for Windsor and Maidenhead in 2008.

We also understand that formula grant is provided to those receiving authorities which exist as at 1 April of the year in question, and takes into account the services that they provide. If therefore there is a transfer of functions, then the grant will take this into account. We would hope that

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

the Localism Bill, as well as underpinning the opportunity for firefighters to set up their own mutuals, will enable new FRAs to develop as the local community wishes.

A Road-Map for the Future

In taking these proposals forward, we would expect the Government to set a permissive regime in train. In essence, we would see change being driven through the desire by local communities for greater control over their fire and rescue services, and by the ability of individuals to form their own mutuals to provide that service.

As a consequence to underpin the process, we would expect the Government to allow individuals districts and boroughs to become fire and rescue authorities in their own right, and for firefighters to have the right to set up their own mutuals. Therefore those FRAs and constituent bodies who feel that the current system works for them, can remain with it, while those who are more enterprising can break away, and become pacesetters for the rest. However, we do believe that there should be a requirement in the national framework for FRAs to consult their staff on the possibility of forming mutuals, and to also consider the scope for separately commissioning all or part of the services they receive. The mutualisation process will need to be underpinned by appropriate detailed advice and support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

National Framework

A second stage of work is undertaken by the Department and National Interest Workstream together with contributors to the Fire Futures National Framework review. This will build upon the work to date and will develop further the extent and content of the next National Framework and will encompass the expectation set out above. This recommendation ties in with other recommendations set out in the rest of the report

Decentralisation

That the Localism Bill allows districts and boroughs to form their own FRAs subject to whatever safeguards the Secretary of State wishes to put in place. That further work is undertaken by the Department, and National Interest Workstream together with contributors to the Fire Futures Decentralisation Review in consultation with the wider sector to address the practical implications of decentralisation and the support needed to achieve the goal. DCLG may wish to consider putting pilots in place with willing district or borough councils. It will be important to ensure that the appropriate funding architecture is put in place to support this. This project should be DCLG led.

Mutualisation

DCLG should liaise closely with the Cabinet Office regarding the setting up of mutuals in the service, with a view to ensuring the necessary support, guidance and safeguards are in place. This process should commence as soon as possible and have regard to the suggested transition arrangements set out in the report. Where

firefighters wish to form their own mutual, this should have precedence over any other form of service delivery. The preparation of comprehensive advice, and provision of the necessary support will be essential. It would be vital to consider the full impact of any legal issues.

Commissioning and Delivery

It should be a National Framework requirement that each FRA should consider commissioning fire and rescue services within the financial year 2011/12, and engage with their workforce on the possibility of them setting up mutuals, either collectively, or in parts of the service. Where there are proposed station closures, communities should be allowed to consider the setting up of mutuals to retain the service if they wish.

Assurance

Assessment and assurance should be built upon sector led initiatives, with the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser maintaining an independent overview role. Consideration should be given to setting up citizen based assessment systems not unlike HealthWatch. The industry could place a role in such 'watch-dog' organisations. The Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser could be asked to oversee the putting in place of appropriate assurance arrangements.

3. SECURE PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK: THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment is the area where most fire and rescue service activity is undertaken. A greater knowledge of that environment is needed, along with closer working with the wider fire sector. The built environment continues to become more complex and the threat of fire more difficult to counter. We have found that there is significant evidence that fire safety is currently lagging behind these changes and needs to catch up, otherwise there is a major risk that fire safety problems are simply inadvertently created and locked up in the built environment to cause problems for fire safety in the future. A national overview is essential, translated to the local level substantially through the effective process of Integrated Risk Management Planning.

The regulatory framework is seen as substantially fit for purpose. The key issue, however, is securing compliance with the regulations and guidance. That is one of the biggest concerns of the sector. It is also evident that there is a significant lack of respect for the regulations, outside the core fire safety sector, which is also substantially responsible for a failure to follow compliance.

There is currently a perceived low level of competency within the sector in relation to fire safety and built environment, not helped by the fact there is no common qualifications' framework that covers building and fire safety competencies. Whilst the FRS undertakes building safety checks, no single organisation can take on responsibility for awareness of fire safety amongst building designers, constructors, owners and occupiers. This campaign can be taken on by that part of Fire UK, normally referred to as the 'industry'. That part of the sector needs to come together more closely and be less introspective,

and there must be a much better dialogue, in particular, with those outside the core specialist fire safety sector who are not fire specialists but who in practice are responsible for delivering fire safety in practice (eg general design, specification, and construction, owners).

It has been estimated that there are, at least, 4 million businesses that fall under the Fire Safety Order (FSO) and it is therefore quite clear that the sheer volume and level of the potential workload is excessive. There is an also unreasonable expectation that the FRS is equipped and resourced to take on the burden of advice and policing that goes with the FSO, and is needed to fully follow through the enforcement requirements.

It could be considered that the prime role of FSO enforcement could be delegated, in part or wholly, to the private sector – and that indeed may be a developing outcome, however it is unlikely to be a reasonable and practical, complete solution in the short term. It is something to be worked towards. Enforcement of the FSO should remain with the FRS. That is not to say that there is no role for the industry segment within the fire sector in backing up the frontline enforcement role of the FRS, and industry associations are ideally placed through their contacts with members who are engaged in the market to act as a watchdog on progress and problems.

One of the greatest challenges for the sector as a whole is to fully mobilise and apply the collective sector knowledge that is available. Dissemination of information and best practice is a growing imperative given the complexity of the built environment and the challenges that the varied levels and type of occupancy present across communities. In that context, central and critical to the sector knowledge base, is to have a much better database.

Added to this mix of change is also the increasing development and application of risk-based design approaches under the banner of fire safety engineering or expert judgment. Where the building is too big, too complex, or too innovative to fit comfortably within the more rigid standard and there is a tendency for the techniques to be applied, more and more, beyond their limits of applicability, without adequate scrutiny, and essentially outside the scope of approved practice. The concern is that the boundaries are being increasingly pushed into areas of uncertainty, where applicable supporting knowledge is at best weak, at worse non-existent. The risk is that fire safety margins are being increasingly squeezed, with much less room for error should the unexpected happen.

There is undoubtedly an important role for industry-endorsed third party certification schemes. But the schemes must themselves be fit for stated purpose and properly accredited. The optimum effect will only be achieved by officially mandating third party, independent schemes – or by receiving much wider specifier and client endorsement by insisting on third party schemes to mitigate risks by specification.

The core strategy for reducing fire risk through the built environment should consist of five main elements:

- First improvements can be made through better application of what is already known.
- Second a better understanding of fire behaviour and building response to fire is required.
- Third, there needs to be improved compliance with regulation, legislation and industry driven best practice.
- Fourth, the strategy needs to take a wider view on the impacts of in line with requirements to lower the costs of fire damage taking note of community needs.
- Finally, there needs to be better collaborative working for connected fire safety from design to occupation of the building.

RECOMMENDATIONS – The built environment

There is no need for further legislation, however:

- *The sector should lead on the application of knowledge, linked to competency, certification, data sharing and awareness programmes. The Government should endorse this process and ask that part of the sector for a formal plan of action.*
- *The programmed review of Approved Document B should continue, but with a view on new and emerging practices, as well as broader community needs and the wider dimensions of fire which are likely to become more prominent.*
- *Building control should take a proactive co-ordinating role involving the FRS. To facilitate that agreement it may be appropriate for a representative building control body to form a cooperative agreement with CFOA.*
- *The sector should continue to disseminate information to promote awareness, education, training and competency accreditation programmes.*

4. EVIDENCE-BASED RESPONSE TO RISK

The need to ensure data is freely available and research properly co-ordinated, is at the centre of effective risk management.

Data and other evidence is fundamentally important to the proper delivery of risk based services. We found nothing to indicate that there is concern about the reporting burden of data in the Fire Sector. Most respondents to our general survey on knowledge management issues agreed data collection is necessary to inform better training and education. There is also a strong demand for greater pooling and dissemination of information as conducive to better practice. For instance most agreed that facilitating co-ordinated access to integrated risk management plans is essential. There is also a strong belief that incident recording systems data should be share widely and be integrated with costs of fire derived from the insurance sector. The respondents also raised concerns that experimental data from the Fire Experimentation Unit was not being sufficiently disseminated and that firefighters' operational knowledge was declining due the prioritisation

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

of fire safety for resources. Arising from this are the following recommendations:

- A partnership arrangement between government, private sectors and the third sector should be established with a view to sharing data and research;
- Co-ordinated access to Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs) would facilitate sharing of good practice, lessen 'reinvention of the wheel' and reduce associated local risk planning costs;
- A national Integrated Risk Management Plan should be available and be an integrated part of local IRMPs to support national resilience;
- A sector-led Research Panel (not restricted to Fire and Rescue Services) should prioritise research;
- Responsibility for Operational Doctrine should remain within government, but production and dissemination should be co-ordinated by an appropriate organisation.

The possible action arising from this response is for government to facilitate or encourage the formation of a sector led hub for the dissemination of sector knowledge. However, this is not a role for DCLG but rather a function for a voluntary association of fire researchers and academics. A potential threat to the viability of this is the lack of cohesion amongst the various elements of the fire sector for hub.

RECOMMENDATIONS – Knowledge management

- *A working group should be set up to review the scope for setting up a national data function, what data would be included, who would finance such a venture, what access would be allowed, and what governance structure should be set in place. This group should also review the feasibility of placing all IRMPs online.*
- *A working group should explore the scope for a sector led research panel, and develop proposals for a shared work programme.*
- *The IRMP committee should look at the feasibility of creating a national IRMP based on national risks.*
- *Technical and operational guidance should be written by experts in the fire and rescue service. This should be included in the national functions work mentioned above.*

5. A FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE THAT CAN OPERATE TOGETHER

While services operate primarily at the local level, they often need to respond outside their own areas, not least when dealing with major incidents. It is essential that such service are interoperable when they come together.

We have considered an on-going concern of government, and that is how we ensure interoperability assured across a range of services, each operating entirely independently.¹¹ Their conclusions indicated that this in part should be dealt with by means of the National Framework, which

should set out expectations - however this will need to be underpinned by practical activity. Whilst the localism agenda aims to devolve power to as small a unit as possible there is a role for central government in facilitating interoperability, and ensuring that at major incidents both equipment and personnel can effectively operate together.

In order to create interoperability across geographical and functional boundaries, an unequivocal expectation amongst the population that this will be delivered needs to be generated, and then met by fire and rescue services. This involves development of the National Risk Assessment process, underpinned by National Framework requirements. This in itself will be further underpinned by an appropriate level of assurance, feeding into local Integrated Risk Management Plans. In taking this forward it is recommended that there should be a common risk assessment protocol applied to national, local and generic risks, to enable category 1 and 2 responders to have a common understanding of the risk identified.

There should be a mechanism by which the sector itself can redirect resources in support of the national interest and better use be made of commercial support options for deployment. Less onerous and bureaucratic arrangements to access latent military capabilities and assets should be established and there undoubtedly exists greater scope to involve private sector suppliers in the provision of logistics support to FRSs.

In terms of assurance, it is recommended that what is currently delivered to Ministers by the National Resilience Board, should be sought for all aspects of interoperability. Assurance mechanisms should be in place for the full range of FRS service, most notably fire cover and flood and water rescue.

The Group has also recognised that England does not operate in isolation. As a consequence it was agreed that some headline assurance levels should be established to ensure interoperability throughout the United Kingdom.

In terms of community resilience, a range of measures have been put forward to build resilient communities, including involving communities in assessing risk, exercising their emergency plans, and using the FRS with its resources and personnel, to act as go-betweens with other organisations.

RECOMMENDATIONS – Interoperability

- *Government should set unequivocal expectations for interoperability across the service in the National Framework, and the local response to this should be transparent and demonstrable to the public.*
- *There should be a time limited working group set up looking at interoperability issues, in particular:*
 - *the feasibility of FRAs themselves drawing more easily upon military resources;*
 - *making better use of commercial delivery models;*

- *providing assurance on interoperability at a level provided by the National Resilience Board for a full range of services;*
- *to have mechanisms in place to ensure interoperability across the United Kingdom;*
- *promoting community resilience;*
- *and developing further standards for the Multi-Agency Interoperability Work.*
- *This working group should include the wider sector and other government departments.*

6. PROTECTING THE NATION – MANAGING THREAT AND RISK

How do we deal with national threats at the local level?
Are we adequately prepared for major risks?

A significant question that the group asked itself, is how are the linkages between National Threat and FRS risk planning created. Currently they are not sufficiently clear and the creation of a sector-led, and more effective mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure that there is more consistent planning in relation to national risks.

The Coalition Government's new National Security Strategy states that the Government's response to national security must encompass two complementary strategic objectives:

- ensuring a secure and resilient UK
- shaping a stable world.

The fire sector is an important contributor to the delivery of this National Security Strategy by addressing local risks, and making sure this contribution is integrated with other emergency services.

It is clear that the Cabinet Office are very heavily engaged in work at the national level, but how this impacts locally is far from clear. There needs to be much closer working relationship between the sector as a whole and the Cabinet Office in identifying and responding to threats and risks. It is suggested that a revised IRMP Steering Group could ensure national benchmarking, share and disseminate best practice and provide a gateway for the oversight and coordination of proposals to mitigate the effects of national risks and threats – especially for cross border and cross partner arrangements. It would be essential to have a strategic presence from the Cabinet Office (CCS) on this Group.

In undertaking this, it is envisaged that a national plan will be created by lifting the most relevant and critical elements of IRMPs, relating to national threats and risks and holding such information centrally. This will form a UK-wide plan that will be aligned closely to the National Resilience Planning Assumptions and LRF Guidance. Ensuring closer links to these critical national elements through local IRMPs will ensure a more robust national response to major events. The links between risk at every level and resulting resolution capabilities should be entirely transparent and demonstrable to the public. A common

assessment protocol should be applied, and local IRMPs should provide local users of services with an assurance that those services are equipped to address the range of risks.

There is a need to more closely integrate prevention, protection and intervention. Greater emphasis must also be given to risk in the built environment. IRMPs must be intelligence-based and led and have appropriate mechanisms capturing national risks through better links to the Civil Contingencies Secretariat and LRA Guidance. Local IRMPs must recognise national threats and consideration must be given to the links between Local Resilience Forums and IRMPs.

In addition DCLG must be prepared to fully share the IRS data sets. The principle behind localism is to allow FRSs to measure what is important to them and allowing them access to the full data set would enable this and provide the ability to benchmark it as well. There is also the potential to allow public access to some of the data (subject to Data Protection issues) and so reduce the growing number of FOI requests received.

Collectively, CFA, the Fire Service College, CFRAU, as well as partners in the fire industry, might be able to provide a more effective lead in developing national operational doctrine, as well as other functions as part of a national hub.

This would include the development of standard operating procedures for operational responses to risk, operational doctrine, mechanisms for ensuring command competence, other control measures, safe systems of work and the safe person concept and setting the requirements for operational training. From a central point, most appropriately at the College itself, this hub would be able to ensure national consistency across the whole sector – importantly it was also agreed that the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) should provide the academic qualification and accreditation mechanism to support the role of the national hub and the wider training agenda.

Vitality, the group recognised that an absence of a national methodology and template for assessing premises risk and 7(2)(d) as a key risk. Such a model should be developed as a priority for any new national policy group created and should operate in a similar way to the model established for the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO). It is envisaged that the Civil Contingencies Secretariat will continue to set out guidance and map the relevant national threats, but by expanding the role of the FRS sector within a national IRMP Steering Group there should also be greater scope to ensure local plans capture critical and cross border issues, risks and ensure the effective tie-in of national risks to IRMPs.

The issue of flooding has been raised by the Group. The Group recommends a resolution of the ambivalent situation FRS find themselves in with regard to flood and water rescue and urge the Minister to make these Statutory Duties,

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

funded through New Burdens, and to grant FRS the statutory power to control the inner cordon at these events.

RECOMMENDATIONS – National Risk Assessment, Threat and Risk

- A high level committee be formed, possibly based on the IRMP steering group, to link national to local risks. This should have a senior figure as chair, and appropriate secretariat facilities. This should be formed as soon as possible.
- A common assessment protocol should be applied, and local IRMPs should provide local users of services with an assurance that those services are equipped to address the range of risks.
- Local IRMPs must recognise national threats and consideration must be given to the links between Local Resilience Forums and IRMPs.
- A national model should be developed for assessing premises risk.

7. FUNCTIONS BEST PERFORMED AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Even within a decentralised system, some functions are best performed collaboratively and at a national level.

We have undertaken a comprehensive review looking at a range of Pan- FRA issues, including standards, assurance and assessment which needed to be taken forward in partnership with government. Key consideration included, how can key fire and rescue functions be assured in terms of the level of standards to be expected, and the general coherence of the service. The group commented in relation to the governance of such arrangements:

‘In recognising that the existing arrangements do not provide the coherence and authority to coordinate national functions efficiently and effectively the creation of an appropriate national body within the “delivery chain” which sits between central government and individual FRAs would be strongly supported.’

Clearly these are issues which have existed for a long period of time, and no viable solution has yet been found. However, given that the current arrangements are not working, this situation urgently needs to be addressed. It is likely in time that the sector as whole will be able to address these issues without the guiding hand of government, but we are not at that stage yet, and are not likely to be for some time. As a consequence, a national level body which interfaces, with central government, should be established to be responsible for the consistent delivery of the recommended set of national functions. The appropriate sector-led body could be constituted under various structural arrangements. While a number of potential structural models exist, the Group has concluded that the following are worthy of further investigation and serious consideration:

- A new multi stakeholder institutional body
- A new partnership owned by CFA and the LGA
- Creation of a social enterprise partnership model.

The above options for consideration will need to be fully evaluated.

In decentralising power from Whitehall to local councils, it is imperative to clearly define the respective roles of central government and local Fire and Rescue Authorities.

The Pan FRA group feel that the role of central government in this National Functions section should include: national policy; the legislative framework supporting the fire industry; the assurance and audit of FRAs; and the national resource allocation.

In pursuing this model, the role of the FRAs should include: the accountability for operational delivery of services; local policy; resource management, and local partnerships.

The Group recommends the following set of national functions to be developed and provided nationally by an appropriate body for the collective benefit of not only all fire and rescue services but other stakeholders:

- risk horizon scanning;
- policy issues;
- capability management for national resilience arrangements;
- knowledge management;
- service standards;
- EU/UK technical improvements;
- assurance and audit;
- improvement and support;
- collaborative procurement;
- equality and diversity;
- national campaigns;
- workforce development.

In financing such an arrangement, the following funding issues need to be further evaluated/ developed:

- Establishment of private/public sector (joint ventures) commissioned functions;
- FRA funding based on commissioned transfer of functions delivered nationally; to achieve economies of scale and elimination duplication and waste;
- Establishment of a Trading Revenue;
- Central government funding based on commissioned transfer of its responsibilities.

Serious further consideration needs to be given within the Fire Futures review of the opportunity to recognise the need for effective sector funded national structures and arrangements that support FRS improvement and delivery and the potential that exists to secure them.

RECOMMENDATIONS – Overarching National Functions

That the Government supports the creation of a national functions body, and be generous in getting it onto its feet. While the body should be sector led and funded, it will require some support to prove its worth, get going and generate its own income.

Whatever arrangements are set in place, the Government should ensure that the body does not become some form of quango. We see strong links between such a body and arrangements already in place for National Resilience assurance.

8. THE FUTURE OF THE FIRE SERVICE COLLEGE

What is the future of the Fire Service College and what is the best way to ensure its ongoing viability.

We have looked at the viability and future role of the Fire Service College (FSC). It is apparent from a number of comments in the Fire Futures document portfolio that there is no appetite within the Fire Service to lose the resource. However, the College is an Executive Agency/Trading Fund and it has not performed well over the years since it was established. Its market share is low, and competition from other FRA training establishments has grown. All of which prompted a strategic review in 2008/09. This review concluded that the College could achieve financial sustainability and generate profits by operating on a fully and explicitly commercial basis.

The College is planning to break even this financial year. With improved marketing and sustained improvement to the College's brand, this should result in increased training revenues, and overall, these cash measures should lead to an increase in profitability. Such improvements will potentially make the College operation more attractive to buy-in by the private sector and other potential partners, although financial investment by others to achieve return on investment will surely be dependent on an increase in market share and diversification and extension of product not with-standing debt and asset value issues.

The College operates in a competitive training market in which a number of customer FRS bodies directly compete with it, leading to over-supply in the market. The local training facilities and staff at these FRS are generally funded by the tax payer/rate payer and represent additional cost to the public purse – this does not appear to represent value for money in any way. Nor is the playing field for pricing a level one: the College must consider its full overheads in its prices, whilst competitor FRSs do not appear to factor in those ongoing overheads which are paid for out of their grant, such as training facility maintenance and staff costs. In addition, this landscape has led to fragmented standards of training, as identified in the recent HSE report, especially around incident command.

The question is whether the current Trading Fund model is the best model to achieve the greatest success. There is little doubt that greater commercial freedom of manoeuvre would be of significant benefit whilst transforming the College's operation. Our recommendation would be a more pragmatic and financially viable Joint Venture model which is sector partnered with service delivery separated from governance/commissioning and exposed to the market-place.

A possible way of piloting this would be to re-establish the

Fire Service College as a Joint Venture with the private sector. One half of the joint venture would be an employee owned mutual that is partly owned in the public interest. It is suggested that if there were a demonstrable success with this joint venture, this would facilitate consideration of whether the model was applicable elsewhere in the sector, including the running of brigades to the extent that lessons learned are applicable to organisations with different accountability and financial structures.

Joint ventures can access new markets and distribution networks. Joint ventures increase capacity by having more resources, technology, specialised staff and capital to leverage. Thirdly risks and costs can be shared with the partner. The joint venture can also offer flexibility, because it can run with a limited life span. The FSC's annual report cites a specific objective for the FSC is to 'progress towards a sustainable basis, achieving a trading surplus of £0.8 million'. According to the assessment made in the annual report this has yet to be achieved, (34%) of total revenue came from the private sector and by the FSC's own assessment this is an underutilisation of capacity. That said, with its unique facilities for training national security emergency response, one might expect public sector organisations to be the main focus of the FSC's work. Hence there is scope for improvements to be made as a result of greater private sector involvement and expertise. However, given the role of the College in operating for the national interest in achieving joint operability in disaster situation, it might be inappropriate to have the FSC operating on a 'for-profit' basis in its entirety.

Closure is not a viable option for the Fire Service College because in the current climate its assets would be undervalued. However, there may be a greater role for the FRS in facilitating joint-operability with other services and the College could be developed to fulfil this function. The footprint of the College could also be potentially reduced and the sale of some of its assets could improve its financial viability.

RECOMMENDATIONS – The Fire Service College

- *The Government should set in train an immediate assessment of the potential of the College with a view to securing its long term survival and stability by means of a joint venture arrangement.*

9. THE WIDER INDUSTRY COMMITMENT TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

At the meeting of the Industry group, including professional bodies, on the 8th December, they agreed to proceed with a number of commitments relevant to the built environment and the management of knowledge, at no cost. They asked for the following comments to be included in this report:

Fire safety provisions in buildings need to be based on a consistent and connected process with continuity along the chain from design through specification and construction to occupation, including extension of the best

practice principles to existing buildings and refurbishments. Unfortunately, the process as it currently operates is fragmented and disjointed. Likewise, the guidance along the chain is either absent or disconnected from one stage to the next, significantly lacking consistency and profile, such that the guidance that does exist can be too easily dismissed and ignored.

The report on the built environment highlighted that despite a regulatory framework that is considered generally fit for purpose in respect of fire safety particularly with the improvements secured by the codification of legislation in the fire safety order, there does continue to be problems with compliance and enforcement. It is the sector's view that there is a disconnect between enforcement and enforcing authorities in applying the framework for the design, construction and the occupation of buildings much of which has been attributed to the plethora of confusing and often contradictory guidance that has been produced. The sector recognises much of the guidance and expertise to support the guidance resides within the sector itself and has committed to:

- Resource, review, codify, rewrite and where required publish guidance supporting existing legislation but encompassing the entire process from building design to end use.
- Using its own resources and expertise to train educate and disseminate its knowledge through campaign marketing and structured learning programmes to ensure that the guidance is fully understood by enforcers and end users alike.
- Through the knowledge management stream, which will be discussed in the next section, the sector has also committed to work directly with FRSs to support training and qualifications, without the need to publicly fund intermediary Sector Skills Councils. This will be achieved using the natural position of the Institution of Fire Engineers as a meeting place for the FRS, industry involved in building design and the evaluation of building technologies and materials, awarding bodies and training providers.
- The knowledge management stream recognised the importance of supporting an intelligence-led approach and has committed to provide a sector-led Independent Research Panel, working with the DCLG but not led by it, to which sector organisations voluntarily contribute expertise.
- It has agreed to provide a Fire Knowledge website that provides free access to available data, information and research findings and to lead an independent sector analysis of the knowledge gaps in fire behaviour in buildings, through our technical groups, and facilitate the sector response in seeking to address those gaps. The sector will then commit to produce codes of conduct and practice and expected standards of behaviour and principles to ensure the circle is complete.

CONCLUSIONS

In trying to find answers to the significant questions raised in the production of this report, we have looked into a range of options for the future. Naturally these will require greater detailed assessment, and some will require further consultation.

The future for the fire and rescue service, and Fire UK as a whole is bright, and it has almost unlimited talent within it waiting to be unleashed. This report highlights a number of ways in which that talent can be brought to the surface, and create a better and safer nation in which to live.

A number of these recommendations will require resource to be spent – others will necessitate simply a guiding hand on the tiller. Some need to be actioned by government, more need to be developed by the sector – and as you will have seen work has already started on this. Whatever the action or recommendation to be pursued, we stand ready to discuss them with you, and work hard to help ensure they are effectively implemented.

B17 FiReControl

On 20 December 2010 FBU officials, members and staff, following many years of tireless work, were pleased to finally hear the long-awaited and long-overdue statement to the House of Commons made by the minister of fire when he said:

"Following extensive discussion with Cassidian, we have jointly concluded, with regret, that the requirements of the project cannot be delivered to an acceptable timeframe. Therefore the best outcome for the taxpayer and the fire and rescue community is for the contract to be terminated with immediate effect."

During 2010, the executive council had continued to make our opposition to FiReControl one of our primary areas of work. To reproduce or reflect that work would fill a volume of the annual report by itself. The primary pieces of work were the FBU's submission to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee (chaired by Dr P. Starkey MP) on 8 February 2010, which was supplemented by further evidence submitted on 24 February 2010 at the invitation of the select committee.

The committee published its highly critical report on 1 April 2010 and the matter was reported to members via head office circular 2010HOC0212AD that same day.

The executive council would like to place on record its thanks, appreciation and congratulations for the hard work and dedication shown by all officials and staff during this long campaign.

Memorandum by the Fire Brigades Union to the Department for Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry into the FiReControl project

- 1) The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) represents approximately 45,000 members covering all ranks and duty systems in the fire & rescue service including approximately 4,000 officers, 11,000 firefighters working the retained duty system and 1,500 firefighters (control). This represents over 85% of all uniformed operational personnel currently serving in the fire & rescue services. The FBU welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence both written and verbal to the Select Committee and this submission deals with some of the key issues. We would also welcome the opportunity to appear before the Members of the Select Committee to support our submission and to attempt to answer any questions they may have upon it.

Overview

- 2) The Government originally 'sold' the FiReControl Project on Invest to Save principles. The result, it was asserted, would be a much better and more resilient system which would be delivered in a staged cutover between 2006 and 2007 and pay for itself within 5 years.
- 3) FiReControl is now massively over the original cost estimates, there are significant problems and doubts about the technology, what it can deliver and whether the system will be 'resilient'. The project will not be complete, even on current timetables until the end of 2012 at the earliest, if at all. There will be no savings, it will cost more.
- 4) The problems must be put down to lack of foresight, major errors at the beginning and since, poor project management, lack of stakeholder engagement or genuine 'sign up', an inability to take proper note of real concerns and the dismissal of doubters and sceptics out of hand.
- 5) Costs and timescales became totally out of control, leaving some FRSs with ageing systems that require imminent replacement. Many had not upgraded because of the expectation that a new RCC system would be in place by 2006/2007 and then later 2008/2009.
- 6) Many have no planned Control facility going forward. The responsibility of the fire authority remains to ensure control systems are fit for purpose to fulfil its statutory duty irrespective of the FiReControl Project which may or may not be concluded.
- 7) Such is the state of the project and lack of confidence in it that a fundamental independent review must be undertaken involving all stakeholders and utilising and upgrading current controls, the FBU's preferred option, must be considered as part of that process.
- 8) Assertions about the resilience of the new system are now central to the new government 'spin'. There is no evidence to support claims of greater resilience or that the end result will be a much better system.

- 9) It is important to temper the government 'spin' with a dose of realism about what has been achieved and what could be achieved.

Progress so far

- 10) The RCCs' buildings are nearly all built. None are close to being operational and their costs are a significant drain on the project.
- 11) Supposedly 'resilient', they are red brick constructions with considerable areas of glass situated behind wire-fencing in open business parks. Some are based on flood plains, flight paths or close to airports and major motorway junctions, all of which undermine claims of 'resilience'.
- 12) There have been numerous delays and cost-overruns. Morale has plummeted, confidence in the project has nose-dived across the service. There has been immense pressure on senior operational managers. Some key staff have left.
- 13) The adoption of the LACC model has created major problems and a whole cottage industry of additional FRS/Regional Management Board advisors replicated across every region in England. A simpler and cheaper solution would be a secondment model for control staff, that would be real progress instead of the current uncertainty for staff and close the gold mine for consultants giving HR and legal advice on the employment issues.
- 14) All RCC directors have been appointed. The first four appointed had no fire service background, let alone a fire service control background. This was the preferred outcome of CLG.
- 15) In 2008 there were 130 project risks on the FiReControl Risk Register, eight of which were rated 'high' or above. On 16 December 2009 in a parliamentary answer in response to a question from David Drew, fire minister Shahid Malik said there were 176 project risks, "of which sixteen are rated 'high' or 'very high'".
- 16) There are major concerns with the technology.

Command and control

- 17) FiReControl was intended to produce a 'stripped down' version of our current emergency fire controls. The FiReControl concept was based, as we pointed out, on a roadside assistance control model – call-handling, mobilising and limited incident monitoring and support.
- 18) The lack of a proper command and control role or function in the RCCs started to become more obviously apparent to the wider fire service from 2008 onwards. Command and control is what ensures the safety of firefighters and the public at incidents and goes well beyond basic incident monitoring and support.
- 19) It is central to fulfilling several statutory duties placed on fire authorities, including ensuring the health and safety of

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

their firefighters. A proper command and control function was not included in the specifications for FiReControl.

- 20) At a FiReControl workshop at the BAPCO conference on 22 April 2009 concerns were openly acknowledged. A very senior advisor to EADS on FiReControl faced a number of probing questions from FRS control officers who raised the issue of command and control at incidents.
- 21) EADS made clear the system being provided to RCCs was call-taking and mobilising, with some limited incident monitoring because those were the contract specifications. There is NO command and control function, “it is not part of the specifications”.
- 22) The contract specifications, he said, meant that at incidents officers would have laptops or MDTs and apart from that they would be “on their own”. The EADS advisor said it was only now that FRSs were starting to realise the lack of a command and control function in the contract specifications for the RCC technology and there needed to be “debate” about what happens.
- 23) Our clear understanding is that on this point the contractors delivered to the specifications demanded of them. This serious omission was made by those who set out the contract specifications.
- 24) The issue is not fully resolved and is of grave concern. At the very least, remedial work causing further delays and costs will have to be undertaken and a whole new area of “out of scope” work has been identified.
- 25) It has significant implications for the staffing model, the technology, cost and delays. In our view this played a very significant role in the further delays which have emerged and at least some of the additional costs which have arisen as a result.
- 26) The matter of how command and control is maintained in a practical sense with the breaking of the link between local FRSs and their local emergency controls is still not resolved. In answer to a parliamentary question from John McDonnell MP about the transfer of operational command and control arrangements to regional controls the fire minister Shahid Malik replied: “The responsibility for operational command and control will remain, as is now, with local fire and rescue services”.

Unproven technology, under-development

- 27) Until recently the proposed mobilising system from Ericsson – CoordCom – had never been deployed in the UK fire service market. To state that it was proven off-the-shelf technology was misleading and inaccurate.
- 28) It is also worth noting that the FiReControl updates contain 2 items which are “to be costed by EADS” relating to mobilising officers and dynamic mobilising, both standard features in existing suppliers’ systems. This again indicates that the original system specifications would be functionally less than the systems currently in use in some areas.

29) It has now publicly emerged that Ericsson is to be dropped altogether in favour of Intergraph I/CAD as a mobilising system. Intergraph I/CAD has been tried and tested and failed in the UK fire service.

30) In the proposed Cleveland tri-centre tests, Intergraph I/CAD failed. In any event, no system has been tried and tested in a national network of regional fire service controls, as none exists anywhere in the world.

31) We anticipate the FiReControl specification may be more demanding than those specified a few years ago and we will need some convincing that a product – albeit an updated version – which failed a lesser test can now succeed in a more demanding one.

32) We anticipate knock-on effects including potentially on DCMT1 and DCMT2 which we mention later in this submission. This may lead to further delays.

Resilience

- 33) Another major feature cited as essential was that of resilience. The choice of nine different systems does not in itself guarantee resilience, neither does 46 systems. The system architecture chosen by CLG for nine systems is then compromised further by only having three data centres, all of which are housed within three of the existing controls.
- 34) Currently to render the FRS in England inoperable a considerable number of FRSs would have to fail or be taken out by terrorist attack (as well as their back-up facilities). Under the new scheme taking out the three data centres will render the whole RCC infrastructure unusable.
- 35) Without the data centres then the Gazetteer options become unusable and dispatching impossible for such large areas. Current localised systems, even without Gazetteers, can mobilise with area knowledge to generate responses to an emergency situation.
- 36) The call-handling capacity is appallingly low because of very low staffing numbers. As a result individual RCCs will hit spate conditions much more quickly.
- 37) At times the national network will have very, very low numbers of staff on duty – less than 60. The entire national system could hit spate conditions when several RCCs hit spate conditions at the same time. This would happen during, for example, widespread weather events such as flooding or widespread snowfalls.

Database generation

- 38) The current proposal is utilising the NLPG dataset. This is meant to be another benefit of the proposed RCCS.
- 39) This is utilised by many organisations and is a substantial database for mobilising. However it is somewhat different to the databases that FRS currently use. Many FRSs have started to switch their existing systems to use the NLPG database and are finding out at first hand the problems it poses.

- 40) To give some examples: business parks that are currently built generally identify the different premises as Unit 1, Unit 2 etc. This is how these buildings appear in the NLPG database. Once let the building now has a name and may change hands several times even 1 year. These names do not appear on the NLPG database for some considerable time – if ever – and the company name provided will result in no match against the gazetteer when searched by the operator at the RCC. Invariably the unit number will not be given or known and does not form part of the new address. To overcome this each FRS will have to generate an “extra” database containing this information, maintained by them, a not inconsiderable task.
 - 41) Another example is that many towns and cities have areas within them, these areas form part of the address to the local inhabitant. In one FRS there are nine areas in one town which do not exist in the NLPG database, as such every property in those areas will have to become part of a local database for that FRS to allow matching against the supplied address. The only alternatives are to get the NLPG database amended (only allowed through local government request and a lengthy procedure) or to get the residents to change the way they report addresses. It is our belief that it is almost certainly impossible to do either within the timescales involved.
 - 42) There will be many similar examples that will come to light as the database generation continues and practical use of NLPG emerges, these items should have been known and dealt with at the outset.
 - 43) The transfer of information is time consuming and cumbersome. It also has to be provided by FRSs and is out of scope work.
- DCMT1 and DCMT2**
- 44) These are the toolkits for converting and transferring the FRS's existing data into a format that EADS can use to link the FRS related data to the NLPG database and also to generate the “extra” databases that contain the entries that do not exist in the NLPG database.
 - 45) Problems with the DCMT1 toolkit became apparent to fire and rescue services in the summer of 2008 and has played a major role in the delays. We understand these problems only became apparent after CLG, as the Project Managers, had signed off the toolkits as meeting the contract specifications and it was then rolled out FRSs.
 - 46) Up to that point CLG at imposed itself as the go-between linking EADS to the FRS. We understand it made a point of ensuring there was little or no direct contact between the contractors and other stakeholders meaning the problems only became apparent after the toolkits had been cleared for release to FRSs.
 - 47) This issue of direct collaboration was addressed – belatedly – in the summer of 2009 with the creation of Solution Establishment Workshops, the first attempt at genuinely collaborative working. But what it highlights is that this was not happening before and only started when the Project ran into serious trouble with delays mounting.
 - 48) The DCMT1 toolkit may now be substantially complete, albeit nearly two years late. Some of the issues have been inexcusable. But in the absence of close contact between EADS and the FRSs – a decision taken by CLG as Project Managers – it was perhaps inevitable.
 - 49) Project Managers should have known that the larger authorities would have enormous data sets and for the initial releases to appear to have problems handling large data sets is ridiculous. The other reported issues show the poor quality systems at Departmental Project Management level that allowed these to get to the end user.
 - 50) Again the Project Management systems and methodology (Prince 2) should have picked these items up and managed them rather than supplying poor quality tools – albeit to specifications agreed and signed off by CLG - within the project life cycle.
 - 51) Switching the mobilising system from Ericsson to Intergraph/ICAD may produce further problems with the DCMT1 toolkit. That remains to be seen.
 - 52) CLG has consistently under-estimated the amount of work needed to be completed by FRSs to identify, cleanse and capture the data even with the toolkit working perfectly. This is at least three to five years of work.
 - 53) There is limited and reducing capacity within the fire service to deliver this quickly – the ability is there, simply not the number of control personnel needed to carry out the task in addition to their existing workloads.
 - 54) Whilst DCMT1 is used to identify what FRS address data is contained within NLPG, and what is not, it is the more complicated DCMT2 that “binds” this information together. Only time will tell whether similar issues will emerge with DCMT2 as did with DCMT1. It is imperative that mobilising arrangements for a life-saving emergency service such as that for the fire and rescue service aren't changed without being fully validated and tested beforehand. Testing “in the field” is not a professional option to adopt.
 - 55) It would be surprising, given the complexity of the technical challenges, if they did not. There may also be issues relating to the switch to Intergraph I/CAD as the mobilising system.
 - 56) We are aware, given the delay to the roll out of the DCMT1 toolkit, that many FRSs have not completed the work and some are only at the early stages of starting the work relating to the use of DCMT1. Without this data it is difficult to conceive how any meaningful testing of the system can take place.
 - 57) Performance of this system will depend on the volume of data searched and a system that works with a small data set may not even work, or work as well, with a large data set if the hardware is not specified correctly.

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

Current system capabilities in business case inaccurate

58) One of the main reasons cited by numerous ministers for the project was that the current systems did not support the latest technology. There were nine technology items cited in each region's business case Part 1, being:

MDTs / VMDS

Information Available to Fireground

AVLS

Status Updates

Dynamic Mobilising

EISEC

GIS (Ctrl Only)

GIS (Integrated into Service)

Full Premise based Gazetteer.

59) This information is inaccurate, misleading and has never been corrected. Some items are incorrect and others are inaccurate in that the facilities were available but the FRS chose not to purchase them e.g. Dynamic mobilising, EISEC and Premise based gazetteer.

60) Ministers then used this data to cite one of the reasons for the justification for the project was ensuring all fire controls had the most up to date functions. Had the correct information been established from knowledgeable sources then this justification would have been non-existent.

61) Since the project award all the items listed above are available on all the existing suppliers systems, most as standard items if local fire and rescue services judge them to be important enough to purchase them.

62) The Department could have amended GD92 which sets out requirements for control systems to ensure all systems could have been gradually upgraded in the normal way to meet these requirements. They have not done so, they still could.

How did we get to where we are now?

63) The approach and project management were flawed from the outset. The entire project was bundled into a single contract with a prime contractor leading a consortium. Such was the scale of the project, there were probably no more than a handful of companies worldwide which could have bid for a project of this size with a realistic chance of success.

64) This approach effectively meant that every existing experienced supplier of control systems to the UK fire service market eg Fortek or Remsdaq, would be excluded. They were.

65) It also meant there was a very high likelihood that the prime contractor chosen would have no experience in delivering a control system to a fire service in the UK or, possibly, anywhere in the world. This is what transpired.

66) Project management was supplied by a series of departments with little historical knowledge of the fire service, informed – if that is not putting it too strongly – by transient civil servants and consultants with no experience

of delivering any fire service control system of any size, anywhere. It was overseen by a series of transient ministers.

67) There were some FRS secondees in various numbers at various stages. Of the 60 people assigned to the project in the first few years, only 12 were from a fire service background. What weight was attached to their work, opinion or views is not known.

68) Once the decision had been taken to 'bundle' the contract in such a way – with the inherent flaws we have outlined – the use of a consortium or prime contractor to facilitate such a large and ambitious project is entirely in order.

69) However, the project differed from the fire service norm at that time in that the prime contractor (EADS) appears to have largely a supply/ install contract only. Central project management was and is being carried out by CLG using their own staff along with some seconded FRS staff and consultants.

70) There were clearly major issues with the technical specifications the contractors were asked to deliver too. The project scope has been changed before, after and since the IT contract was signed. There also appeared to be no 'real world' assessment of the true complexity of the project nor of realistic timescales to deliver what was being demanded.

71) The results are clear for everyone to see: no clear and consistent understanding of how emergency fire controls work, lack of leadership, controls, objectives and relevant technical expertise. Even with such a flawed process, a single "turnkey" contract could have removed some of the issues and led to a clear target to be achieved or penalties to be levied.

72) Instead, CLG FiReControl project managers were a barrier between the contractors EADS tasked with delivering the technology and the end users – fire and rescue services. Direct collaborative working between EADS and the FRS was blocked by CLG until the creation of Solution Establishment Workshops (SEWs) in the summer of 2009.

73) The central point of the creation of the SEWs is not that the process started, but that it took until the project was on its knees before CLG allowed this method of direct collaborative working to be put in place.

74) Poor CLG project management was compounded by what should have been the close relationship between the FiReControl and Firelink projects. Delays to the Firelink project have had a knock-on effect on FiReControl and vice-versa.

75) It is clear from our discussion with a number of those involved in both projects that there was a lack of transparency, openness and communication between the two projects for prolonged and critical periods. The responsibility for that lies heavily at departmental and ultimately ministerial level.

Firelink/FiReControl

- 76) The original timetable to complete FiReControl by December 2007 was tied to the completion of Firelink, the new digital radio system, which had a delayed completion date of December 2007. Firelink is providing the vast majority of the benefits claimed for RCCs and is very technically challenging in its own right.
- 77) While we know Firelink radio technology can work for brigade level controls there has to be a question mark over its capacity to work across several fire services region-wide. There are already genuine question marks about the capacity of Airwave, which is now a private monopoly supplier to the emergency services, given the increasing burdens being placed on it.
- 78) Delays to Firelink do have a knock-on effect on FiReControl. Some of these were set out in a national project manager's update, Firelink Strategic Snapshot – December 2007. This acknowledged that a number of fire services did not update their existing controls – known as legacy systems – because the new RCCs were meant to be in place by the end of 2007.
- 79) Delays to both the Firelink and FiReControl projects meant "interim solutions" had to be put in place to cope with the late-running of both projects. Additional work had to be carried out for what was described as the "longer extended interim solution".
- 80) Problems identified in the Firelink Phase A operational rollout included: Fit out of eight pilot vehicles in each FRS: "temporarily stalled in the first tranche of regions due to delays by Airwave in providing test scripts." Issues with training "eg lack of training equipment."
- 81) Problems were identified in the Phase B launch date (the fit out of the main vehicle fleets). This was "progressively delayed as a result of... over ambitious forecasting and inadequate groundwork by Airwave... delays in submission of test scripts for Phase A acceptance work... knock-on effects of the (preceding) police resilience programme."
- 82) These issues meant "Airwave roll out forecasts have been drifting increasingly out of synchronisation with events on the ground since the late summer". The result was a "realism adjustment" – a euphemism for a further delay. Firelink project managers reported they had been able "to persuade Airwave fully to reflect the reality of where we are and their track record to date by adding a significant amount of contingency to their forecasting."
- 83) This strategic snapshot is also revealing in a number of other points. Concerns about the fitting of aerials to officers' cars threw up other concerns about "the evolving FiReControl concept of operations appears now to be shifting beyond the current Firelink scope of supply based on a wider interpretation of the term 'resilience'. Separate work is therefore now in hand... to clarify the FiReControl concept of operations..."
- 84) The concept of operations would play a major role in setting out the technical specifications for the contract agreed with EADS. That it was still evolving at this stage – there was still no fixed concept of operations – would make it much more difficult to establish the technical solution.
- 85) The same report includes part of a letter from Richard How, the senior civil servant heading up the FiReControl project on a day to day basis. This letter, to the Firelink team, reveals there were already concerns about delays for FiReControl arising a matter of months after EADS secured the contract.
- 86) It revealed that Mr How had written to the Firelink team at the end of August 2007 about "concerns that the release dates for a number of products – in particular Convergence and Data Schema – from EADS were later than planned." Mr How told the Firelink team, operating from within the same department and upon which FiReControl depended, that EADS provided some information but that it would "be counter-productive" to share that with them at that time.
- 87) By November Mr How could still not share the information. He could say that "Since then we have been working closely with EADS to develop a comprehensive set of robust plans in which we all have confidence... However, EADS is not as far advanced as they and we hoped they would be... this lack of information is preventing the FRS from developing their detailed activity and resources plans... the failure to deliver to date is inevitably creating concerns about the capability to deliver as they have contracted... the delay in providing information is compressing the time available that that (sic) the FRSs have to complete their activities..."
- 88) It would be unfair to Airwave and EADS not to point out that these documents only set out the views of CLG project managers. These comments may be unfair to one or both contractors, may not fully set out the full picture or be self-serving in other ways.
- 89) What is clear is the department was not ensuring the proper flow of full information between the key personnel and the key contractors working on two closely related projects. If anything, the department was a barrier to the flow of critical information between and within both projects.

Overview – getting it wrong from the start

- 90) The project is defined to operate under the Prince 2 project management process. Like all project management processes these define tasks, timelines, costs, checkpoints/gateways, actions, personnel, risks and should include for contingencies. The documented hierarchy published in the Business Cases (Part 1 and Part 2) provides for the accountability.
- 91) The published delays do not account for the difference in time from the original proposal and the current end date. There must therefore have been significant delays during

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 prior to the first re-alignment date. It would not be unreasonable for the Select Committee to request sight of the original Gantt chart (project plan) and the current one.

92) This should show (under Prince 2 guidelines) all of the slippages and the reasons and what corrective action, if any, was taken. All plans should be reviewed at least monthly if not more frequently and reports produced to show progress/issues/corrective action/costs to date. There are timelines in the Business Case documents but these contain insufficient detail and were only produced in 2008/2009.

93) The FiReControl project was based on a 2003 report from Mott MacDonald, updating an earlier report. It purported to set out how a much better and more resilient system could be completed within 4 years, would pay for itself and save money. It was clearly flawed.

94) A key part of selling the original decision to proceed with the project was undoubtedly based on the financial information produced in the 2003 Mott MacDonald which indicated there would be significant savings (£20 million year on year) to be made on a project costing £100 million. This produced the claim by then minister Nick Raynsford that the project would pay for itself within five years.

95) There would be ongoing savings, it was asserted, and these would be ploughed back into the fire service. On paper, it was a formidable case – a much better system, delivered in a few years, making massive savings using tried and tested technology.

96) As the Fire Brigades Union repeatedly pointed out, this was obvious nonsense to those with hands on experience of managing significant change in a control room environment. Even a brief consideration of numerous public accounts committee and select committee reports would show national government's inability to deliver projects that worked, on time and to budget.

97) It is belatedly accepted by government that no national network of regional fire controls exists anywhere in the world. The technology has never been tried and tested on this scale, if at all, in a fire service environment. The technology is in development during the course of the project and remains so.

98) The 2003 Mott MacDonald report also aligned FiReControl with the Labour government's regional government programme. It is only in the context of a regional fire service that a regional control centre could make any sense at all, although there would still be issues of resilience and operational practicality.

99) The original initial capital one off costs, based over 10 years, were estimated as £100 million (Mott MacDonald Full Report 2003 page 143) which included new buildings (£25.2 million), systems (£36 million), project management (£12.2 million) and redundancy costs (£27.1 million) with

ongoing savings on costs of maintenance (£28.1 million) and ongoing staff savings (£143.3 million).

100) Completion was estimated to be four years after commitment, namely 2007. There is a major error in the Mott McDonald report that calculates the savings to be £70.8 million over 10 years. But they mistakenly had ongoing costs of maintenance as a saving rather than a cost. Taking this into account, the actual estimated savings should have been stated as £14.7 million, not £70.8 million.

101) Although the government has reconfigured its arguments to be based on assertions – although not evidence – of better resilience, alleged cost savings have always been central to the Business Case for FiReControl. This is cynical. Other options were and are being rejected on the basis they could show no savings.

102) The original cost estimates bear no relation to the actuality which has unfolded. While we have some sympathy to claims that further estimates are over different timescales to different specifications, it remains that the project was originally pitched and sold on the basis of a very flawed report.

103) In our view it is not a reasonable excuse that specifications and scope changed and a project was adapted or added to. It is a consistent criticism of how things start to go wrong in major IT projects.

104) Some of the details of the promises on cost savings are set out in the FBU response to Business Case, April 2009 at p11. That document also sets out in some detail our major concerns about the project which we will not repeat in this submission but attach as requested.

105) We also attach numerous independent reports commissioned from the Institute of Public Finance which detail the progression of the Business Case. These are also attached and we will not re-visit all the detail within those reports.

What the government claims the project costs

106) The government often uses figures which are different to or selectively chosen from those used in their Business Cases. These also need to be addressed.

107) Given the detailed information they must hold, there is little consistency in the government claims of what the project will cost. Figures are quoted over different time scales – some to 2012, others to 2020.

108) The fact that some of the leases, signed in 2007 onwards are over 20 years and some over 25 years extend beyond both dates. There appears to be no co-terminosity in the lease termination dates which are likely to close out between 2027 and 2032.

109) When it suits, and to 'prove' alleged savings, staffing costs of running the RCCs are included. At other times they are not.

110) It is an oft-quoted comment from government that critics of the project are not comparing like with like, or using different timescales. The government appears to do this itself, making it very difficult to tie down what the full costs are or even details how the costings have changed in the various Business Cases.

111) Differing language is used by government to describe various costs as “basic initial costs”, or “set up” costs to “estimated full cost of implementing FiReControl”. The Business Cases quote a figure of around £1.4 billion, although that does include on-going staffing costs through the life of the project.

112) These are included by government – it is their Business Case – because alleged savings were always based on cutting the numbers of emergency fire control staff. We will return to that issue later.

On 22 October 2009 the following question was asked and answered:

Mrs Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what recent estimate he has made of the total cost of delivery of the FiReControl project; and what estimates were made in (a) 2004, (b) 2005, (c) 2006, (d) 2007 and (e) 2008. [293319]

Mr Malik: The current estimated overall cost of delivery of the FiReControl project for (a) 2004 was £120 million; (b) 2005 – £160 million; (c) 2006 – £190 million; (d) 2007 – £360 million; and (e) 2008 – £380 million.

On 2 November 2009 Mr Malik answered in another question:

The basic initial costs and timescales of implementing the **FiReControl** project, as originally estimated in 2004, were £120 million. Following more detailed work, project costs were updated to include funding to fire and rescue authorities for local and regional implementation activity, the costs of the regional control centre building leases and the costs of equipment to be installed in every fire station in England to support improved mobilisation.

The expenditure to date on the project is approximately £190 million. The estimated full cost of implementing FiReControl is £420 million.

113) Even on these figures the cost of the project has more than tripled.

Why have costs increased?

114) The reasons given in Mr Malik’s reply for some of the increased costs show how ill-thought the original estimates were. Mott MacDonald’s building costs estimates were £25.2 million and even over a ten year period (as opposed to the longer leases) are well short of the reality of the leasehold and other costs relating to the buildings.

115) The fact that Station End Equipment – the ‘cost of equipment to be installed in every fire station’ – were left out of the calculations – beggars belief. It meant the project was moving along on the basis they had worked out the cost of the equipment needed to send a message,

but not the fact there would need to be equipment to receive the message and it would have to be paid for.

116) In a letter dated 13 November, in response to concerns raised by a constituent of Rob Marris MP, Mr Malik goes further in explaining the cost and time overruns: “the FiReControl technical solution has proved to be more complex than originally anticipated, and the development stages have taken much longer than expected.” He asserted that the contract with EADS was signed with them having a full “understanding of the technical solution required... [nor having full] information about the amount of work that would need to be carried out by the individual 46 fire and rescue authorities”.

117) Only once the contract had been signed – which was in 2007 – he asserted, did “it become apparent that the project scope needed to be broadened”. No details of the broadening of the scope are given.

118) The Outline Business Case (OBC) November 2004 sets out in some detail (at Appendix C) why the costings in the original Mott MacDonald report were wrong. The OBC identified some key areas of risks the project would face including that there was a very high risk of total project failure.

119) The OBC uses a Private Developer Scheme (PDS) as its recommended method of supplying new Regional Control Centre buildings. It is an expensive option and the OBC underlines the catastrophic impact on any estimated savings of the buildings being completed more than six months before they are meant to become operational.

120) The OBC heavily flagged up, as a significant risk, the financial impact of the buildings being completed more than six months before they were to start becoming operational. It also pointed out the importance of there being a degree of co-terminosity for leases for the new RCC buildings which would become the national network of regional control centres. That is they would all expire and have to be renewed at approximately the same time or within a reasonable period of each other.

121) The OBC identified that from the signing of the PDS contracts to building completion would take around 18 months. Building in a six month rent-free period from practical completion to becoming operational would deal with the issue of rents being paid for empty buildings and is a sensible recommendation.

122) Having identified these two key traps to be avoided – and the mitigating steps needed to be taken to avoid them – the CLG project managers then walked into both traps. On 10 August 2005, without any further Business Case of any kind, CLG announced it was proceeding with the PDS scheme, sites had been identified and the contracts signed with the developers for between 20 years and 25 years and which come to an end between 2027 and 2033.

123) The minister, asked on 16 December in a parliamentary

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

question by David Drew to make a statement as to how a national network was to be kept in place after the ending of the first set of leases in 2027 and the ending of the final leases in 2034, simply referred to the Landlord and Tenant Act.

- 124) The signing of the PDS contracts at such an early stage has been catastrophic. No update of the Outline Business Case was produced before the decision and no more detailed work had been done on costings, timescales or the prospects for the technology.
- 125) A draft Full Business Case was produced in 2006 and another update in 2007. Another was promised throughout 2008 and eventually appeared. The IPF reports on all of these are attached.
- 126) The Institute of Public Finance, in an independent report for the FBU, said in its assessment of the Private Developer Scheme (PDS) – the biggest price ‘ticket’ for the whole project – did not demonstrate value for money. The IPF also identified a £200 million increase in the total project costs in the FiReControl Business Case. The overall project costs did not rise above the £1.4 billion identified in the previous 2007 Draft Business Case because an assumption was made which cut back on staffing costs by a further £200 million.
- 127) Having hastily signed the property contracts, the IT contracts then waited for more than 18 months to be signed. There was therefore no chance of the RCC buildings being operational six months after practical completion and rents becoming payable.
- 128) The IT contract was signed in March 2007 after much delay. As we pointed out earlier, by August 2007 CLG were already complaining about delays to DCMT1 and Convergence work. Why CLG expected such complex work to be completed within a few months has never been explained, but it was from the summer of 2007 that concerns about delays started to emerge.
- 129) Our own response to the Full National Business Case is also attached. We will not go through that in detail but attach it as requested. It does raise significant questions about resilience, call handling capacity and call filtering by BT and Cable and Wireless Operators.

Where do we go from here – basic principles

- 130) First, a profound reality check is needed. There is little confidence left within the fire service that this project is going anywhere good and it's not going anywhere soon.

That is an opportunity to re-think what basic principles should underpin what happens next:

1. There are political limits to how far local democratically controlled fire services are prepared to go towards regionalisation;
2. There are technical limits to what can be achieved at a

regional level within a reasonable timescale and budget;

3. You should only be prepared to take great risks and go to great expense if there is evidence – not assertion or mere conviction – that the rewards are so great as to justify the level of risk being taken;
4. There must be a clear link between the key strategic priorities of local fire services and any future project configuration, including agreed measures of success;
5. There must be clear ownership and leadership driven by the needs of local fire services and not by the needs of central government;
6. There must be an effective engagement with all key stakeholders and a re-building of confidence and cooperation;
7. End-users need to buy in to any future project and not have it used as an opportunity to drive down their working conditions or working environment;
8. Project managers must continue to demonstrate skills and a proven approach to project management and risk management;
9. There must be an agreed and realistic timetable, greater cooperation with all stakeholders including contractors with the aim of achieving a proper collaborative environment and not a return to a blame culture and key players being kept apart;
10. Adequate provision of resources and skills to deliver what is required.

The ten key principles we set out above should apply to any future configuration of how the benefits required from future systems are delivered. The key is delivering what local fire and rescues say they need going forward, utilising at least some of the work, and possibly some of the RCC buildings if appropriate.

- 131) Alternatives to FiReControl are already being explored with or without the knowledge or cooperation of CLG. Our preferred option, on the basis of speed, cost and confidence in it as a solution, is to utilise upgraded existing controls.
- 132) This is not a ‘do-nothing’ option. The union is also prepared to consider any Business Case presented which considers other options. We would urge that under any other options, including RCCs, if government does press ahead.
- 133) A decision to press ahead regardless does not make success a certainty. The technology may never be made to work in the way required of it.

Supplementary evidence

Letter sent by email to :-

Dr Starkey, Chair CLG Select Committee
House of Commons
7 Millbank
Westminster
SW1P 3JA
25 February 2010

Dear Dr Starkey

The Fire Brigades Union wishes to place on record its thanks for being given the opportunity at the hearing of the Select Committee on 8th February 2010, to explain our view that despite the amount of money that has been spent so far, the project should be ended completely, rather than throw further good money after bad.

I enclose further information, as requested by the Committee.

Yours sincerely



ANDY DARK
Assistant General Secretary

Information provided by the Fire Brigades Union to CLG Select Committee

23 February 2010

Specific Examples of End User Requirements not being met by FiReControl

1. Officer Availability and Mobilisation

A major part of mobilising emergency resources to incidents includes the ability of fire controls to mobilise officers to incidents. Currently this is done via a pager system.

Ensuring the correct number of officers to incidents with the correct attributes (or specialisms) is essential for proper command control on the incident ground. To do so, controls must be able to have information readily to hand to know whether these officers are in fact available for duty and their location.

All this at present is done via local fire controls which monitor officer availability and attributes and update this as and when their availability and/or location changes. For example if you require a Fire Investigation Officer or a Hazmat Officer, these are specific attributes (there are many different attributes).

We are informed that FiReControl will now have the facility for officer availability as currently. However, what isn't clear is how officers will be mobilised.

The original specification was for officers' cars to have Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) fitted. The FBU understands that this option has now been withdrawn since many officers' cars are actually privately owned or leased. Due to the introduction of Firelink radios and the removal of legacy radio equipment from existing Controls, and all of the above mentioned, local controls are currently mobilising officers via private pager bureaux or the mobile phone network. Neither of which can be classed as resilient methods.

This was reported in CLG's FiReControl Newsletter Jan 10 – Project Ellipse.

These problems have been recognised by FRSs and finally CLG are having to address them but this was never part of the original specification with EADS. How is live real time information and updated data transferred from FRSs to RCCs in a secure and resilient way to ensure it meets their own criteria for resilience. This would include such things as officer availability, officers' rotas and retained availability. The FBU has received PR materials provided to FRSs by private companies offering to address this shortfall to capitalise on the situation. One such company is Infographics offering to supply 'middleware' for RCC integration.

The matter of officers' status (availability) has been discussed with CLG. CLG have stated that no determination has yet been made on this and that the options under consideration for officers' status to be notified to RCC network are via:

- Handheld radios, or
- Two way pagers, or
- Satellite navigation devices, or
- Voice.

Status changes have to be verified. Currently this is carried out by a fire control officer dedicated to that task. This matter has not been considered in the CLG staffing model as at that time it was widely viewed that officers would use MDTs.

Information provided by the Fire Brigades Union to CLG Select Committee

23 February 2010

Specific Examples of End User Requirements not being met by FiReControl

2. Retained Duty System (RDS) mobilising

Background information

Wholtime firefighters work at a fire station and are mobilised by a call to the station by teleprinter which provides written data concerning the incident and which resources are being mobilised. If there is a fault with the system this will be done by telephone. If the crews are not present at the station they will be contacted via the radio in the appliance. At all times the crews are together in one place.

Day crew firefighters work at a fire station during the day and are mobilised by a call to the station by teleprinter

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

which provides written data concerning the incident and which resources are being mobilised. If there is a fault with the system this will be done by telephone). If the crews are not present at the station they will be contacted via the radio in the appliance. At all times the crews are together in one place. They differ from wholetime firefighters in the evening when they are mobilised in the same way as firefighters working the retained duty system (RDS).

Retained duty system (RDS) firefighters are rarely at the fire station together (other than, for example, on the weekly drill night for a few hours). This varies across the country but is invariably required to be 5-10 minutes or 1-2 miles travel distance. An RDS firefighter (when available for calls) must be located within a given radius of the fire station whether at home, work or undertaking other activities. An RDS firefighter will invariably be at a separate location when alerted from other members that will form the appliance crew. They are mobilised by multitone pagers (alerters). Once paged the RDS firefighter will promptly attend the fire station and take details of the call there.

RDS firefighters can change their status throughout the course of the day subject to having provided availability for an agreed (minimum) total number of hours for the week.

FBU submission

The FBU is informed that the Station End Equipment fitted into fire stations to mobilise crews will be exactly the same in a retained station as it is in a wholetime duty (or day crewed) station. This means that unless crews are actually on station to hear the turn out system they will not respond. (This is why RDS firefighters have to have a separate alert and mobilising arrangements.)

This has led to CLG having to patch up and rethink how FiReControl will cope with turning out (mobilising) RDS fire crews.

We are informed by CLG that it is envisaged that changes to the availability status of RDS crew members will be done by internet or telephone. This pre-supposes that the RDS member will have a telephone and/or internet access.

It is very common if not universal that local controls have one control operator monitoring the availability of RDS personnel at all times including in those control rooms where availability is integrated into the system. This matter has not been considered in the CLG staffing model. We are informed that CLG are now asking EADS to devise a solution to retained availability management systems and that they are writing a programme. This will be similar to some existing systems used now in controls such as the Rappel System or Garton systems.

If it is correct that such systems already exist and if both CLG and EADS had had clear understanding of end user requirements regarding availability and mobilising of retained duty system personnel then why did they not incorporate it into the project initially? What is the additional cost of this work?

Information provide by the Fire Brigades Union to CLG Select Committee

24 February 2010

Specific Examples of End User Requirements not being met by FiReControl

3. Matters arising from the Equality Impact Assessment

Terms and Conditions

The FBU can broadly support the recommendations, however not without some qualification. These being:

1. The report concludes (page 9)
Even if a gender equality impact assessment had been undertaken at the earliest possible stage, it is unlikely that the potential adverse gender impact identified would have altered the course of the project. CLG would have needed to balance the requirement to improve national resilience and enhance the capability of fire control against the potential equality impacts identified.

The issue of whether FiReControl will/could provide improved national resilience and enhanced capability aside, the fact that it is intended that staff will be removed from their current employer (on transfer) and be placed on transferred terms and conditions which are vulnerable to change will mean that these workers – predominantly women – face the prospect of worsening conditions including pay. This was made clear to us by an ex-Chair of the West Midlands LACC who publicised the fact that the intention of the proponents of the RCC project was to slash costs by changing pay rates to those in call centres as soon as is practicably possible – which are approximately 50% less than current salaries. This could be avoided if staff were employed by application of the staff retention model commonly used in the NHS.

2. The report encourages changes to shift patterns. The current shift patterns which should transfer are widely regarded by staff as being satisfactory.

RCC Building Design Specification

In December 2009 CLG published an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the project. In relation to the buildings this highlighted for example: **EIA – para 3.7.2** Concludes that an Access Defect Rectification Plan is implemented by CLG. This is in response to the realisation that eight out of nine RCC buildings do not conform to the DDA in relation to access, door switches/swipes and hearing induction loops etc. CLG were given a blank piece of paper at design stage and the department's persistent failures in managing the project included a failure to oversee these points in the first eight buildings blaming contractors for interpreting the act wrongly! Only London RCC escaped as it had not yet been completed.

Recommendations

- 3.7.1. That immediate steps are taken to ensure the required access standards are met first time in the construction of the London Regional Control Centre.

- 3.7.2. That the access defect rectification plan is implemented by CLG.
- 3.7.3. That the local authority controlled companies designate the rooms to be used as meeting and training rooms and consider either installing permanent inductive loop systems in those rooms, or purchasing a portable inductive loop and establishing an effective management system for it.

General

We believe that all recommendations in the Equality Impact Assessment should be implemented.

Further we believe that CLG should make the staff retention model (other than in London) mandatory on all FRAs and respective LACCs.

That out-standing EIAs required to be conducted by LACCs should be carried out as a matter of urgency.

Information provided by the Fire Brigades Union to CLG Select Committee

25 February 2010

Specific Examples of End User Requirements not being met by FiReControl

4. CLG Staffing Model and associated staffing matters

A. Staffing Numbers

CLG's position from the outset has been that as they are not the employing body nor the service provider that it is the LACCs who will make the decisions on staffing numbers. This is reflected in the Part 1 and Part 2 Final Business Cases.

CLG have though produced baseline staff numbers which are produced according to its staffing model which they have proposed to LACCs. These are contained in the Part 2 Business Case, and are shown below:

Region	Transitional figure	Steady figure	Current figure (all local controls in LACC region)
West Midlands	?*	70	159
NE	63	55	110
Yorkshire and Humberside	75	71	142
SW	72	63	176.5
East Midlands	70	56	141
SE	85	75	227 **
London	92	81	125 est
NW	96	84	187
East of England	83	63	148 **
Total	636	618	1415.5

* No figure given in Part 2 Business Case

** No figure given in Part 2 Business Case, figures provided from other sources – watch based staff numbers only – managerial and other staff to be added

The FBU believes the numbers of staff on duty across the network is dangerously low and therefore the call handling capacity of RCCs will be much reduced from current levels and are the result of hypothetical modelling.

The project relies heavily on IT and we are constantly told that control operators in any RCC will be able to answer a call from anywhere in the country. However, due to the seriously low indicative staffing numbers suggested by the CLG staffing model the system would reach saturation point very quickly and not be able to cope. Since the IT is only of any use at all when it can be answered quickly and interpreted by a control operator we believe end user requirements will not be met. For example the CLG have no power over the LACCs to set minimum crewing levels thus ensuring resilient staffing numbers across the network.

It will be down to each individual RCC to decide how many staff they wish to have on duty at any one time, they could rely on the rest of the network to answer their calls, but if they all do this then the result will be overload and calls going unanswered.

B. Staffing Numbers – beyond their sell-by date

On 15 July 2009, the fire minister announced the latest delay. That same day CLG also announced the introduction of Solution Establishment Workshops in order to discuss end user problems/ perspective/ requirements:

"The Minister also explained improvements to the project approach. Joint CLG and EADS (the main contractor) teams would be working on a day-to-day basis with the Fire and Rescue Service. A series of Solution Establishment Workshops have started at EADS, involving the CLG team, FRS representatives and EADS."

(Source: FRS Circular 43/2009)

The staffing model was rolled out in April 2008. The staffing numbers were proposed to LACCs in July 2008 [they were included in the Part 2 (regional) Business Cases]. The Solution Establishment Workshops did not commence until August 2009 and are still not finished.

The staffing numbers (and staffing model) will need to be re-visited once the outcomes of the Workshops have been finalised. It is the view of the FBU that CLG should acknowledge this fact and make an announcement to that effect.

C. Audit, assessment and regulation of adequacy of staffing arrangements for national assurance.

CLG maintains that resilience will be assured because of the performance standards that the LACCs will be required to meet and the existence of the contractual requirements of the LACC.

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

The FBU maintains that simply relying upon accountability arrangements, which by their nature will only be brought into effect after a negative performance has occurred, is an unsatisfactory way of approaching a risk critical activity such as emergency fire mobilising arrangements.

Moreover, there is no body or system to oversee/ audit the performance standards from a national assurance perspective.

In the final analysis, there are no sanctions for contract failure other than exhausting remedies through litigation.

There is no body or system which can insist on or implement immediate remedies when failures become apparent resulting from deficiencies arising from such matters as staffing establishment deficiencies.

D. Resilience

At a recent discussion with CLG, the FBU's fear that the resilience of fire control operation in England in the event of (inevitable) failure of the RCC project has not been properly considered.

CLG acknowledged that the promised resilience/ effectiveness of each go-live phase would not be assured until some time after the go live date and the "testing" of the system under real-time "field conditions".

Similarly, the resilience/effectiveness of the entire network could not be assured until after the entire network had been implemented and been in operation under field conditions.

There are effectively four parts of the network:

- Data (including gazetteer).
- Buildings
- Technology
- Staff (including numbers of).

D.1 Data

If the data is impaired, manual solutions could be substituted or used as a complementary component.

Therein lies a problem: This would however require more staff. So data problems could only be overcome or patched if staffing was available

D.2 RCC Buildings

If one of the buildings were deficient or became compromised, the theory is that the network could absorb the workload.

D.3 Technology

If the technology was found to be deficient, a reliable remedy could only be to fall back on the existing legacy equipment.

Therein lies a problem: There is no signed agreement between CLG and FRAs that existing mobilising equipment will remain in place nor that the existing control rooms would remain available for a specified period up to and for a (reasonable) time beyond the entire network has gone live. A signed agreement by every FRA must be a pre-condition before the first cutover.

D.4 Staff

At a recent meeting, CLG stated that deficiencies in the staffing model and/or the decision by LACCs on the numbers to be employed can be rectified based on experience.

Therein lies a problem: CLG have failed to understand that in order to enjoy the protection that the TUPE regulations afford, staff that transfer would have to do so at the time of cut-over. Staff cannot opt to join the LACC workforce after the cutover date without losing the protection of TUPE requirements. In turn that presents a problem to the LACCS (and to the FRAs and effective mobilising) because there will be no experienced or trained staff to be recruited into the regional control room to supplement the number of staff.

E. FBU proposed solution

E.1 Existing control rooms and mobilising equipment.

CLG must sign agreements with FRAs that existing control rooms and existing mobilising equipment will remain in place and available for a specified period up to and for a (reasonable) time beyond the entire network has gone live. A signed agreement by every FRA must be a pre-condition before the first cutover.

E.2 Staff-retention of employment model.

In order to provide:

- Assurance to emergency fire control staff regarding their, terms and conditions (unless varied by collective agreement) and job-security; and/or
- Resilience in the event of TUPE transfer arrangements not resulting in agreements; and/or
- The loss of staff from FRAs who may leave in anticipation of the regionalisation of controls (which of course may never happen) based on the belief that continued employment is in jeopardy; and/ or
- Availability of experienced staff to LACCs to work in the RCCs in the event of staff refusing or not wishing to transfer employment to the LACCs; and/ or
- FRAs with available experienced staff to supplement staffing numbers in RCCs in the event of planned staffing levels in LACCs proving deficient; and/or

- FRAs with available experienced staff to crew the local control room should the RCC network fail; and/or
- Cost savings to LACCs which will not need to employ HR staff.

... the FBU proposes that the current planning arrangements to transfer employment of staff to the LACCs is brought to an end and replaced by the implementation of the retention of employment model as is commonplace in the NHS (eg in ISTCs).

Early agreement between CLG and the FBU on this matter would provide huge benefits for LACCs, CLG, staff, and FRAs in the event of the RCC project proceeding.

More importantly to the FBU and our members (because we do not believe the project will ever come into effect) it would also provide benefits to staff, CLG and FRAs in the event of the RCC project not taking place.

Information provided by the Fire Brigades Union to CLG Select Committee

24 February 2010

General concern re End User Requirements not being met by FiReControl

A. SOLUTION ESTABLISHMENT WORKSHOPS

On 26 November 2008 the fire minister at the time, Sadiq Khan, announced a nine month delay to the project stating:

"...a number of difficulties with the ICT and other dimensions of the project were identified. These issues will result in some delay, and the FRS rightly expects us to address these in full.

On 15 July 2009, the new fire minister, Shahid Malik announced a further ten month delay stating the reasons as being:

"... in recent months it has become clear that technical problems with developing the IT system in a way which will meet all our and FRS requirements mean that further time is needed to complete the project."

On both occasions the reasons for the delay were said to be the result of technical problems with the I(C)T. On the occasion of the latter announcement, CLG announced the introduction of Solution Establishment Workshops in order to discuss end user problems/ perspective/ requirements:

"The Minister also explained improvements to the project approach. Joint CLG and EADS (the main contractor) teams would be working on a day-to-day basis with the Fire and Rescue Service. A series of Solution Establishment Workshops have started at EADS, involving the CLG team, FRS representatives and EADS."
(Source: FRS Circular 43/2009)

We do find it somewhat disconcerting that CLG announced a delay of a specific period (ten months) and then began dialogue with end users about the problems and requirements that they have.

The FBU is concerned that the announcement of a delay was one month before the consultation with end users regarding their requirements had started. The conclusion that we draw is that either the consultation is cosmetic or that the 10 month period was plucked out of the air. Either way, we are not confident that the announced timetable and promise of taking the outcomes of the consultations seriously can be assured.

B. DATA CAPTURE

EADS have been rolling out a presentation regarding the latest developments on data capture. A copy of the presentation is enclosed. EADS have notified stakeholders that DCMT2 will not be available until five months after the relevant Change Notice has been signed, and consequently may be as late as August. They also stated that the Intergraph system is currently only 60-70% compliant with updates not being made until July and September. Because of the very tight timeline to the May 2011 cutover date a further delay is now expected.

C. PLAN B

The Regional Control Centre project has been around for some considerable time now. Early promises of introduction in 2007 were wildly optimistic. The current first cutovers are now said to be possible in May 2011.

Throughout that period investment in the local control rooms has been held back.

From a human perspective, the staff have been left on tenterhooks concerning what the future holds for them and their families.

The fire and rescue service, the public and the staff deserve to be informed of what plans are in existence/ preparation for something as significant as the organisation and delivery of their emergency fire service control function.

Despite that, CLG state that they have a "Plan B". Disgracefully, this is being kept back from the public and staff due to CLG insisting on unnecessary, in appropriate and undemocratic secrecy. CLG did not even declare it to the Select Committee hearing on 8 February 2010.

The FBU believes that if there truly is a Plan B it should be made known. Given the experience of the RCC project (failed targets, an inoperable system, weak consultation, exponential growth in costs) it is imperative then it must be declared to see if it is, a) viable and b) more robust than the apparent panacea which RCCs were promised to be.

Circular 2010HOC0212AD

1 April 2010

To: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT – PUBLICATION

The Communities and Local Government (CLG) Select Committee have today published their report on FiReControl, which can be seen on the following link:-

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmcomloc/352/352.pdf>

The report is a damning indictment of the project.

Select Committee condemns CLG for not cooperating with its work.

The Select Committee (SC) states: “our inquiry has been hampered by the Government decision not to provide us with sight of various reviews of the FiReControl project carried out for CLG.”¹ Those external reviews were seen by the National Audit Office (NAO) which reported in February 2010. In what the FBU considers to be a significant criticism of the Department, the SC Report says that **“CLG’s written evidence refers to the review implying that their conclusions were positive”**² and then goes on to say **“However, repeated references in the NAO’s memorandum to the same reviews suggested that may not be the full story.”**³

It is clear that the public safety fiasco known as FiReControl is now more than simply a matter of mis-management of a key component of the delivery of fire and rescue services. CLG’s refusal to hand over the external reviews on the matter, has developed into one that seems to point to obstruction of independent parliamentary scrutiny of a project which has cost millions of pounds, which has been subject to delay after delay, and is still nowhere being created, let alone functioning!

The Select Committee Report on first reading seems disappointing. The Select Committee highlights that CLG had had essentially cited its record on FiReControl as an indication that it had learnt its lessons from the criticism meted out by the Public Accounts Committee regarding the New Dimensions project.⁴ Despite the fact that CLG has learned no lessons whatsoever, the Select Committee does not recommend the abandonment of the Project.

Select Committee slams CLG and challenges the Department to live up to its hollow promises.

However, there are some real clues as to what the Select

Committee feels about the viability of FiReControl. The Committee reflect that **“the history of the project is a catalogue of poor judgement and mismanagement”**⁵ and goes on to say **“There are now considerable doubts about whether the project can be delivered.”**⁶

It is against this backdrop that the lack of a clear call for the Project to be axed now must be considered. On the one hand, the Committee says **“On balance, given the investment of public funds already committed, and the benefits that will accrue, we conclude that CLG should press ahead with the FiReControl Project.”**⁷ This highly disappointing comment must be considered in the context of the qualification made by the Select Committee which reads **“In particular it is conditional on the urgent agreement of a viable project plan... which will ensure that the target ‘go-live’ date of mid-2011 will be met.”**⁸

Select Committee not confident in the Project.

The Select Committee doesn’t appear to be too reticent in expressing its doubts about the likelihood of the Project ever getting off the ground. It mentions or alludes to alternative strategies three times in its seven “Conclusions and recommendations”! In paragraph 1010, the Committee recommends that CLG should **“review its options and make an informed clear, open decision about the future of FiReControl.”** This sits alongside these two comments: **“This project plan must include interim milestones which will allow progress to be assessed on a regular basis and decisions to be taken about whether alternatives need to be considered”**⁹ and **“CLG should urgently draw up and consult on contingency plans for any further failures.”**¹⁰

Select Committee suggests safeguards for the Fire and Rescue Service when the Project almost inevitably fails.

Holding CLG to deliver on its assurances or to foot the bill for its failure to do so and thereby maintain sound emergency fire service mobilisation for the public via the existing control rooms, the Select Committee said that the contingency plans which should be put in place **“should include provision for the maintenance and, where necessary, upgrading of existing control room technology, and CLG should meet the full costs of that to FRAs where it has become necessary as a result in the FiReControl project.”**¹¹

Select Committee report seems to be predicting an absence of ‘buy-in’ by fire and rescue authorities.

Recognising perhaps the scepticism of many fire and rescue authorities reflected in the written submissions (known as ‘memoranda’) that were sent in, coupled with the LGA’s position (though probably confused by the muddled messages which it has received from CFA as it struggles under the

¹ Paragraph 5 on Page 8 of the SC Report.

² Paragraph 6 on Page 8 of the SC Report.

³ Paragraph 7 on Page 9 of the SC Report.

⁴ Paragraph 98 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

⁵ Paragraph 99 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

⁶ Paragraph 100 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

⁷ Paragraph 101 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

⁸ Paragraph 101 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

⁹ Paragraph 101 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

¹⁰ Paragraph 103 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

¹¹ Paragraph 103 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

weight of money it receives from the government) the Select Committee drew attention to what the FBU believes will be inevitable: **“Each FRA has the legal right to make the final decision on whether to accept FiReControl. Any failure to ensure that all FRAs use the new system would be a significant blow to the ultimate aims of the project.”**¹²

CLG spin machine kicks into action.

Within hours of the Select Committee report being published, the CLG seem to have drafted in a Malcolm Tucker to write their press release; either that or they have been given a spoof copy of the report. The assertions by the Minister as to what the Report says bear no resemblance at all to what the Report actually says. The release is not worthy of detailed comment. Perhaps the most critical point which reveals the myth that the Department is trying to create, is that there isn't even a machine on which the trainers can train on. That said, the FBU do not want to be overly critical. Seven years on, CLG officials did tell LGA and FBU representatives at a recent meeting that they have managed to produce one training note – on the phonetic alphabet!

Concluding remarks.

The FBU's position on the FiReControl Project is well-known to members and is reflective of the view of the vast majority of members, and need not be reiterated here. This circular provides a commentary on only some of the issues contained within the Select Committee report. I encourage all members to read the Report from cover to cover and to compare it against what CLG have to say on the matter.

Hard copies of the reference documents will be provided to control branches throughout the UK. All of the documents are available to view on the FBU website using the following link <http://www.fbu.org.uk/campaigns/outofcontrol/index.php>

The FBU written submissions provided to the Select Committee can be found on pages EV 101 – EV 116 of the Select Committee report.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally



ANDY DARK
Assistant General Secretary

WRITTEN MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

From Bob Neill MP/ Baroness Hanham
20 December 2010

Fire and Rescue Service

I would like to inform the House about recent developments on the FiReControl Project.

This is the third part of the last Government's resilience programme and set out to replace the standalone control rooms in England's Fire and Rescue Services with a national network of nine control centres. The aim was to improve national resilience, interoperability and efficiency as well as to enhance the technology available to the Fire and Rescue Service.

Many Hon Members will be aware that, for some time, the project has experienced delays and delivery problems.

The progress of the project has caused serious concern, and so in June this year I made it clear to the main FiReControl contractor, Cassidian (formerly EADS Defence & Security), that the main IT system must now be delivered to time, cost and quality. At this point, we activated a key milestone in their contract requiring the main IT system to be completed in three control centres by mid-2011.

We told Cassidian that no additional taxpayers' money could be invested in this project, nor would delivery of a system of reduced quality or functionality be acceptable.

Following extensive discussion with Cassidian, we have jointly concluded, with regret, that the requirements of the project cannot be delivered to an acceptable timeframe. Therefore the best outcome for the taxpayer and the fire and rescue community is for the contract to be terminated with immediate effect. Cassidian and the Department for Communities and Local Government have reached an acceptable settlement over this although the details will remain commercially confidential.

I know many people in the Fire and Rescue Service and in Fire and Rescue Authorities have devoted considerable time and expertise to this project, especially those who have served on governance and working groups, directors of the local authority controlled companies, advisers from the Chief Fire Officers' Association, Fire and Rescue Service secondees to the project and other staff involved from the fire and rescue community, and many technical and resilience experts. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all these people for their contribution.

Over the next few weeks we intend to identify the extent to which any legacy assets from the project, including the control centre buildings, can be used for the benefit of the Fire and Rescue Service and local communities in future. We will also be making arrangements for maintaining products already delivered.

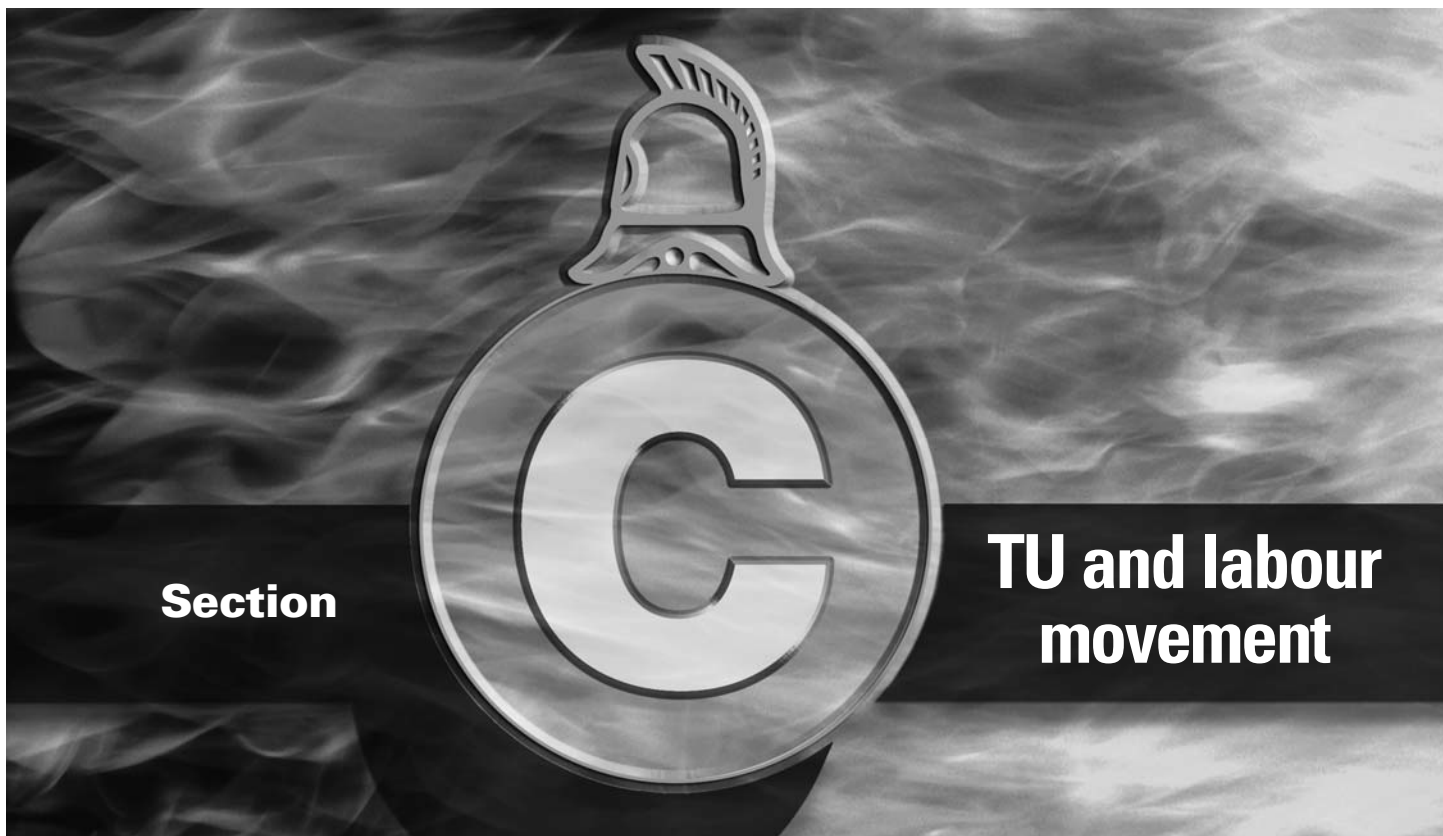
¹² Paragraph 102 on Page 41 of the SC Report.

SECTION B — FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

The Department will cease funding activities directly associated with the project as quickly as is compatible with organising an orderly closing down of the project. We recognise that Fire and Rescue Authorities will now wish to review their control arrangements in the light of today's decision. This Government does not intend to impose any solution for the future of control room services.

We will, however, start to consult the fire and rescue sector soon on how best the Government can support them, if at all, in developing their alternative plans based on the principles of localism, ensuring public safety, building up national resilience and delivering value for taxpayers' money. These continue to be our overriding priorities.

I know that the uncertainty around the future of this project has been frustrating and unsettling for the fire and rescue community and those closely concerned with their interests. My objective has been to deliver operational certainty for the Fire and Rescue Service and financial certainty for the taxpayer. Today's decision will deliver that objective and I will continue to keep the House informed of progress.



Section

TU and labour movement

C1 Introduction

During 2010 the union continued to participate in the various campaigns and activities of the trade union and labour movement. The focus for international work is developed by the international subcommittee of the executive council and has addressed issues directly affecting firefighters throughout the world, as well as supporting and developing campaigns around wider international solidarity issues.

The FBU sent delegations to a number of conferences including the TUC, Wales TUC, STUC and ICTU in addition to playing a full and active role in all TUC equality sections.

The FBU has supported many campaigns, including those initiated by the TUC such as the campaign against the cuts.

The general election in May saw a number of our FBU parliamentary group members stand down or lose their seats. We would like to thank them for their work over the years supporting the FBU in parliament. The group continued to work closely with the union during 2010 and the executive council wishes to place on record the union's thanks for this important area of work.

C2 TUC 2010

The 142nd annual Trades Union Congress was held in Manchester from 13-16 September.

The FBU's delegation was:
Matt Wrack

Mick Shaw
Vicky Knight
Tam McFarlane
Micky Nicholas
Rose Jones
Ian Murray
Warren Gee.

The FBU submitted two motions:

Pensions

Congress reaffirms its support for the provision of quality occupational pensions in both the public and private sectors and opposes the sustained campaign seeking to undermine such provision.

Congress notes with alarm the continuing campaign against decent pension provision under the coalition government. The shift to using CPI to upgrade pensions will adversely affect both public and private sector pension provision.

Congress opposes attempts to create division between those working in the public and private sector which is merely an attempt to create a 'race to the bottom' in pension provision whereby each attack on pension rights is gradually extended to all groups of workers.

Congress agrees to:

- Develop research and publicity material to support the campaign to defend quality occupational pensions and demonstrate the value of these to working people as a whole;
- Develop the case for extending the provision of quality final salary occupational pensions to those who are not currently covered by such schemes;

SECTION C — TUC AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

- Fully support any workers forced to take industrial action in defence of pension rights.

Congress notes that statements from the coalition government suggest that working people can expect significant attacks on pension rights over coming months.

Congress agrees to support the closest possible collaboration between affiliates in defence of occupational and state pension rights. This should include:

- The organisation of a major national demonstration in support of occupational and state pension rights;
- The closest possible coordination of campaigning between affiliates, including the coordination of industrial action where appropriate.

Public services

Congress notes with alarm the austerity agenda of the coalition government. These policies seek to ensure that working people in the UK pay the price for the failures of the economic system by regressively raising taxes and by embarking on the most vicious programme of spending cuts in living memory.

Congress recognises that these policies will devastate the lives of the most vulnerable in society, will destroy hundreds of thousands of jobs and will undermine the prospects for young people. The austerity agenda will further weaken public services by opening up new areas of public service to outsourcing and privatisation.

Congress rejects these policies and reaffirms support for the principles of public service and democratic accountability.

Congress recognises that public spending drives growth, which benefits recovery in both the public and private sector. Congress agrees to campaign to build a broad coalition of working people to oppose these attacks and agrees to:

1. Build a series of demonstrations against government austerity measures.
2. Further develop the arguments against these policies through research and the production of pamphlets and other materials.
3. Support local campaigning activity against cuts, especially by trades union councils.
4. Build a broad movement of opposition by developing links with other working class organisations opposed to cuts and closures.
5. Maximise the impact of such opposition campaigns by convening a Convention Against The Cuts to draw together all those organisations engaged in challenging the governments' agenda.
6. Build the coordination of industrial action against cuts.

Congress was held against the backdrop of the most serious attack on the welfare state for generations. Therefore, the issues of defending public services and pensions were ones

that were the subject of motions from several affiliate unions. As a result both FBU motions were composited into Composite 5 (Pensions) and Composite 10 (Defending public services). These were both passed by congress with the FBU making contributions to both debates.

The FBU also submitted amendments to motions on health and safety and Palestine. Once again, these were subjects that were the matter of motions from other unions and as a result the FBU's amendments were incorporated into composites. Composite 15 (Health and safety at work) and Composite 18 (Palestine) were both passed by congress and the FBU again spoke to both motions.

Congress delegates and visiting officials attended and spoke at several fringe meetings, including three organised by the Trade Union Coordinating Group (TUCG). Once again, we shared an exhibition stand with the Institute of Employment Rights, and general secretary Matt Wrack was re-elected to the general council.

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

C3 ICTU northern conference 2010

The FBU sent a delegation comprising the regional officials to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions' (ICTU) 2010 northern biennial delegate conference, held in Derry on 27-28 April 2010.

The conference was attended and addressed by a number of high-profile politicians including deputy first minister Martin McGuinness.

The FBU delegation, as usual, played a full and integral part in the conference which, among many other issues, debated motions on the economy, equal opportunities and pensions.

The delegation participated in many of the fringe events which took place throughout the course of conference.

C4 STUC 2010

The 113th STUC annual congress was held in the Caird Hall, Dundee from 19-21 April 2010.

Delegates:

Gavin Barrie

John Duffy

Jim Malone

Alan Paterson

Gerry McLeod

Lothian and Borders regional treasurer/acting chair

Tayside regional secretary

Tayside regional organiser

Grampian brigade secretary

Dumfries and Galloway brigade secretary.

Various problems with flights meant a reduced FBU attendance at STUC this year but there was still a positive input from the FBU. Thanks to Bro Alan Paterson and Bro Gerry McLeod for stepping in as late substitutes.

The first resolution covering the fire boards was carried by congress:

Congress notes with concern the previous report by the Audit Scotland which highlighted the level of involvement of Scottish fire boards in the running of the fire and rescue service and wishes to assist in addressing the concerns of the Fire Brigades Union with regard to the level of understanding and accountability of members of such boards. To this end this congress calls for and will work to encourage direct representation of the Fire Brigades Union on all Scottish fire boards.

The second motion, “Rebuilding collective prosperity – public services”, was included in a composite which was moved by the general council and carried by congress. It was supported by:

Educational Institute of Scotland
UNISON Scotland
Public and Commercial Services Union
GMB Scotland
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers
NASUWT
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Prospect
South Lanarkshire TUC.

Bro Roddy Robertson, EC member, was re-elected to the general council of the STUC.

C5 STUC black workers' conference 2010

Delegates:

Lud Ramsey
Hakim Beaouji

The 14th annual STUC black workers' conference took place in Glasgow on 2-3 October 2010. The conference was opened by the chair, Hilda Smith.

The conference had 18 motions, five of which were about cuts and the impact they will have on the BME population. As most of the BME workforce is in the public sector the cuts will impact negatively and disproportionately on BME workers. The conference agreed to try to counter this by organising in a way similar to the “better way” campaign and preparing to fight the possible redundancies.

There were four motions about opposing the far right. With the increasing rise of the English Defence League (EDL), Scottish

Defence League (SDL), the British National Party (BNP) and the Welsh Defence League (WDL), the motions called upon the STUC to step up its campaign against far right parties. This should be done by working with community groups and anti-fascist organisations to ensure that Scotland keeps the far right “right out”.

The Scottish police (Strathclyde, and Lothian and Borders) were praised, surprisingly, for being very instrumental in denying the EDL and SDL. This was achieved by not letting them march past any places of worship and then containing them in one pub in each city. Therefore, trouble was kept to a minimum.

The FBU had two motions: Hakim Beaouji moved Haiti as a first-time speaker; Lud Ramsey moved motion 17, Single Equalities Act. Both motions were passed by the conference.

Lud Ramsey was voted onto the STUC black workers' committee to serve for 2010-2011. He was also asked to speak at the STUC disabled workers' conference in November.

C6 STUC women's conference 2010

The STUC women's conference was held in Perth on 1-2 November 2010.

Delegation:

Denise Christie	Lothian and Borders, Scottish women's secretary
Kerry Walker	Dumfries and Galloway
Yvonne Campbell	Grampian
Colleen Devine	Grampian

Observer:

Vicky Stonebridge	Highlands and Islands
-------------------	-----------------------

Both the FBU resolutions, on menopause and on domestic violence, were carried at this year's conference. The FBU also submitted an emergency motion on the London firefighters' dispute asking for the STUC women's committee to condemn the action of the sacking of over 5,500 members by the London Fire Brigade and to commend and send a strong message of support to our sisters and brothers taking industrial action. This emergency motion was carried and a media report was sent out by the STUC highlighting this.

All our delegates spoke at conference this year with some first-time speakers. The contribution from the FBU within the debates was good and the sponsored lunch provided was very well received and gave our delegation the opportunity to speak to some of the guests at the conference.

Denise Christie was elected once again to represent the FBU on the STUC women's committee.

SECTION C — TUC AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

The following resolutions were passed:

Composite C: Domestic abuse (covering motion nos. 25 and amendment, 26 and 31)

That this Conference is deeply concerned about the impact the forthcoming public sector cuts will have on the services provided to women suffering from domestic violence in Scotland. Violence against women is a human rights violation and domestic abuse is an ongoing scourge of modern society, requiring a coordinated response from the Scottish government, trade unions, employers and individuals amongst others.

Conference acknowledges that Scotland did rate above average in the Map of Gaps report concluded by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the End Violence Against Women (EVAW) Coalition, but believes there is so much more room for improvement and is concerned at the lack of local, available and adequately funded services in Scotland.

Conference also notes that support services are a postcode lottery with Glasgow coming out top and in many areas of Scotland there are shocking failures to ensure that women have access to vital support services, such as Rape Crisis Centres, refuges and domestic violence outreach projects.

Conference is appalled that up to 3,000 women fleeing domestic abuse are turned away from Scottish refuges every year, because of a lack of space. Scottish Women's Aid has said they have to turn women and their children away every day. The prospect of further cuts would set back their achievements to date.

Conference notes that Scottish Women's Aid believes that the causes of domestic abuse lie in historical inequalities which still exist between men and women in our society, and that to mark their 35th anniversary, Scottish Women's Aid will launch a campaign to eradicate domestic abuse on 24 November 2010.

Conference also notes that women experiencing domestic abuse often fall foul of sickness, absenteeism and performance procedures, and that negotiated workplace policies are of benefit both to the employee and the employer.

Conference, therefore, calls on the STUC Women's Committee to work with the STUC General Council to:

- lobby the Scottish government to oppose any cuts to vital domestic violence support services;
- work with Scottish Women's Aid and other agencies to campaign for adequate provision and appropriate support for all women and children who need it;
- introduce awareness of domestic violence to the classroom, as we believe that education, awareness and the politics of equality must set the foundation stone for a just and fearless future for women and girls;
- ensure members are aware of the issues surrounding domestic violence and that support and advice are available;

- call upon affiliates to negotiate workplace policies on domestic abuse; and
- support the campaign to be launched by Scottish Women's Aid on 24 November.

Mover: Glasgow Trades Council

Seconder: Fire Brigades Union

Supporters: GMB Scotland, UNISON Scotland

Menopause

This women's conference is concerned that there is no real evidence based information on how the menopause can affect women in those industries where menopause symptoms can cause a health and safety risk.

Symptoms such as hot flushes, bloating and sleep irregularities to name a few may have direct health and safety implications on women in certain industries.

We believe that women should be supported when going through the menopause and employers should have supportive policies and procedures in place.

In order to assist affiliates in negotiating menopause policies with their employers we therefore call upon the STUC Women's Committee to:

- investigate further the effects the menopause may have on women working in those industries that will have direct health and safety implications; and
- produce and distribute to affiliates a report on the findings.

The findings of this report are to be included in an information leaflet on the menopause which is to be distributed to all affiliates.

C7 Wales TUC conference 2010

Wales TUC 2010 was held in Llandudno at the North Wales Conference Centre from 26-27 May 2010.

Welsh Region FBU delegates were:

Grant Mayos (regional secretary)

Cerith Griffiths (brigade secretary South Wales)

Joanne Byrne (regional women's representative)

Simon Fleming (regional health and safety coordinator).

An emergency resolution on human trafficking was moved by Joanne Byrne.

Human trafficking

Conference condemns the appalling and unacceptable escalation of human trafficking, which predominantly targets women and children.

Internationally, human trafficking is the fastest growing organised crime, with around two million people being forced

into the sex trade every year. This is nothing short of 21st century slavery and must be wiped out.

Following the conviction of Thomas Carroll and his wife Shamiela Clark on 7 February 2010 for running a network of 22 brothels from their Pembrokeshire home, conference believes that it is not just the inner city areas that are a cause for concern but also rural Wales.

Conference is further concerned that according to Local solutions to an international crime: trafficking of women and children in Wales 2010, a report by an Assembly cross party working group, golf's Ryder Cup will fuel a boom in women and children being forced from abroad to work in the Welsh sex industry.

Therefore conference calls upon the Wales TUC in conjunction with sister unions to:

- campaign for adequate Welsh Assembly government resources to prevent and deter the perpetrators, and to provide support and refuge for the victims;
- publicise and oppose this form of exploitation and abuse;
- work closely with organisations such as Amnesty International and other relevant agencies to highlight and eradicate this slavery.

Fire Brigades Union

Wales TUC 2010 women's committee election

Joanne Byrne (FBU) was elected to Wales TUC women's committee with 252,069 votes.

C8 TUC women's conference 2010

10-12 March 2010 saw the TUC holding its 80th annual women's conference in the Winter Gardens, Eastbourne, where 253 delegates debated a wide and varied trade union agenda for working women, representing almost 52% of the TUC's membership.

The week was particularly important to trade union and labour movement women, not only for marking 80 years of organisation under the umbrella of the TUC on gender issues and campaigning for women's rights, but also for marking the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day (IWD).

IWD is a day of recognition and celebration of the political, social, and economic achievements of women, and the continuous campaign for women's rights. Whilst at women's conference, we looked back over history and recognised progress and effective political change that had been made with amazing successes seen from the resolutions put forward at this conference.

This centenary also recognised that campaigns for women's rights need redoubling. The conference agenda showed both

new and historic attacks on women, with oppression, imprisonment, slavery and abuse all high on the agenda required for positive change.

One of the main themes which ran through the conference agenda was public sector cuts. We heard how a report produced by the TUC shows that these cuts would hit female employment the hardest as 4 in 10 women work in the public sector compared to less than 2 in 10 men. Women view the public sector as offering secure work with a good work-life balance and a decent retirement income – all of which will be under threat if deep public sector cuts go ahead.

The TUC also launched the report "Women and the Recession – One Year On" depicting the crisis of how the economic downturn has affected women at work. (The report can be found on the TUC website www.tuc.org.uk.)

FBU motions

As agreed, the FBU put the issues of women in Afghanistan and domestic abuse on the agenda for conference and both were unanimously supported. The domestic abuse motion became part of a composite, but the motion on women in Afghanistan stood alone with a large number of speakers in the debate and full support of the TUC women's committee.

It was agreed that the motion going forward to congress in September on behalf of working women would be the motion "A workplace agenda for women", calling upon the TUC and affiliated unions to remain vigilant in opposing attacks on campaigning and bargaining for women's equality, support organising women in unions and devise a trade union and workplace agenda for women, highlighting outstanding workplace issues, and finally, to be part of an ITUC campaign for decent work for women.

Childcare – TUC Women Officers' Summer School

As has been previously reported and to the FBU's great disappointment, the TUC has maintained a policy of non-provision of childcare at the annual women's school. The NWC has annually boycotted the event because of this policy decision and correspondence has been shared between the FBU and the TUC on the subject.

Due to the lack of progress or information on childcare provision at the event, the delegation asked for a point of information under the annual report to conference. It must be noted that the response was progressive, with a view to the TUC giving a commitment to investigate and progress the issue as a matter of urgency.

This needed to be followed up via both the general council and TUC women's committee to ensure some movement in time for the summer 2010 event.

Speakers

Along with motions highlighting women's struggles today, there were stories from inspirational women and international guest speakers, such as Joyce Moloi Moropa MP (ANC), chair of the South African parliament's Public Service and Administration Committee.

SECTION C — TUC AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

Joyce spoke of her continuous involvement in politics remembering back to her early involvement in the ANC youth wing and the impatience felt by younger activists about the need for change. Joyce was very frank about the fact that women were discriminated against through apartheid, suffered additional gender discrimination and particularly as working women, with the double burden of paid and domestic labour.

Joyce has been actively involved in building a women's organisation within the ANC and South African society, a project that means that within South African political structures women's representation reaches up to 50%, a figure proving that 20 years after the removal of apartheid, our sisters in South Africa have something to teach us. This representation in the political system at all levels is an amazing achievement.

Harriet Harman, MP for Camberwell and Peckham, deputy leader of the Labour Party, leader of the House of Commons and minister for women and equality, also addressed the conference. This address covered the fight for the forthcoming general election, the importance of trade unions, the progress of the Equality Bill and the agenda for women in the next government.

TUC deputy general secretary Frances O'Grady also addressed the conference, giving an invigorating update on the progress made by the TUC since the last conference. This encompassed the launch of the "Women and the Recession" report, the Robin Hood tax, the forthcoming fight on public sector cuts and attacks on pensions, and the ownership and responsibility for the state of the economy.

The FBU delegation spoke on the following issues:

Composite 1: Women and the threat of the far right;
Composite 2: Ending violence against women;
Composite 3: Sexualisation of girls and young women;
Motion 9: The price of motherhood;
Motion 15: Flexible working;
Motion 21: Domestic violence awareness in schools;
Motion 36: Afghanistan;
Motion 38: Sexual violence against women as a weapon of war;
Motion 41: Health and safety for women in the workplace;
Motion 12: Public debt and the gender equality duty;
Emergency Resolution 2 - Civil service compensation scheme;
Question – TUC Women's Summer School;
Vote of thanks for the chair.

Elections

As endorsed by the EC, Sis Vicky Knight was nominated for the TUC women's committee for the tenth year running. She was subsequently elected as one of 14 women trade unionists to represent the interests of women at the TUC for the congress year 2010-11.

Closing

The conference ended with a farewell to Professor Mary Davis, University and College Union activist and the chair of this year's TUC women's conference. After an amazing opening speech on the importance of the continuous organisation of women and our fight for equality, she sadly

announced that she is stepping down from the TUC women's committee, due to retirement from teaching after nearly five decades of activism in the movement.

A history lecturer, author and well known socialist and feminist, she has been and will continue to be an inspiration to women and trade unionists everywhere.

C9 TUC LGBT conference 2010

The TUC LGBT conference was held in London at Congress House on 1-2 July 2010 and was attended by 206 delegates from 28 unions, 12 observers, 64 visitors and eight others. Meetings were held for bi, black, trans and women delegates.

Conference was addressed by Frances O'Grady, Dougie Rooney, Maria Exall, Johann Hari, Linda Stewart, Martin Pendergast, Adam Rogalewski, Lynne Featherstone and Yemisi Ilesanmi.

The Fire Brigades Union was represented by the following delegates:

Stewart Brown (EC)
Patrick Carberry (secretary)
Yannick Dubois (chair)
Norm Perry (Region 10)
Alli Burrows (Region 12)
Peter Wilcox (Region 3)
Kevin Gutherson (Region 9)
John Arnold (Region 3).

The following motion was moved by our delegation and received unanimous endorsement by the conference.

Domestic abuse

Violence against lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans (LGBT) people is a human rights violation and domestic abuse is an ongoing scourge of modern society, requiring a coordinated response from government, trade unions, employers and individuals amongst others.

Domestic abuse affecting the LGBT communities is increasingly recognised, both by LGBT people themselves and service providers. Despite this, our knowledge and experience (and the services available in both the generic domestic abuse and LGBT sectors) remain limited.

Conference therefore welcomes the government's pledge to introduce awareness of domestic abuse to the classroom and we believe that education, awareness and the politics of equality must also set the foundation stone for a just and fearless future for LGBT people.

Therefore, conference calls on the TUC and affiliates to take action by:

- ensuring members are aware of the issues surrounding domestic abuse and that support and advice is available;

- lobbying government to ensure that improved services are available to all LGBT people, in all areas of the UK; and
- encourage affiliates, branches and members to get involved with Broken Rainbow and like minded organisations to raise awareness of this problem.

C10 TUC black workers' conference 2010

The 17th TUC black workers' conference took place in Liverpool on April 23-25 with the theme "Solidarity is our strength".

FBU delegates in attendance:

Michael Nicholas
Samantha Samuels
Andrew Fernandes
Ludwig Ramsey
Dalton Powell
David Pazir
Colin Jarrett.

Day one

Day one got under way with an opening speech from the chair Collette Cork-Hurst on the difficulties that lay ahead and the continued and sustained attack on our communities that would intensify if the Conservatives won the forthcoming general election. The theme that ran through the conference was "Solidarity is our strength".

There were a number of guest speakers throughout the day. Frances O'Grady (TUC deputy general secretary) spoke on the issues that affect BME people and trade unions:

- half of black youth are without work;
- how the recession was started by bankers in Wall Street and London and not by us;
- how black people are eight times more likely to be stopped and searched, three times more likely to be arrested, twice more likely to be unemployed or passed over for promotion;
- how courts are intervening and stopping legitimate strike action on a technicality.

Anita Cole (policy officer, Liberty) spoke on the valuable work that has been done and continues to be done in highlighting the issues that affect our communities, specifically:

- DNA testing – Britain has the largest database in the world with five million people on it, most of whom are innocent;
- ID cards;
- Stop and search – Section 46, introduced after the 7/7 terrorist attack on mainland Britain, is used on threats of terrorism. BME people are five times more likely to be stopped.

Dougie Rooney (president of the TUC) spoke of the continued discrimination in the workplace and how we should do more to challenge and rectify discriminatory practices.

Motions carried:

Black workers and public sector spending;
Race equality non-compliance in the public sector;
Race equality in the public sector;
Discrimination in recruitment;
Supporting black workers' career progression.

Day two

The guest speaker was Dr Robert Berkeley (director of the Runnymede Trust) who opened the second day of the conference. He spoke about the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool and suggested that delegates should visit it to gain an understanding of why black people continue to struggle for recognition. Dr Berkeley also reflected on where we were on the election campaign trail and how cuts in the public sector would affect BME and cause unemployment. Also, we must ensure that the race equality agenda stays at the heart of all debates. He said that 10 race councils were being disbanded with nothing to replace them. Dr Berkeley also spoke on a single equality act and how it would come under scrutiny after the next election.

Motions carried:

The impact of education funding cuts on black workers;
Beating the Tories – free school meals;
When I am older I want to be... unlocking the potential;
Mental health debate;
Digital Britain and BME representation in the media;
Equality Bill;
Chinese and East Asian portrayal;
Broadcasting regulator's policy on diversity.

Two emergency resolutions:

BBC's proposed closure of Asian Network;
Haiti (moved by Samantha Samuels, FBU).

In the afternoon conference adjourned for 90 minutes so delegates could attend a variety of fringe meeting on various issues:

Stop the cuts at BBC Asian Network;
The Labour Party and the BME vote; and
Haiti: bled to death before the quake.

Day three

Motions carried:

Membership of political parties;
The far right – a destructive presence;
The national database;
Stop and search;
Under-representation of black people in trade unions;
Positive image, positive futures.

FBU delegates spoke on a number of motions during the course of the conference.

The FBU emergency motion on Haiti was adopted by the conference to be the black workers' motion to September's

TUC congress. Sis Samuels spoke of the need to continue to give much vital support to the plight of the Haitian people. She further highlighted the horrors that Haitian people were having to endure. Conference was reminded that Haiti fought for her freedom against the British, French, and Dutch empires and became the first free nation governed by former slaves. A country of rich potential was now the poorest country in the Western hemisphere.

FBU executive council member Michael Nicholas was re-elected to the race relations committee for 2010-2011.

C11 Institute of Employment Rights

The Institute of Employment Rights (IER) was established in February 1989. It 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 became a registered charity.

Members of the institute include:

- the general secretaries of most of the trade unions in the UK;
- a selection of labour law academics; and
- legal practitioners who specialise in representing unions and their members.

Members meet once a year to give direction to the work of the institute. The day-to-day affairs are managed by an executive committee which is elected by the members. Bro Matt Wrack has again been elected onto this committee.

The institute is funded by donations and subscription fees, sales of publications and seminar receipts.

The institute itself is a relatively small organisation. The work is commissioned on a voluntary basis and reflects the views of the authors. The results of the work of the institute are published in booklets available for sale or through annual subscription. The institute also provides short articles (free of legal jargon) for trade union journals and other popular publications. The FBU continues to purchase these publications for distribution amongst officials.

It organises seminars on topics of particular importance and holds occasional lectures. FBU members and officials continue to attend these events held in Liverpool and London.

The FBU is currently working with the IER on the extent and implications of Section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, dismissal and re-engagement, which is being used with increased regularity.

C12 International

The executive council's international committee continued to meet in 2010. The intention is for the committee to have an overview of the union's international relations and setting priorities.

The international work of the union is divided into two broad areas: industrial matters concerning relations with firefighter and other trade unions in other countries, and solidarity work supporting international movements in line with FBU policies and principles.

Annual conference saw several resolutions with an international theme passed and these are being progressed through the union's structures.

Annual conference 2010 heard from Jorge Gamboa, an executive member of CUT, the largest union federation in Colombia, which led oil workers in a campaign against privatisation in 2007-08. Since CUT was founded in 1986, some 2,700 trade unionists have been murdered and Jorge himself was the subject of an assassination attempt by police. Gamboa urged the FBU to join the campaign to free trade unionists and political prisoners from Colombian jails.

General secretary Matt Wrack visited Colombia between 20-25 July as part of an international delegation including trade unionists.

In September the FBU sent a delegation to Brussels for a "no to austerity" demonstration called by the European Trade Union Confederation. This was attended by around 100,000 trade unionists from across Europe and, despite the relatively small size of the FBU delegation, the national banner and three regional banners were carried the length of the march.

The union continues to be active within various international solidarity campaigns, particularly:

- Cuba Solidarity Campaign;
- Palestine Solidarity Campaign;
- Justice for Colombia.

C13 FBU parliamentary group

In addition to our strategy meetings and ongoing programme of work, full meetings of the FBU parliamentary group were held in January, June, October and December 2010. This is less frequent than would usually be the case due to the general election campaign period and the subsequent delay in forming the coalition government. A parliamentary lobby was organised for 17 November. Group members addressed the FBU rally which was held in Methodist Central Hall before the parliamentary lobby.

The group, comprising 28 Labour MPs, has used every parliamentary mechanism available to further the FBU's aims in a number of policy areas, including:

- flooding and the Pitt review;
- the FiReControl project;
- firefighter safety;
- firefighter pensions;
- fire service funding cuts;
- Fire Futures;
- the London dispute.

Over the year the group tabled a total of 11 early day motions (EDMs) and 43 written questions, as well as supporting other EDMs in line with the union's policies. There have been numerous interventions on the floor of the House by members of the group in support of the FBU, asking oral questions and contributing to debates on legislation and policy matters in both the Commons and the Lords. Members have also written seven letters to government ministers, seeking meetings or information on specific policy matters.

A significant part of the group's work for the union continued to focus on the ballooning cost and delay in the FiReControl project which the Labour government embarked upon in 2002 after the need for upgrading control rooms was officially acknowledged. The coalition government eventually announced the scrapping of the project at the end of December and the group will make the case in 2011 for the long overdue upgrade of control rooms which remains outstanding.

The Pitt review's call in 2007 for the creation of a statutory duty for the fire service to respond to flooding emergencies continued to be resisted by the Labour government. Group members made repeated efforts to amend the Flood and Water Management Bill to reflect Pitt's recommendation but could not persuade the government to accept these amendments during the bill's passage through the Commons and the Lords.

The group has represented these concerns to the new government and has encountered a similar attempt to evade the clear implications of Pitt's recommendation to create an appropriate statutory duty. Other aspects of the parliamentary process have been used to press the case for statutory duty and the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee's inquiry into future flooding and water management legislation has recommended to the government that it accepts the FBU's argument for creating a statutory duty, in line with Pitt's recommendation four years ago.

Health and safety was also a key campaign area for the group in the year past. Lord Young of Graffham's appointment by David Cameron to an advisory role on health and safety issues was quickly followed by media interviews in which Lord Young made a number of provocative comments, chief amongst them being the ambition to "remove the police and the fire service from health and safety legislation". Subsequent meetings between the union and Lord Young established that this was not a serious threat to the health and safety of public servants but political posturing. However, the Trade Union

Coordinating Group, of which the FBU is a founder member, will continue to monitor the government's intentions on health and safety and will hold a lobby of Parliament on 2 March 2011

The lack of national standards in reporting firefighter injuries and the increase in fatalities in recent years was highlighted to the government and this remains an area of ongoing work for the group.

In June the coalition government appointed the former Labour cabinet minister John Hutton to head a review of public sector pensions. This signalled the new administration's determination to force through cuts to all public sector pension schemes, including the three which apply to firefighters. The group supported the FBU's submission to the review and noted the interim report's indication that Hutton will propose reforms of the fire service pension schemes.

The new government's spending cuts will hit all public services hard and the fire service will be no exception, despite George Osborne's misleading comment in his Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) statement in October that: "In recognition of the important service provided by the fire and rescue service, we have decided to limit its budget reductions in return for substantial operational reform."

The CSR, in fact, announced a 13% cut in central government funding of the fire service, a 25% cut in local government funding and a two-year freeze on council tax. The Fire Futures review, chief fire officers appointed by the government to propose reform of fire and rescue services, estimates that the fire and rescue service faces a 30% budget cut over the next four years. The government also stated that decisions on making cuts to local fire service budgets will be taken by individual fire authorities.

London MPs in the group worked to highlight the shocking decision taken by the London fire commissioner Ron Dobson and the chair of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, Cllr Brian Coleman, to issue sacking notices to all 5,557 London firefighters to force them to agree to changes to shift patterns.

The group highlighted this disgraceful attack on basic employment rights and industrial relations. MPs also pointed out the basic threat to public safety of Brian Coleman's decision to take 27 fire appliances out of fire stations across the capital and to hand them to strike breaking firm AssetCo. The fire engines remain out of public service and the group is working with the union to get these appliances back into the fire stations they belong to.

The Fire Futures review reported in mid-December on its initial suggestions for future reform of the fire and rescue service. The group is trying to establish when the government intends to respond to these, chief amongst which is greater integration with the ambulance service.

We continue to look at ways to work with non-Labour parliamentarians, as well as increasing the active core of the group.

C14 Affiliations

During 2010 the FBU maintained or established affiliations to the following organisations:

Union organisations

- European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)
- International Firefighter Unions Alliance (IFFUA)
- International Union Rights
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Labour Research Department
- Public Services International
- Scottish Trades Union Congress
- Trades Union Congress
- Trade Union Coordinating Group (TUCG)

Fire organisations

- Federation of British Fire Organisations (FOBFO)
- Fire Protection Association
- Firefighters Memorial Charitable Trust

Campaigns – national

- Abortion Rights
- Broken Rainbow LGBT Domestic Violence Service (UK)
- Campaign against Climate Change
- Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom
- Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
- Defend Council Housing
- Disability Alliance
- Inquest
- Labour Representation Committee (LRC)
- Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)
- Love Music Hate Racism
- National Assembly of Women
- National Pensioners Convention
- The People's Charter
- Searchlight
- Show Racism the Red Card
- Stop the War Coalition
- Unite Against Fascism (UAF)
- United Campaign to Repeal the Anti-Trade Union Laws
- Workers' Educational Association
- Working Class Movement Library

Campaigns – international

- Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA)
- Amnesty International
- Anti-Slavery International
- Cuba Solidarity Campaign
- Hands off Venezuela
- Justice for Colombia
- Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC)
- Venezuela Information Centre
- War on Want
- Western Sahara Campaign



Section

Pensions

Retained firefighters: pension settlement

FBU officials and representatives from Thompsons solicitors continued to negotiate with representatives from the department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) to reach a settlement to the issue of firefighters working the retained duty system gaining access to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS).

Regular updates on progress were given to executive council members and a circular 2010HOC0317MW issued on 7 May 2010 to all retained branches explained the latest position. This circular explained that executive council members had, at their meeting held on 20 and 21 April 2010, discussed the current negotiated position and agreed that it be recommended to members for acceptance.

Work has continued with CLG to produce a blueprint showing exactly what the modified scheme will look like and that this is then made available to members. This blueprint is expected to be completed early in 2011 after which the statutory consultation will take place.

Fairer Commutation Campaign

The Fairer Commutation Campaign continued throughout 2009 and an update was given to all out of trade members on 4 January 2010 in circular 2010HOC0003MW. This circular explained that model grievances, to submit to the Pensions Ombudsman, were being prepared for individuals who retired pre 22 August 2006 but after 1 March 2006 and for individuals who retired pre 1 March 2006. It also explained the continued support that the FBU would be giving to out of trade members who were involved in this campaign.

These model grievances were distributed in circular 2010HOC0126MW on 17 February 2010 with an explanation of how they should be used.

The Pensions Ombudsman initially raised an issue that the internal disputes resolution process (IDRP) had not been exhausted but, following written correspondence and several telephone conversations, it was accepted that the IDRP was not the practical route in this situation.

As part of the ongoing process the Pensions Ombudsman sent copies of the initial submissions from the department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) to the FBU for our comments. A brief summary of this initial submission which included a view from CLG that the Pensions Ombudsman had no jurisdiction to consider these complaints was contained in circular 2010HOC0329SS issued on 13 May 2010.

On 26 May 2010, following the FBU comments, head office received a further letter from the Pensions Ombudsman explaining that the investigation would focus on the Government Actuary's Department, but the door would be left open to extend this to the CLG if necessary. This letter also explained that the test case approach that had been discussed between the FBU and the Pensions Ombudsman would be adopted and a test case for each year in question would be selected.

The GAD position remained that the complaint should not be investigated because:

1. It is time barred;
2. If it is not time barred the Pensions Ombudsman can only investigate maladministration that occurred after 6 April 2006;
3. If it is not time barred there was no maladministration.

Further updates were given to executive council members at their meetings held on 8, 9 and 10 June and 21, 22 and 23 September 2010.

SECTION D — PENSIONS

On 8 December 2010 the FBU received a letter from the Pensions Ombudsman which included the provisional findings in relation to the three points of contention raised by GAD.

Changes to pension tax relief

Government proposed changes to tax relief on pension contributions which if implemented were likely to affect a wide number of FBU members. Initial consultation ended on 27 August 2010 and circular 2010HOC0533MW outlined those likely to be affected and informed members that the FBU had submitted a response to these proposals.

A bulletin simplifying the changes and giving examples of the way this proposal could affect members was posted on the FBU website. This bulletin also urged members to email or write to their MP asking them to oppose this proposal.

This issue was also raised at the Firefighters' Pension Committee and a response was submitted that took account of many of the concerns of the attendees. In October HM Treasury issued a summary of the responses and detailed the next steps.

On 14 October 2010 circular 2010HOC0645SS, which explained the government changes to pension tax relief, was circulated. It highlighted that these changes were not as severe as those initially proposed and further consultations were expected on options for flexibility over payment of charges.

The issue was discussed further at the Firefighters' Pension Committee and a further paper FPC (10)13 which raised the issue of ill health and redundancy was distributed.

Changes to pension indexation

In June 2010 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that for future pension increases the measure of inflation figure would be the Consumer Price Index (CPI) instead of the Retail Price Index (RPI). This announcement was confirmed in Firefighters' Pension Scheme circular 4/2010 issued on 7 July 2010.

This had the obvious potential to devalue the future pension uprating and the FBU immediately looked into a possible challenge to this position. Initial legal opinion was sought and a report was presented to the executive council at the meeting held on 7, 8 and 9 December 2010. The executive council discussed the report and agreed to seek further legal advice before any final decision on a challenge is taken.

Pensionable pay

The department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) issued a Firefighters' Pension Scheme circular (11/2009) which requested responses from stakeholders on the issue of pensionable pay. The FBU responded and raised concerns with how some elements of pay were being treated inconsistently with regard to their pensionability.

CLG suggested several options including a suggestion that payments such as London Weighting Allowance and Flexible Duty Allowance should not be pensionable in the same form as they currently are. CLG attempted to debate this issue at

the Firefighters' Pension Committee held on 15 March 2010 but the FBU objected to the discussion being held in this forum as it was an issue of a contractual nature and must therefore be only discussed at the National Joint Council (NJC).

Following this opposition the paper was withdrawn and CLG informed the committee that the proposals would not be actioned at this stage.

Apportionment

On 13 August 2010 circular 2010HOC0501SS was issued giving advice to officials representing members in the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) on rule K reviews. This advice was issued to clarify the position on when apportionment could be applied and to give details of a test case that the FBU were running where an authority was dealing with a review contrary to the guidance on how they should be applied.

On 4 October 2010 an update on the test case was given in circular 2010HOC0626SS and clarified that CLG had conceded that on a K2 review apportionment cannot be applied to factors that were available at the time of the original decision. Simplified this meant that unless apportionment was used at the initial assessment by the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioners (IQMPs) it could not be introduced at subsequent K2 reviews.

Update guidance for officials dealing with ill-health retirements

On 12 August 2010 head office facilitated a medical appeal update for regional/sectional pension co-ordinators. This update focussed upon the new guidance for Independent Qualified Medical Practitioners (IQMPs) issued by CLG in July 2009. On 25 August 2010 circular 2010HOC0527SS was issued to outline the full process and to illustrate the changes to the process to all officials. This document highlighted the main stages involved in both medical and non-medical issues and requested that officials used the ideas contained in the attached model letter to ensure that they had early involvement with any ill-health retirement situations.

On 21 September 2010 circular 2010HOC0596SS was issued to remind officials of the importance of securing early involvement in ill-health cases and to inform of a course that will be run in 2011 designed to outline the pre- and post-IQMP process.

Age discrimination

Circular 2010HOC0192MW issued on 22 March 2010 informed members that CLG had taken legal advice following a challenge raised on potential age discrimination concerning firefighters who were employed and joined the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) age 18-20 years old and that they would not be defending their position legally. The remedy to the position was that anyone who joined the FPS age 18-20 will not be required to pay pension contributions from the point at which they reach 30 years' reckonable service until the point they reach age 50. At age 50 the individual can retire and receive a pension or resume making pension contributions. The entitlement would be backdated until 1 December 2006

when the age discrimination regulations came into effect and a refund of contributions would be made to affected members.

CLG confirmed this position would require a change to rule G2 of the FPS and that following ministerial approval this would be enacted. This was later confirmed in Firefighter Pension Scheme circular 3/2010 issued on 21 June 2010.

Implications for re-employment of Firefighters' Pension Scheme pensioners from 6 April 2010

On 9 March 2010 circular 2010HOC0158SS explaining the new tax rules that took effect from 6 April 2010 regarding members who retire under rule covering the protected pension age was issued. This circular included a guidance note(1/2004) that outlined that the new rule relates to the Finance Act 2004, whereby the minimum pension age (MPA) rose to age 55 from 6 April 2010. Members of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 retained a right to retire from age 50 (provided they have 25 or more years of pensionable service). This right to retire at an age below 55 was protected and on retirement members receive a protected pension age (PPA).

(HM Revenue and Customs took the view that this protection does not extend to chief fire officers appointed on or before 5 April 2006).

The guidance note brought to the attention of fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) the tax rules that will be applied from 6 April 2010, where an individual who has taken pension benefits from the FPS takes up employment again.

It explained that from 6 April 2010, an individual who retires with a PPA and who subsequently takes up employment will lose that protection if they are employed by one of the following employers and one of the four employment conditions listed was not met:

1. an employer who employed the individual in the six months before benefit entitlement arose, and who was also a sponsoring employer in the scheme under which benefit entitlement arose in that six-month period;
2. any person connected with the employer described in the previous paragraph. Note that under this condition the person employing the individual does not need to be a sponsoring employer;
3. any sponsoring employer in the pension scheme under which benefit entitlement arose that is connected with the individual.

Therefore, from 6 April 2010 an individual who has retired with a PPA and was subsequently re-employed by a FRA before they have reached age 55 would incur additional tax charges on all pension benefits, including any commuted lump sum, paid to them before reaching age 55 unless one of the following four re-employment conditions is met:

1. recall by the armed forces;
2. a break in employment of at least six months;
3. a break in employment of at least one month and benefits may be abated;

4. a break in employment of at least one month and the re-employment is materially different.

The guidance note issued on 26 January 2010 also explained the discretion available to employers on abatement and gave a definition of what is meant by the term "materially different".

Abatement and re-employment

In line with annual conference 2009 resolution 35, work was undertaken to evaluate the continued policy on pension abatement and if necessary produce an alternative position. A report was submitted to the executive council for its meeting held on 8, 9 and 10 February (2010HOC0113SS) following which an executive council policy statement – Pension abatement and re-employment – was prepared for annual conference 2010.

After being debated the statement received the support of annual conference and became FBU policy.

Local government pension scheme – fact not fiction

In response to media stories that public sector pension scheme costs are spiralling out of control, the FBU, along with other unions, produced documents aimed at giving a more balanced view on the situation. These documents (Mythbusting guide; Ten key facts; The truth about the LGPS; LPGA – the economics; What politicians say about the LGPS) were explained in circular 2010HOC0247SS and were distributed to FBU members to enable them to correct the inaccuracies and give an informed opinion when speaking to members of the public and media.

Scheme valuations

A special meeting of the Firefighters' Pension Committee was held on 11 January 2010 to discuss the actuarial valuations of the firefighters' pension schemes as at 31 March 2007. At this meeting CLG raised issues around the future affordability and sustainability of the firefighters' pension schemes and drew attention to the fact that the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) had suggested that factors such as increased longevity for pensioners would have a dramatic effect upon the future cost of the schemes. The FBU raised several issues around savings that had already been made and that these had yet to be realised.

CLG outlined that other public sector pensions had already looked at cost sharing options such as "cap and share" and that they may have to be considered in more detail in the very near future for the firefighters' pension schemes.

The next valuation of the firefighters' pension schemes (FPS and NFPS) is due to take place in 2011.

CLG suggested that a future paper, Options for the Future, be prepared for a subsequent meeting of the Firefighters' Pension Committee.

Options for the Future

Circular 2010HOC0192MW, issued on 22 March 2010, reported to members that at the Firefighters' Pension Committee held on 15 March 2010 four papers were presented by CLG which

SECTION D — PENSIONS

included papers on cap and share and on options for the future. Cap and share is a method that is being adopted in a number of public sector schemes to reduce the risk of pension cost increases to the employers. In brief, if actuarial factors show that the cost of the scheme has increased then members have to share the cost of the increase. Once the employers' share reaches a cap determined by the Treasury then members have to meet the entire increased cost. Members share the cost or bear the cost by increasing contributions or taking a cut in their benefits.

CLG introduced this paper and explained that cap and share would be imposed on the firefighters' pension schemes following their next valuation in 2011. That valuation would be used to examine how the schemes have fared since 2007. Changes to assumed rates of inflation, pay increases, life expectancy etc will be costed and subjected to the cap and share arrangement. Falls in the stock market will not be subject to this regime.

The FBU outlined that there was much more detail required on this issue before any decisions could be made and highlighted that the risk-sharing element of the decision would have to be considered in great detail, especially in the 1992 FPS, due to it being a closed scheme.

CLG also introduced a paper, Options for the Future, which included tiered contributions, fixed commutation, ending final salary pension schemes, raising the normal retirement age and a more flexible retirement process. CLG suggested that members of the Firefighters' Pension Committee should say which options were palatable and which ones were not.

The FBU made it quite clear that until further information was made available, any discussion was premature. CLG was also reminded that the NFPS was introduced as a cost-saving scheme and the effect of its introduction has not yet been measured. CLG was adamant however that whatever the result of the next general election, substantial further savings would have to be made. Their attitude was that because the FPS is more expensive than the NFPS, it is the FPS that will be the target for savings. The FBU also stated that all the other options suggested would need to be explained fully including any proposed savings to the scheme highlighted before any decisions on them being acceptable or not could be taken.

The FBU suggested that this work was undertaken before any further options paper was put before the committee for its consideration. After a debate on this suggestion CLG reluctantly agreed to provide further information to a future FPC.

CLG made it plain, however, that they fully expect major changes will need to be made to the FPS, and it is clear that their preferred option would be to close the FPS altogether and move all members into the NFPS.

In addition to the discussion that was taking place at the Firefighters' Pension Committee meetings the government announced that John Hutton would chair an Independent Public Service Pensions Commission structural review of public sector pensions for the 2011 budget.

At the 38th meeting of the Firefighters' Pension Committee, held on 17 November 2010, CLG explained that the level of savings required from the spending review equated to an increase in employee contributions of around 3%. CLG explained that these would be phased in from April 2012 and that with the introduction of tiered contributions for more senior roles this would equate to employee contributions in the Firefighters' Pension Scheme rising to around 17%. This was described as a necessary cash injection exercise and that further benefit changes would be implemented in 2014 following further recommendations from phase two of the Hutton review.

Members were informed of this on 19 November 2010 in circular 2010HOC0712SS which outlined the imposed employee contribution levy and what it would mean for the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS), the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme (NFPS) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

Independent Public Service Pensions Commission

On 22 June 2010 circular 2010HOC0421SS informed members that John Hutton had been appointed to chair an Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, which had been set up to review public sector pensions.

On 28 June 2010 an invitation was sent to submit evidence and views for consideration by the commission. The FBU took up this invitation and submitted evidence to the commission on 3 August 2010. On 9 September 2010 the FBU, along with other public sector unions, took part in a round-table discussion with John Hutton and raised serious concerns with some of the proposals that were being discussed as part of the ongoing review.

The initial report from John Hutton was released on 7 October 2010 and circular 2010HOC0638MW, issued to all members on 8 October 2010, outlined what the report spelt out – that public sector workers could look forward to working longer, paying more and getting less. Attached to the circular was a mythbuster which was designed to give examples of inaccuracies that were being spread about the firefighters' pension schemes and some counter-positions that members could use to give a more balanced view.

On 1 November 2010 the pensions commission put out a further call for evidence for its final report which was due to be released in spring 2011 in time for the budget. This request was in the form of 25 specific questions and asked for specific information on issues such as scheme designs and risk sharing.

The FBU was also invited to a further round table meeting which took place on 2 December 2010 and once again raised serious concerns around the direction the review was heading, especially following the Treasury's decision to impose the 3% employee contribution levy.

The closing date for evidence was 17 December 2010 and the FBU submitted a response in line with this timescale. This response was distributed to officials on 17 December 2010 as an attachment to circular 2010HOC0760SS and was posted on the FBU website.



Section

AIF 2010

Introduction

The management committee of the accident and injury fund comprised:

Vice president	Alan McLean
National officer for AIF	Paul Woolstenholmes

Executive council members – January to May 2010:

Bro Roddy Robertson	Region 1
Bro Jeremy Pagan	Region 4
Bro Ian Leahair	Region 10
Bro Stewart Brown	NGLC

Executive council members – June to December 2010:

Bro Roddy Robertson	Region 1
Bro Ian Murray	Region 4
Bro Ian Leahair	Region 10
Bro Stewart Brown	LGBT

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 2010									
REGION	TEMPORARY DISABLEMENT		PERMANENT DISABLEMENT	DEATH OF MEMBER	EX- GRATIA	DEATH OF DEPENDANT	TOTAL AMOUNT	TOTAL PAYMENTS	
	ON DUTY	OFF DUTY							
1	No. of payments	2		5	1	2	£102,203.03	10	
	Amount paid	£1,104.23		£84,819.20	£5,000.00	£11,279.60			
2	No. of payments	23	12	4	2	1	£112,133.57	42	
	Amount paid	£21,059.29	£7,324.88	£76,109.60	£2,000.00	£5,639.80			
3	No. of payments		2	1		2	£49,746.73	5	
	Amount paid		£4,475.73	£33,991.40		£11,279.60			
4	No. of payments	5		2		4	£56,275.04	11	
	Amount paid	£5,516.84		£28,199.00		£22,559.20			
5	No. of payments		4	5		5	£164,229.22	15	
	Amount paid		£2,410.72	£119,520.00		£28,199.00			
6	No. of payments	21	5	2			£39,954.62	29	
	Amount paid	£12,702.64	£3,152.48	£10,000.00					
7	No. of payments			6		1	£127,858.80	7	
	Amount paid			£122,219.00		£5,639.80			
8	No. of payments		4	6	1	1	£125,570.54	12	
	Amount paid		£8,414.34	£101,516.40	£10,000.00	£5,639.80			
9	No. of payments			1	2		£27,699.00	3	
	Amount paid			£23,199.00	£4,500.00				
10	No. of payments	10	7	1	1	5	£76,072.52	24	
	Amount paid	£5,308.22	£8,443.30	£32,622.00	£1,500.00	£28,199.00			
11	No. of payments			2		1	£33,490.80	3	
	Amount paid			£27,851.00		£5,639.80			
12	No. of payments	9		6		2	£158,314.92	17	
	Amount paid	£5,887.72		£141,147.60		£11,279.60			
13	No. of payments	1	3	2	1		£45,988.40	7	
	Amount paid	£1,190.28	£1,947.12	£27,851.00	£15,000.00				
TOTAL NO. OF PAYMENTS		71	37	2	8	24		185	
TOTAL AMOUNT		£52,769.22	£36,168.57	£28,199.00	£38,000.00	£135,355.20	£1,119,537.19		



Section

Legal report

Last year the union secured £3.5m in compensation for members and their families injured at and away from work.

Pensions

Retained firefighter pensions

Following the FBU's success in the House of Lords and at the employment tribunal in the test cases, agreement on the principles of the pensions settlement and the terms and conditions has been reached. The terms and conditions settlement is due to be signed and the draft statutory instrument necessary for the pensions settlement is expected to be published shortly.

Surrey pension judicial review

The union appealed to the Board of Medical Referees (BMR) on this matter. The board allowed a member's pension to be reduced on a Rule K review by apportioning part of their disablement to not-due-to-service injuries.

On the FBU's instructions, a judicial review of that decision was sought. Both the department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) and Surrey FRA agreed that it was not lawful to allow apportionment on review in a case where the entirety of the disablement had been assessed as having been caused by service-related injury in the first instance.

Judicial approval of this agreement between the parties has now been obtained.

Employment

Freedom of expression

The FBU and Thompsons solicitors secured a ground-breaking victory for a member who was sacked by Greater Manchester fire and rescue authority for sending an email to colleagues about the fire service's insistence that he used a chair that was injuring his back on nightshifts at work.

After a seven-day hearing in June and September 2009, the employment tribunal concluded that the member's right to freedom of expression under the Human Rights Act had been breached and that his dismissal was unfair.

This year Thompsons secured an out-of-court settlement of £80,000, which is more than the statutory cap for these types of cases.

Continual professional development payments

The employment appeal tribunal (EAT) has dismissed the appeal by South Yorkshire fire and rescue authority (SYFRA) against a ruling that it unlawfully deducted £915 each from the wages of four FBU members when it turned them down for continual professional development (CPD) payments under the scheme introduced in 2007.

The EAT ruled, as did the employment tribunal, that it was a breach of contract for SYFRA to refuse to pay a CPD payment just because the published sickness absence target had been exceeded.

It was held that the CPD payment was not simply an attendance bonus. The wording of the CPD scheme required an assessment to be made of a firefighter's commitment to attendance. So a firefighter who normally has a good sickness

SECTION F — LEGAL REPORT

absence record, but who has a genuine illness or injury one year which takes them over the absence target, should not automatically be refused a CPD payment on those grounds alone. SYFRA did and the EAT said it was acting unlawfully.

It may still be open to a fire authority to refuse a CPD payment if, for example, a manager believes that a firefighter all too readily takes sick leave each time they have a mild cold. But the manager would have to have a reasonable basis for coming to that conclusion.

Disability discrimination

Compensation for unfair dismissal and disability discrimination was secured for a member who was sacked by his local authority employer after being on sick leave for some time – even though the employer’s own occupational health doctor advised the member to remain off work. The employer accepted that the member was disabled after seeing the GP report obtained by the FBU’s lawyers.

Unfair dismissal

A station manager sacked for gross misconduct was awarded £90,000 for unfair dismissal. An employment tribunal unanimously ruled that the member had been unfairly dismissed by Derbyshire fire and rescue service. The member was sacked after an investigation into a complaint made against them by a member of the public. The chief fire officer both heard his appeal and upheld his dismissal.

The investigation was inadequate and witnesses were not interviewed. The tribunal found that the investigator and hearing chair presented their evidence in a manner “whereby each was more concerned with supporting each other than with effectively establishing the facts independently and objectively for the purpose of making a proper assessment of the case”.

Kevin Hughes v Merseyside fire and rescue service

Kevin Hughes, an FBU branch chair, was dismissed for gross misconduct on grounds that he “assaulted James Tasker, the son of a fire service officer, Station Manager Steven Pratt. The assault was in connection with issues relating to Station Manager Pratt working during the 2006 industrial action and took place in the Victoria Public House, Rainhill”.

The FBU instructed Thompsons to draft Bro Hughes’ grounds of appeal and issue a claim for unfair dismissal and dismissal on grounds of trade union activities.

The employment tribunal found unanimously that Bro Hughes was unfairly dismissed, albeit the claim of dismissal on grounds of trade union activities was unsuccessful. The tribunal accepted that the dismissing officer had a genuine belief on reasonable grounds after an investigation that Bro Hughes was guilty of punching Mr Tasker in the face and causing him an injury. However, the tribunal found the investigation and disciplinary hearing was tortuous. They were very critical of the employer for not telling Bro Hughes that they accepted the assault was neither work related nor related to the industrial action in 2006.

The tribunal said: “There was no adverse connection between the offence and the employment on the respondent’s own findings of fact and it was outside the bands of reasonable responses to dismiss him for it in all the circumstances of this case.” It also said: “We cannot accept that Fire Officers are in a special position vis-a-vis the members of the public in the way, say, a police officer is. In our view they are like any other employee in any walk of life.”

Kate Ellis v Hampshire fire and rescue service

Kate Ellis, an RDS firefighter at Kingsclere fire station, submitted a grievance in April 2007 alleging that she had been sexually harassed many times by watch manager, Mark Butler, and other members of the watch since arriving there in 2005. Things deteriorated after she made the complaint and she was even threatened in the street and her car vandalised.

A fact-finding investigation into the low morale at Kingsclere resulted in Kate Ellis being subjected to Stage 3 disciplinary procedures. She was then forced to endure a 12-day disciplinary hearing during which every member of the watch gave evidence against her. Following this hearing, Hampshire found that, even though she had only “contributed” to an unpleasant working environment, she would be subjected to an informal management action plan during which she could not visit Kingsclere or contact any of her colleagues.

When she was eventually allowed to return to Kingsclere in October 2008, she was ignored and ostracised. She felt she had no option but to resign. She subsequently pursued claims against Hampshire fire and rescue service (HFRS) for constructive unfair dismissal, direct sex discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.

At the end of the second day of a 10-day tribunal hearing in April 2010, after the first of HFRS’s witnesses had given evidence, employment Judge Warren ordered the parties outside to settle the case. He stated: “In the whole of my career I have never seen a witness so significantly and totally demolished in giving evidence... it is getting embarrassing.” A settlement was agreed in the sum of £45,000 (which was the full amount she was claiming) and a judgment was then entered by the tribunal confirming that HFRS had conceded the claims of constructive unfair dismissal, direct sex discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.

Health and safety: deaths at work

Atherstone on Stour, Warwickshire

Court proceedings have commenced seeking compensation. Criminal investigations are also ongoing but decisions have yet to be made on criminal charges and those who were arrested have been re-bailed by the police.

Marlie Farm, East Sussex

There have been considerable delays in extracting information from East Sussex fire and rescue service in order to progress court proceedings against the Marlie Farm fireworks factory in respect of nine personal injury claims, including that on behalf

of the widow of FBU member Brian Wembridge who died in the tragedy. The information has now been obtained and the proceedings have been served. Defences are awaited from ESFRS and the negligent owner.

Shirley Towers, Southampton

Thompsons has given advice to the FBU accident investigation team and those injured and bereaved in the tragic fire in which firefighters James Shears and Alan Bannon died.

Compensation for widow

FBU lawyers recovered over £300,000 for the widow of a member killed in a road traffic accident while attending a fire.

Personal injury

Crushed by hydraulic platform

A member who had to retire from the service after his leg was crushed between a hydraulic platform and a roof received £217,500 damages. He was attempting to make a damaged chimney safe when the platform he was on struck the roof and he fell. His leg became trapped and his foot, ankle and heel were crushed. He also suffered psychological injuries as a result.

Slipped disc ends career

An FBU member was forced to give up their job after they slipped a disc while attending a car crash in February 2005. The member received £100,000 compensation in an out-of-court settlement. The member felt a twinge in their back as they and colleagues tried to move a car back onto the road. It was only a few days later, when the member began to feel pain down the back of their leg, that they went to their GP and discovered they had slipped a disc. The member required surgery and had to give up playing sports and can now only walk short distances.

Near drowning

A member who almost drowned when thrown from an inflatable boat during a training exercise has received £162,500 compensation. The member was rendered unconscious in the water and suffered minor brain damage. He was subsequently medically retired on ill-health grounds.

Car crash on duty

A member who was forced to retire five years early due to injuries sustained in a road traffic accident while on duty received £45,000 compensation after having suffered head, neck and shoulder injuries and his movement became increasingly restricted.

Fire appliance crash

A member who suffered neck and back injuries when the fire engine he was travelling in drove into the back of another vehicle, received £32,000 compensation.

Leather shoes caused injury

A member who sustained knee and thigh injuries when he slipped over as he walked in the grounds of his brigade's

headquarters wearing issued officer's leather shoes has received significant compensation.

Faulty door trim results in fall

Substantial compensation was secured for a member whose promotion prospects were blighted after falling out of a fire appliance cab and suffering leg injuries. The member's foot slipped on the faulty trim of the door as they climbed out, banging their knee and landing awkwardly. Although the fire service admitted liability, it disputed that the accident was the cause of the member's ongoing injury or that they were going to be promoted. Witnesses and colleagues helped to prove these points and the claim settled before trial.

Breathing apparatus training caused knee injury

A member who suffered a knee injury during a training exercise has received compensation. The member was required to crawl around on their hands and knees using breathing apparatus until the cylinders became empty. This rubbed skin off both knees and an infection developed. The employer, Warwickshire fire and rescue service, and West Midlands fire and rescue service, which operated the course, denied liability and blamed each other for the member's injuries. Thompsons was forced to issue court proceedings and the claim settled before trial.

Ice slips

Compensation was recovered for two members who were injured when they slipped on ice.

The first slipped on a ramp at a training centre and suffered a blow to the head and whiplash-type injuries. The defendant denied liability on the basis that the fire service had employed contractors to administer a reasonable gritting/snow clearance policy and that a frost that night was unexpected. Thompsons searched through microfiche Times archives and found a weather forecast which predicted a minus temperature on the evening of the accident. This provided evidence that the defendants had failed to implement their system and the claim settled.

In the second ice slip claim, an RDS firefighter suffered a serious knee injury when they slipped on ice at a scrapyard while attending a fire. He had warned the crew commander that conditions were icy and visibility poor, but grit was not put around the appliances and he fell as he walked around to check a hose. West Midlands fire and rescue service has agreed liability, but the medical prognosis for the member remains unclear.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) claim

Over £100,000 has been secured from the CICA for a member who had to retire from the fire service after being badly injured when a gang of 20 drunken youths attacked a fire crew as they attempted to put out a skip fire. The member was attacked whilst trying to pull some of the youths off a colleague whom they had attacked as he tried to roll the hose reel in. One of the youths lashed out with a bottle and the member took the

SECTION F — LEGAL REPORT

brunt of the blow to the elbow and shoulder whilst trying to protect themselves.

A civil claim was pursued against the member's employer for failure to have a suitable system in place to protect firefighters when faced with such situations. There was evidence that there had been assaults on firefighters in the same area and it was likely that the fire had been started as a trap. However, the employer denied liability, even though after the incident new procedures were put in place which stipulated that two appliances should attend if called to the same area at night. The case hinged on whether there had been negligence in allowing the crew out of the appliance, but the judge said there had not been and so the claim failed.

The CICA, who do not require fault to be proven in criminal injury cases, later made the award based on the member's injuries and his loss of earnings.

Family member claims

Crushed by car

The wife of an FBU member, who suffered multiple fractures when she was crushed against a wall by a car which mounted the pavement, has received £30,000 compensation. She was injured in south west London and was in hospital for several days afterwards. She continues to suffer from post-traumatic stress as well as from the physical effects of her injuries.

Cases such as this show the value of the union's legal service, with union lawyers prepared to take on cases that claim firms and no-win no-fee solicitors will not.

Whiplash victim benefits from husband's FBU membership

A woman who was injured when a careless driver smashed into her car has received a settlement worth £6,353 thanks to her husband's membership of the FBU.

The woman, from Middlesbrough, was driving on a dual carriageway in rush hour traffic on her way to work. As the traffic in front of her slowed down, she braked and the person driving behind her crashed into the rear of her car. She suffered a whiplash injury to her neck, an injury that significantly affected the quality of her life. After the accident the pins and needles down her arm gradually worsened to the point that she required physiotherapy and time off work.

She continues to suffer with intermittent neck pain and is unable to do heavy jobs.



Section

**Internal
administration**

G1 Executive council meetings 2010

9 February 2010
10 February 2010
11 February 2010
16 March 2010
20 April 2010
21 April 2010
17 May 2010
18 May 2010
19 May 2010
20 May 2010
8 June 2010
9 June 2010
15 June 2010
11 August 2010
21 September 2010
22 September 2010
23 September 2010
30 September 2010
22 October 2010
3 November 2010
18 November 2010
19 November 2010
7 December 2010
8 December 2010
9 December 2010

G2 Executive council attendance record 2010

	Possible	Actual	Reasons for non-attendance
Mick Shaw (president)	22	21	1 – medical appointment
Matt Wrack (general secretary)	22	22	
Andy Dark (assistant general secretary)	22	22	
Executive council members			
Roddy Robertson	22	18	2 – travel difficulties / 2 – other union business
Jim Barbour	22	12	2 – medical appointments / 1 – sick leave 3 – travel difficulties / 1 – other union business 2 – annual leave / 1 – family leave
Alan McLean	22	17	3 – medical appointments / 2 – annual leave
Jerry Pagan	7	7	
Ian Murray	15	15	
Warren Gee	22	21	1 – annual leave
Dave Green	6	5	1 – annual leave
Dave Limer (acting)	4	4	
Dave Limer	12	12	
Rose Jones	22	22	
Mike Smith	22	20	1 – annual leave / 1 – family leave
Keith Handscomb	22	21	1 – annual leave
Ian Leahair	22	17½	½ – medical appointment 1 – other union business / 1 – family leave 2 – sick leave
Jim Parrott	22	19	1 – annual leave 1 – other union business / 1 – family leave
Karl Horan	22	22	
Tam MacFarlane	22	22	
Jack Ford	22	21	1 – family leave
Stewart Brown	21	15½	1 – annual leave / 3 – TU leave difficulties ½ – other union business / 1 – fire service course
Micky Nicholas	22	20	1 – annual leave / 1 – family leave
Tam Mitchell	22	20	1 – annual leave / 1 – travel difficulties
Sharon Riley	22	20	1 – family leave / 1 – other union business
Vicky Knight	14	9	4 – annual leave / 1 – family leave
Denise Christie	5	5	
National officers			
John McGhee	22	17	2 – other union business / 3 – sick leave
Dave Green	16	12½	3½ – other union business
Sean Starbuck	22	18	4 – other union business
Paul Woolstenholmes	22	17	2 – annual leave / 1 – family leave 2 – other union business

G3 Elections 2010

Election of president (elect)

Bro Alan McLean elected unopposed 7 April 2010

Election of general secretary

Number of voting papers returned10,039
 Number of papers found to be spoilt/invalid31
 Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted10,008

Result (one to elect)

Bro Matt Wrack6,088
 Bro John McGhee3,920

CERTIFIED BY POPULARIS LTD 23 April 2010

Bro Matt Wrack re-elected as general secretary

Election of vice president (elect)

Bro Jim Barbour elected unopposed 24 September 2010

Election of assistant general secretary

Bro Andy Dark re-elected unopposed 27 July 2010

Election of national officer

Number of voting papers returned12,374
 Number of papers found to be spoilt/invalid1,101
 Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted11,273

Result (one to elect)

Bro Dave Green7,170
 Bro Phil Jordan4,103

CERTIFIED BY POPULARIS LTD 30 April 2010

Bro Dave Green elected as national officer

Election of executive council members

Election of executive council member Region 2

Bro Jim Barbour re-elected unopposed 7 April 2010

Election of executive council member (elect) Region 3

Bro Andy Noble elected unopposed 25 August 2010

Election of executive council member (elect) Region 4

Bro Ian Murray elected unopposed 7 April 2010

Election of executive council member Region 6

Bro Dave Limer elected unopposed 22 July 2010

Election of executive council member Region 13

Number of voting papers returned824
 Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt)3
 Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted821

Result (one to elect)

Bro Tam McFarlane609
 Bro Bob Walker212

CERTIFIED BY POPULARIS LTD 4 June 2010

Bro Tam McFarlane re-elected as executive council member
 Region 13

Election of executive council member women members

Sis Vicky Knight re-elected unopposed 7 April 2010

Election of executive council member women members

Sis Denise Christie elected unopposed 4 November 2010

Election of executive council member B&EM members

Number of voting papers returned193
 Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt)0
 Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted193

Result (one to elect)

Bro Michael Nicholas99
 Bro Carl St Paul94

CERTIFIED BY POPULARIS LTD 15 June 2010

Bro Michael Nicholas re-elected as executive council member
 B&EM members

Election of executive council member CSNC

Number of voting papers returned361
 Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt)0
 Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted361

Result (one to elect)

Sis Sharon Riley209
 Sis Val Salmon152

CERTIFIED BY POPULARIS LTD 15 June 2010

Sis Sharon Riley re-elected as executive council member
 CSNC

Election of regional and national sectional secretaries

Region 1

Bro John Duffy elected unopposed 9 June 2010

Region 4

Bro Pete Smith elected unopposed 3 June 2010

Region 6

Bro Gary Mitchell elected unopposed 14 September 2010

Region 8

Bro Grant Mayos re-elected unopposed 3 November 2010

Region 10

Bro Joe MacVeigh re-elected unopposed 2 June 2010

Region 13

Bro John Drake re-elected unopposed 26 July 2010

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

Election of regional and national sectional chairs

Region 5

Number of voting papers returned.....	1,836
Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt).....	128
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted.....	1,708

Result (one to elect)

Bro Ian McGill.....	844
Sis Val Salmon.....	510
Bro Neil Thompson.....	354

CERTIFIED BY POPULARIS LTD 18 August 2010

Bro Ian McGill elected as regional chair

Region 8

Bro Cerith Griffiths elected unopposed 14 July 2010

Region 10

Number of voting papers returned.....	1,769
Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt).....	196
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted.....	1,573

Result (one to elect)

Bro Gordon Fielden.....	882
Bro Chris McMahon.....	691

CERTIFIED BY POPULARIS LTD 29 September 2010

Bro Gordon Fielden re-elected as regional chair

Region 12

Bro Steve Allen elected unopposed 2 June 2010

B&EMM national committee

Number of voting papers returned.....	301
Number of papers found to be invalid (blank/spoilt).....	3
Thus, total number of valid papers to be counted.....	298

Result (one to elect)

Bro Lud Ramsey.....	214
Sis Carole Brown.....	84

CERTIFIED BY POPULARIS LTD 23 September 2010

Bro Lud Ramsey elected as B&EMM national committee chair

Election of regional treasurers

Region 1

Bro Paul Wilson elected unopposed 4 November 2010

Region 2

Bro Stephen Boyd re-elected unopposed 22 July 2010

Region 3

Bro Kieran Brennan elected unopposed 6 October 2010

Region 4

Bro Graham Wilkinson elected unopposed 22 July 2010

Region 7

Bro Pete Goulden elected unopposed 2 June 2010

Regional treasurer (elect) Region 8

Bro Chris Howells elected unopposed 2 June 2010

Region 11

Bro Bill Woodfine elected unopposed 2 June 2010

Election of regional officials

Region 7

Bro Marcus Giles elected unopposed 22 September 2010

Region 13

Bro Kevin Herniman elected unopposed 31 August 2010

G4 Industrial disputes

London trade dispute – call for action short of strike

Trade dispute: proposal to impose changes in terms and conditions by dismissal and re-engagement of the workforce

After entering into formal negotiations over new working patterns in June 2010, a trade dispute was registered with the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) on 13 August, resulting in a ballot of the membership.

London members were notified of the form of industrial action following the ballot for continuous action short of a strike, that being:

A ban on the following shall apply from 0900hrs, Friday 24 September 2010:

- A **ban** on the working of pre-arranged overtime, which is non contractual;
- A **ban** on non-contractual overtime i.e. any additional non contractual hours above core hours which are remunerated with either: time of in lieu, extra duty leave, cash payment or any other financial or incentive arrangement;
- In accordance with the *Flexible duty system* arrangements, as per the Scheme of Conditions of Service Sixth Edition 2004, any positive hours worked during the stand by call out period for urgent managerial business i.e. fire calls, urgent accident investigations **MUST** be recovered immediately following those events, but only during normal managerial hours. Those additional positive hours will be transferred to stand by call out hours and only urgent managerial business should be carried out in stand by call out periods;
- In accordance with the *Flexible duty system* arrangements, as per the Scheme of Conditions of Service Sixth Edition 2004, all managers **should not** carry out any request for additional duties on their rota leave days;
- In accordance with the *Flexible duty system* arrangements, as per the Scheme of Conditions of Service Sixth Edition 2004, all managers **should not** be driving in standby call

out hours unless requested to attend urgent managerial business for the authority;

- A ban on participation in all voluntary projects, which includes the withdrawal from those projects members are currently participating in. This includes but is not limited to the following voluntary projects:
- Life; Junior Firesetters; Outreach; Community Fire Cadets; Prison, Me? No Way!; and the cycle project.
- All members who are conditioned to nine day fortnight working will take their agreed rota day each fortnight. That is the day agreed when taking up the placement except where a different day has been agreed for this year in which case it will be that different day.

The industrial action short of strike was then escalated to include a ban on all temporary promotion and acting up applying to those attached to the current 9 hour/15 hour shift pattern. Affected members were to revert to their substantive roles from 0900hrs on 4 October 2010.

Number of votes cast in the ballot:	4,222
Number of individuals answering "yes":	4,014
Number of individuals answering "no":	201
Number of spoiled voting papers:	7

Turnout:	76%
Yes:	95%
No:	5%

London trade dispute – call for action consisting of strike

Fire Brigades Union trade dispute: proposal to impose changes in terms and conditions by dismissal and re-engagement of the workforce industrial action ballot

LFEPA continued to force through changes in terms and conditions of employment by maintaining the section 188 procedure prior to dismissing the workforce and re-engaging them on new imposed terms. The authority did not withdraw the section 188 notices issued and did not agree that this was an unacceptable means to force through changes in terms and conditions of employment. Neither was it accepted that any changes would be negotiated with the FBU and agreed. Instead, it was suggested that proceeding by agreement amounted to a veto over change which the authority could not give.

In addition, the authority continued to pursue industrial relations on the basis of imposition and threat rather than negotiation and agreement. New contracts were written for those promoted to crew manager and watch manager from 11 August 2010 and for those joining the brigade or transferring in. Again these were not negotiated or agreed. Members faced being forced onto these contracts on promotion, transfer and recruitment respectively.

Authority managers also tried to bully members legitimately wearing stickers opposing bullying and the mass dismissal of the workforce. Those members were threatened with

disciplinary action for exercising their rights in the workplace. This was completely unjustified. Members cannot be expected to tolerate such threats and intimidation at work.

London members required all of the following to be met by the authority:

1. Confirmation that, whether or not agreement is reached on the issue of working hours, or on any other matters where the authority wishes there to be changes in contractual terms, there will be no attempt to force through changes in terms and conditions of employment by dismissing the workforce and re-engaging them on new imposed terms.
2. Immediate withdrawal of all notices of proposed termination of contracts of employment under section 188 and confirmation that the fire authority is no longer operating the section 188 procedure.
3. Agreement that this is an unacceptable means to force through changes in terms and conditions of employment. Acceptance that any changes will be negotiated with FBU and agreed.
4. Withdrawal of the new contracts now being issued for those promoted to crew manager and watch manager since 11 August 2010 and for those joining the brigade or transferring in. Continuation of the existing contracts for such personnel until any changes have been negotiated and agreed with the FBU.
5. Immediate withdrawal of the threatened disciplinary action against members legitimately displaying their opposition to bullying and the mass dismissal of the workforce. Acceptance that those members are exercising their rights in the workplace and cannot be disciplined for doing so.

The FBU maintained that until it received a formal confirmation as specifically required above in respect of all five points, a trade dispute existed between the authority and FBU members employed by the authority.

This dispute plainly related to the terms and conditions of employment and working conditions. In addition, the negotiation machinery was central to this dispute.

Number of votes cast in the ballot:	4,431
Number of individuals answering "yes":	3,482
Number of individuals answering "no":	943
Number of spoiled voting papers:	6

Turnout:	79%
Yes:	79%
No:	21%

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) – urgent notice of interim injunction, 3 November 2010

The union – represented by Bro Woolstenholmes, Thompsons, Queen's Counsel and legal counsel – was required to attend the Royal Courts of Justice when LFEPA submitted an interim injunction on the matter of picketing, specifically numbers of

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

those attending for solidarity, during periods of strike action. LFEPA was represented by Queen's Counsel, junior counsel and LFEPA's legal department.

Strike action had been called and took place on 23 October 2010 and 1 November 2010, during which two members (including London's executive council member) and a police officer were injured by vehicles driven by strike breakers. The claimant had also been notified that further strike action had been called for 5, 6 and 7 November 2010 commencing at 10 am on 5 November.

The correspondence

The claimant faxed a letter to the general secretary on the evening of 2 November 2010 setting out various allegations and seeking a response by 12 noon on 3 November 2010. They made no attempt to contact the general secretary by mobile telephone or email to inform him about this and arrange delivery that evening. They simply faxed the letter to head office after the office had closed. Neither the general secretary nor the national officer saw that letter until the morning of 3 November by which time it was too late to respond by 12 noon that day. A letter from the general secretary, confirming that he would look into the allegations but that it would not be possible to respond by 12 noon on that day, was immediately sent.

Nothing further was received on 3 November from LFEPA making any suggestion that the claimant would be applying to the court for an interim injunction or imposing any further deadline. Instead they again waited until after head office had closed and then wrote at 20:07 to give notice of an intended application on 4 November. Once again they failed to do anything to ensure the general secretary received the letter on the night it was sent, something they could easily have done. So the union did not receive that notice until the morning when the solicitors were instructed immediately.

The general secretary, having been intensively involved in discussions with LFEPA, did not have the opportunity to go through LFEPA's paperwork and prepare a statement in reply, which may have led to one or more of the days of action planned for 5, 6 or 7 November being called off.

The union claimed it was wholly inconsistent for the claimant to stress their concerns for public safety in London whilst placing the general secretary in the impossible position of having to choose between those discussions of crucial importance for public safety and preparing evidence in response to their allegations.

The net result of the interim injunction was that the judge made no finding either way on the LFEPA allegations that there had been breaches of the legislation. He accepted the union's proposal to give undertakings to abide by the laws governing picketing in relation to any further industrial action during the dispute. This was naturally proposed as the union's position throughout and that it had abided by those laws and that this would continue to be the case.

In an effort to resolve the dispute, the matter was referred to the Resolution Advisory Panel which met on 16 November

2010 to hear the dispute. The outcome is reported in Section A of this annual report. A consultative ballot of the membership in December 2010 agreed to accept the RAP outcome.

Essex dispute

The trade dispute registered with Essex Fire Authority on 15 June 2009 continued throughout 2010. Various types of action short of strike commenced on 26 August 2009 and continued into 2010.

January 2010 began with the fire authority refusing the reasonable request – made in accordance with Grey Book provisions and the NJC good industrial relations protocol – to jointly seek the third party assistance of the NJC joint secretaries. This was followed by the unilateral decision to suspend the locally agreed consultation and negotiation framework and a review of time off for trade union duties including the cessation of paid trade union leave for those undertaking regional activities. Industrial relations deteriorated and the industrial action continued.

In March exploratory discussions began in an effort to find a potential settlement to the trade dispute. The discussions turned into concerted negotiations. Outline terms for a potential settlement were developed positively, and then on 30 April the FBU announced a temporary suspension of industrial action to assist a final round of detailed negotiations. On 25 June, the resultant proposed "full and final" terms of settlement were sent out to the Essex FBU membership for consultation with the recommendation from the brigade committee to accept. On 13 July, the FBU confirmed to the fire authority that the Essex membership had voted to accept the terms of settlement and that once the agreement was signed by both parties the general secretary would issue the formal notice concluding the trade dispute. The date for signing was set for 21 July.

At the signing, the Essex chief fire officer produced a unilaterally amended version of the proposed terms of settlement. No agreement was reached on the revised wording. Subsequent attempts to find mutually acceptable amendments were rejected by the chief fire officer. Eventually, on 8 September, the chief fire officer confirmed the fire authority would defer any further progress on a proposed settlement to the trade dispute until after the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The notice reinstating the industrial action short of strike was issued by the general secretary on 13 September 2010. The action included an overtime ban; an acting-up ban; a ban on any new temporary promotions to fire station rider posts; a ban on managers working on rota leave days; a ban on new secondary contracts; and a ban on any new additional work agreements.

The trade dispute remained unresolved and the industrial action continued into 2011.

Merseyside

Trade dispute: job losses and removal of posts in RRT (resource and resilience team) and the operational resource centres, application of LLAR (low level of activity and risk) criteria and conversion of Grey to Green Book posts

Background to the ballot and the issues to which the dispute relates

Members were made aware of the proposals by the fire authority to:

1. Reduce the number of firefighters in RRT from 57 to 20 and reduce crew managers in RRT from 15 to 4;
2. Reduce the crewing of prime movers in the operational resource centres to one driver;
3. Continue the application of the authority's LLAR criteria without referring this issue to ACAS arbitration;
4. Facilitate the conversion of 36 day-related Grey Book posts to 36 Green Book posts without identifying the relevant posts.

Members were informed of the result of the ballot for industrial action short of a strike, in the form of a refusal to work pre-arranged overtime.

Number of votes cast in the ballot:	522
Number of individuals answering "yes":	367
Number of individuals answering "no":	155
Number of spoiled voting papers:	0

Yes:	70.3%
No:	29.7%

G5 B&EMM national committee report 2010

B&EMM representatives

B&EMM EC member	Michael Nicholas <i>Elected Dec 2010</i>
B&EMM national secretary	Samantha Samuels <i>Elected Dec 2007</i>
B&EMM national chair	Lud Ramsey <i>Elected Sept 2010</i>
Region 1	Lud Ramsey
Region 2	Vacant
Region 3	Lee Brown
Region 4	Mark Brown
South Yorkshire	Mark Brown
Region 5	Vacant
GMC	Carl Petch
Region 6	Dalton Powell
Nottingham	Dalton Powell
Leicestershire	Ronnie Stanley

Region 7	Colin Jarrett
West Midlands	Pardeep Raw
Warwickshire	Donny Clarke
Region 8	Brian Amos
Region 9	Vacant
Region 10	Garrett Brooks
Region 11	Carole Brown
Kent	Carole Brown
East Sussex	Iain Stewart
Region 12	Andre Fernandes (acting)
Berkshire	Andre Fernandes
Region 13	Vacant

B&EMM executive and national committee meetings 2010

20 January	B&EMM executive <i>London</i>
25-26 February	B&EMM national committee <i>Birmingham</i>
23 March	B&EMM executive <i>London</i>
24-25 June	B&EMM national committee <i>Bristol</i>
10 August	B&EMM executive <i>London</i>
3 September	B&EMM executive <i>Coventry</i>
27 September	B&EMM national committee <i>Birmingham</i>
27 October	B&EMM executive <i>Birmingham</i>
13-14 December	B&EMM national committee <i>London</i>

B&EMM executive – meeting held between full business meetings attended by B&EMM EC member, national secretary, national chair and national vice-chair.

Reports

January 2010

AI Sharpton visit 21 January 2010 – Friends House, London

The Reverend AI Sharpton came to London for an event organised by Operation Black Vote (OBV) called "Realising the dream".

Lee Jasper and Simon Woolley (OBV) were the other main speakers and among the issues discussed was black under-representation at all political levels. Simon informed us that now, more than ever, our vote could make a difference to who gets the keys to No. 10.

AI Sharpton said that this generation bequeathing a worse

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

situation to the next generation is not a viable option. Statistics expressed the deprivation now being experienced in the US black community:

Many US black children are born into poverty; infant mortality rate is higher; more black youths are unemployed; there is an increase in teenage pregnancies and there is an increase in the number of children growing up without a father.

The Reverend Al Sharpton also touched on the situation in Haiti and poignantly stated: "We haven't arrived until we have all landed. It is never on the calendar of an oppressor, to liberate you; we must put it in the calendar ourselves. Although it is a struggle to fight, we must not settle for less."

Doreen Lawrence was acknowledged, and we were updated on a tragedy that took place on New Year's Eve in London and told how the true story was misrepresented by the tabloids. It was heartening how all in the community who knew the real story of this tragedy, pulled together to get an apology printed.

The final speaker was Lib Dem MP Simon Hughes, who spoke about how there is a need for action to address the 399/400 councils that have an all-white leadership.

There are so many positives going on in black communities and this day in itself was a success for OBV. All those who attended left inspired and regenerated to keep up the fight, but the fight needs to be more focussed as we approach a general election and we consider our options. It is important to have the discussion with friends and family especially those who don't see the need to vote. A conversation can change the perspective for an individual and it is important that we who are relatively politically aware hold these conversations and try to make a difference.

May 2010

FBU conference 2010 – B&EMM report

The B&EMM delegation were Andre Fernandes; Dalton Powell; Colin Jarrett; and David Pazir with Samantha Samuels and Carole Brown, the officials.

The first motion was moved by Dalton Powell and requested that any increase in B&EMM FRS discipline is reported nationally. It was carried with an amendment from Cleveland.

B&EMM supported and seconded the proposed alteration to the FBU rule book of rule 26(1)(h) which sees an additional internal union discipline offence:

(h) Is or becomes a member of, or acts or campaigns on behalf of, any racist or fascist political party or organisation.

B&EMM also proposed two amendments to the EC policy statement on Pension Abatement and Reemployment in the FRS. Both these amendments were moved by Colin Jarrett and were carried.

Andre moved our second motion, Change in the law preventing FRS employment of BNP members. This was carried unanimously by conference.

Colin Jarrett spoke on motion 46, Paid time off for health screening, and added the need to ensure that health issues that impact disproportionately on BME workers are included in the negotiations around this issue.

Dalton Powell spoke on motion 65, All different all equal, and the need for a review, but this motion fell.

B&EMM tabled an emergency motion on Haiti which was moved by Andre and carried by conference. Dalton Powell also seconded the LGBT motion 57 on international LGBT campaigning.

B&EMM reps bulletin – April 2010

This was the first bulletin in 2010, but it will hopefully outline the actions that are required from you in order to assist the B&EMM national committee in representing members and inform you of developments on some key B&EMM issues for 2010.

The content was:

B&EMM national chair

The current B&EMM national chair, Leroy Phillpotts will be retiring from the fire and rescue service at the beginning of May 2010. In due course I'm sure you will join us in wishing him all the best for whatever his future brings. An election for national chair will be held in due course.

CLG

The CLG has announced a pilot scheme called the High Potential Development Project. B&EMM have submitted observations on the project's equality impact assessment. At the last national committee meeting in February, it was decided that it is important for our reps to monitor how this project is being managed and implemented in the pilot brigades which were: West Midlands; Staffordshire; Shropshire; Hereford and Worcester; Warwickshire; West Yorkshire; Lincolnshire; Lancashire; Derbyshire; Wiltshire; Cambridgeshire; East Sussex; Luton; and Bedfordshire.

Fire and rescue service (FRS) ambassadors

The CLG is spearheading a FRS ambassador's initiative. This initiative should see role models from those FRSs used in recruitment and awareness raising events in their brigades. B&EMM reps need to find out who the lead is on this initiative in their brigade and report it back to their regional B&EMM rep. If there is no rep, please report back your findings to a B&EMM official.

New B&EMM reps

Congratulations are given to Region 4 as they have one new B&EMM rep. Welcome Tasab Nabi, the new South Yorkshire B&EMM rep.

B&EMM education

The new FBU education timetable is now out, and a list was enclosed of the recommended courses. Reps were advised to seriously consider attending the recommended courses as they will assist with continued progression and better representation of member.

B&EMM – disciplinary monitoring

At the last national committee meeting it was discussed that B&EMM members may be disproportionately disciplined and this is of concern to B&EMM. In order to have appropriate statistics to evidence this, we will need the following information:

Request information from brigades on ethnic monitoring of discipline and grievances.

This information should be readily available as it is information your brigade is required to monitor and record, and make publicly available, under their employment monitoring. If you have difficulties getting this information you should inform your brigade officials, B&EMM regional representative or B&EMM officials.

June 2010

On Friday 4 June 2010 B&EMM attended the 13th equality and diversity strategy group meeting in Tamworth. This turned out to be the final meeting of this group.

The report to the national committee meeting from this meeting included:

1. The former fire minister's speech to the AFSA conference has still not been forwarded.
2. The terms of reference of this group have recently been reviewed. Sis Vicky Knight was elected as the vice chair of this committee.
3. Chair for this meeting was M Hagan (Merseyside DCFO).
4. Transgender and EIA guidance documents are done and these are to be circulated.
5. Workplace facilities (status to be clarified) and exit interviews guidance (clarify origins).
6. The dyslexia policy was discussed as a good document but one that needed a summary attached to it for easy reading and reference.
7. Fire Fit standards questioned and how this is being applied across brigades.
8. We were informed that the second tranche of the stretch target funding had now been allocated to all 32 FRSs – they received £34k each. There was no evidence or criteria requested in order to receive this additional funding.
9. The next meeting of the EDSG scheduled for 24 September 2010 did not take place.

October 2010

14th annual Scottish TUC black workers' conference, Menzies Hotel, Glasgow

Delegates: Bros Lud Ramsey and Hakim Beouji.

The STUC black workers' conference took place on 2-3 October 2010 in Glasgow at the Menzies Hotel.

The conference had 18 motions, five of which were about cuts and the impact they will have on the BME population. As most of the Scottish BME workforce is in the public sector, the cuts

will impact negatively and disproportionately on BME workers. The conference will try to counter this by organising the Better Way campaign and preparing to fight the possible redundancies.

There were four motions about opposing the far right. With the increasing rise of the English Defence League (EDL), Scottish Defence League, BNP and the Welsh Defence League, the motions called upon the STUC to step up its campaign against the far right groups. This would be done by working with community groups and anti-fascist organisations to ensure that Scotland keeps the far right "right out". The Scottish police in Strathclyde and Lothian and Borders were praised for being very instrumental in denying the EDL and SDL the right to march in the two largest cities, Glasgow and Edinburgh. This was achieved by not letting them pass any places of worship and then containing them in one pub in each city. Therefore, trouble was kept to a minimum.

The FBU had two motions – Hakim moved our motion on Haiti as a first-time speaker and Lud moved the second motion on the Single Equalities Act. Both motions were passed by the conference.

Lud Ramsey was voted on to the STUC black workers' committee to serve for 2010-2011. He was also asked to speak at the STUC disabled workers' conference in November 2010.

November 2010

Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) national conference 3-4 November 2010 in Lancashire

A two-day conference was hosted by the Lancashire FRS, whose CFO, Peter Holland, is the CFOA president. The main speaker was the fire minister Robert Neill MP and the main topic of discussion was equality and diversity in the UK FRS. Sis Samantha Samuels took part in a panel discussion on behalf of the FBU.

FBU Lobby – 17 November 2010

The FBU lobby took place at the Methodist Central Hall, Westminster. This lobby was attended by over 2,000 FBU members and their families who came to support the unity of their union against the government's cuts to public services and particularly the FRS. All B&EMM officials attended this rally and there was a wide attendance of B&EMM.

We were addressed by the following speakers; PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka, MPs Katy Clark and John Cryer, TUC deputy general secretary Frances O'Grady, and FBU general secretary Matt Wrack.

Meetings attended:

2010

14 January	Ordinary People Extra Ordinary Careers launch – London
20 January	B&EMM executive – London
21 January	Al Sharpton visit – London
22 January	Meeting Region 7 EC – Birmingham
2 February	Sectional executive – London
3 February	National education meeting – head office

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

25-26 February	B&EMM national committee meeting – Birmingham
9-12 March	TUC women's conference – Eastbourne
23 March	B&EMM executive – London
15 April	OBV Black Manifesto launch – London
22-25 April	TUC black workers' conference – Liverpool
13 May	B&EMM conference meeting – Birmingham
14 May	CLG ambassadors interviews – Birmingham
18-21 May	FBU conference 2010 – Southport
28 May	B&EMM School meeting – Birmingham
4 June	EDSG meeting – Tamworth
5 June	West Midlands B&EMM member case conference
22 June	NASUWT Conference Centre – West Midlands
24-25 June	B&EMM national committee meeting – Bristol
20 July	B&EMM School meeting – national officer
22 July	B&EMM School meeting – Wortley Hall
10 August	B&EMM executive – London
12 August	Pensions coordinators seminar – head office
3 September	B&EMM executive – Coventry
16 September	London dispute rally
22 September	B&EMM representation – Gloucester
27 September	B&EMM national committee meeting – Birmingham
30 September	Region 5 AGM
1 October	Region 7 regional committee
4 October	B&EMM representation – Gloucester
6 October	West Midlands brigade committee
7 October	Region 6 AGM
8-10 October	B&EMM School 2010 – Wortley Hall
15 October	Region 5 B&EMM meeting
19 October	TUC lobby
27 October	B&EMM executive – Birmingham
3-4 November	AFSA conference – Blackburn
6 November	Black achievers awards – Wolverhampton
9 November	Region 5 B&EMM meeting
17 November	FBU lobby
30 November	Reorganisation national committee meeting – Birmingham
13-14 December	B&EMM national committee meeting – head office

Lee Brown	Region 3
Mark Brown	Region 4
Carl Petch	Region 5 (GMC rep)
Dalton Powell	Region 6
Colin Jarrett	Region 7
Donny Clarke	Region 7
Dave Pazir	Region 7 (regional chair)
Brian Amos	Region 8
Andre Fernandes	Region 12

Apologies

Sami Chaudhry	Region 1
Garrett Brooks	Region 10

Minutes of last AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 3 December 2009 were agreed.

EC report (AGM motions and progression 2009)

BNP and rule book changes

This motion was progressed by B&EMM through the executive council. The EC adopted a change to the FBU rule book to make it an offence to be an activist, member of, or be involved with fascist organisations or racist political parties or groups. This change was endorsed by conference 2009.

Support for FBU officials

This motion went to conference as one of the B&EMM motions and was amended by Cleveland to make the motion apply to all FBU officials. There was qualification from the EC which required information to prove any increase in discipline or victimisation of FBU officials – in order to deal with this.

Change in law: racial abuse by public

A letter was sent to the then fire minister, Shahid Malik MP, about the racial abuse of public servants. The response was circulated to all present at the meeting.

TUC motion on Haiti

The B&EMM emergency motion went to TUC congress on behalf of the TUC black workers' conference and was moved by EC member Michael Nicholas. A B&EMM proposal based on our Haiti motion recently went to the EC and was remitted to the FBU international committee.

Other B&EMM resolutions that were agreed will be proposed to the EC in due course.

Elections

The following were elected:

National HSW committee	Colin Jarrett
National education committee	Samantha Samuels
National FAW committee	Ludwig Ramsey
Final appeals committee	Ludwig Ramsey
Firefighter rep	Ludwig Ramsey
B&EMM vice chair	Carole Brown
Advisor editors	Andre Fernandes and Michael Nicholas

G6 B&EMM national committee AGM report 2010

The B&EMM national committee AGM took place at FBU head office on 14 December 2010

Present

Michael Nicholas	B&EMM EC member
Samantha Samuels	B&EMM secretary
Lud Ramsey	B&EMM chair
Carole Brown	B&EMM vice chair

Minutes secretary	Dalton Powell
IRMP committee	Colin Jarrett

Motions

Region 1

Discipline and grievances
Equality and diversity agenda

Region 5

B&EMM ADAE investigators
Equality law

Region 7

EIAs
Sectional consultation

B&EMM executive

Reorganisation

FBU conference 2011 motions and delegates

- Motion 1: Sectional consultation (Region 7) and
Reorganisation (B&EMM executive) composited
- Motion 2: Equality and diversity agenda (Region 1)
- Motion 3: EIA (Region 7) and Equality law (Region 5)
composited as an education resolution

Proposed delegates: Andre Fernandes, Colin Jarrett, Dalton Powell, Mark Brown, and (reserve) Carole Brown

TUC black workers' conference 2011 (Congress House)

8-10 April 2011 in London

Proposed delegates: Andre Fernandes, Dalton Powell, Dean Nelson, Brian Amos, Carl Petch, Colin Jarrett, Dave Pazir, Lee Brown, Michael Nicholas (chairing the TUC BW conference 2011). Depending on EC decision on TUC delegations, this may be reduced to four people.

Proposed FBU motions:
Ending international slavery;
Equality recruitment targets.

Ending international slavery was selected to go to TUC black workers' conference 2011.

G7 CSNC report 2010

In February 2010 the government's select committee once again reviewed the FiReControl Project. The FBU's submission was consistent with our past submission and opposition but, disappointingly, despite having serious doubts over the project's ability to deliver the committee felt it was best to press ahead, since CLG had said that to pull out would cost £8m more than to go ahead.

The CSNC kept up its political pressure and campaigning throughout the first quarter of the year and met with CLG advisers, civil servants and MPs in order to press home our message that the project should be scrapped.

By June there was a new government, yet another new fire minister and still more confusion, delay and overspend on the project. At the Fire and Rescue 2010 conference in Harrogate Bob Neill, the fire minister, promised a review of the project and a quick decision regarding its future. It was to be a further six months before a ministerial statement on 20 December finally put the last nail in the coffin of what was FiReControl.

However, before the year was out and even before the final announcement, there were FRAs nervously making knee-jerk reactions to the economic climate, political agenda and lack of any clear direction for fire controls. This has resulted in proposals for mergers, outsourcing and all manner of other options.

The FBU will continue to defend emergency fire controls and its members together with the vital role they play and the service we deliver. We also look forward to contributing fully in the government's three month consultation on the future provision of fire controls in England, together with the consultation in Scotland into the future of its fire services and controls. If the last seven years have shown us anything at all, it is about the importance of good communication, stakeholder involvement and staff buy-in.

Other work in 2010 involved:

- local issues over promotion and development;
- Local Government Pension Scheme Joint Trade Union Group involvement;
- exploring equal pay;
- control seminar; and
- education of officials.

Throughout 2010 the control staff national committee has continued to provide valuable guidance and information on matters relating to control members' terms and conditions and ensuring that control issues remain top of the FBU's agenda.

We have had a significant victory in the longest ever running FBU campaign but now urge a note of caution as we must be prepared to defend our jobs at a local level in order to ensure resilience and the continued delivery of a first-class emergency control service.

G8 CSNC AGM report 2010

The AGM of control staff members' representatives met on 12-13 October 2010 at Wortley Hall.

Present:

Sharon Riley	Executive council member
Kath Smith	CSNC national chair
Stephen Reid	Region 1
Lynda Rowan-O'Neill	Region 2

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

Jean Westwood	Region 3
Bill Sunderland	Region 4
Tim Gerrard	Region 5
Thom Stitt	Region 6
Sasha Farley	Region 7
Norman Rees	Region 8
Sharon Thorndyke	Region 9
Paul Watts	Region 12
Simon Jones	Region 13

Sis Sue Offland, CSNC secretary, was absent due to a long-term illness. Sis Sasha Farley was endorsed by the committee to carry out administrative duties in Sue's absence.

The following officials were elected and endorsed by the committee:

Vice chair	Lynda Rowan-O'Neill
National health, safety and welfare committee	Kath Smith
National fairness at work committee	Sue Offland (Kath Smith and Bill Sunderland to substitute)
Political	Bill Sunderland
Firefighter rep	Sharon Thorndyke
Final appeals	Sue Offland (Sasha Farley to substitute)
National education committee	Jean Westwood
IRMP rep	Lynda Rowan-O'Neill

The following joined the above committee the following day for the control staff national committee sectional AGM:

Dave Green	National officer
Alan McLean	President elect

Attendees:

Melanie Gibb
Janet Lynn
Margaret Mochan
Gemma Lydl
Caroline Saunderson
Sarah Erratt
Sarah Turner
Helen Young
Debbie Huckerby
Karen Fletcher
Vicky Thomas
Michelle Quinn
Dona Feltham
Andrew Cooper

The meeting opened with the chair's welcome and report. A report was given on Sue Offland's absence and the interim measures put in place.

Alan McLean, president elect, then addressed the meeting. He started his address by thanking the CSNC for inviting him to attend in his role as president elect and by saying that in his

opinion the biggest and longest fight the FBU had ever seen was the campaign against regional control centres. He assured the meeting that the president and national officials would still give 100% of their time and effort to ensure that the campaign came to its only right conclusion; that was for the project to be scrapped. He spoke about how hard working officials of the FBU are but they can only do so much, they need the membership to help them by attending branch meetings and supporting wherever they can. A union is only as strong as its membership and the membership is the union.

Alan went on to speak about the changes we are all going to see with the Comprehensive Spending Review and the effects it will have on fire service budgets. The country has no money and lots of debt which this government has decided that the public sector will pay by shedding jobs, attacking pensions and cutting budgets, instead of going to the bankers and making them pay as they started the recession. It is going to be a time of belt tightening for us all and that includes the Fire Brigades Union.

Sharon Riley then gave her national report to the AGM.

Kath Smith gave the secretary's report in Sue's absence. She gave an overview of what the CSNC officials had been doing over the last 12 months: the control seminar that was held in April, the change in government and where that leaves us with the FiReControl project and the struggles ahead. The hard work and commitment of the committee was acknowledged, especially in light of the challenges they have in order to obtain "reasonable" trade union leave in order to carry out their duties and responsibilities. The national rally on 17 November was highlighted and ways in which members can help by contacting their MP and attending.

The following resolutions were then discussed:

1. PROTECTION IN THE EVENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Given experience in the use of anti trade union legislation to nullify and weaken legitimate and lawful ballots for industrial action in industries outside of the fire and rescue service, FBU control members are concerned at the prospect of being used to weaken the effectiveness of industrial action in the services and controls in which they are not employed should the regional control project go ahead.

This AGM calls on the executive council to obtain legal advice and develop a strategy prior to any move of FBU members to a regional control centre or LACC. This strategy to ensure FBU members cannot be forced to carry out work that will undermine the effectiveness of legitimate and lawful industrial action in fire and rescue services and/or regional control centres in which those control members are not employed.

Progress to be reported back to the control staff national committee six months after annual conference 2011.

REGION 3 – CARRIED

2. FIRE SERVICE CONTROL MERGERS

This conference reiterates its opposition to the merging of

any fire controls. The current provision of fire control must remain in the respective FRS. Any attempts to merge fire controls will be strongly opposed and the executive council will mount a campaign up to and including a ballot for industrial action.

REGION 4 – CARRIED

3. PRIVATISATION OF FIRE CONTROLS

This conference is totally opposed to any attempts to privatise fire controls. We believe that fire controls must remain in the employ of the fire service and remain subject to NJC conditions of service. Any attempts to privatise fire controls will be strongly opposed and the executive council will mount a campaign up to and including a ballot for industrial action.

REGION 4 – CARRIED

4. ATTACKS ON LGPS PENSIONS

This conference finds the attitude of the new coalition government on pensions extremely disturbing. Any attempts to worsen the LGPS must be vigorously opposed in a combined campaign with other unions affected.

REGION 4 – CARRIED

5. REGIONAL/AMALGAMATED FIRE CONTROL ROOMS

This AGM calls for a widening of the FBU campaign against any attempts to introduce regional fire control rooms, to include amalgamations and any similar projects.

REGION 5 – CARRIED

6. REGIONAL/AMALGAMATED FIRE CONTROL ROOMS

This AGM calls on all FBU members not to volunteer to take part in any work activity connected to the implementation of a regional or amalgamated fire control room.

REGION 5 – CARRIED

7. PENSIONS (AMENDED)

This AGM views with dismay the options for changes to public sector pension schemes contained in Lord Hutton's review of public sector pensions. Those options include:

- the end of public sector pensions that are based on final salary;
- increased member contributions;
- increases to the retirement age.

This AGM calls on the FBU to resist by any lawful means possible, including all forms of industrial action, any attempt to introduce changes detrimental to the Local Government Pension Scheme, Firefighters' Pension Scheme or the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

REGION 5 – CARRIED

8. FUTURE OF FIRE SERVICE EMERGENCY CONTROLS (AMENDED)

Conference is alarmed at recent developments regarding the future of the fire and rescue service in the UK and the potential impact on emergency fire controls.

Regardless of any future changes to the fire and rescue service, conference demands that there should be no

compulsory redundancies and that all fire control employees currently on Grey Book conditions of service remain so.

REGION 1 – CARRIED

9. OUTSOURCING AND MERGERS OF FIRE CONTROLS

As details of proposals to outsource/merge fire controls emerge, this AGM calls upon the FBU to extend its opposition to regional controls to resist proposals to outsource/merge fire controls. Emergency fire control staff perform a vital role and attempts to outsource/merge fire controls are nothing more than cost saving measures to the detriment of public and firefighter safety.

REGION 12 – CARRIED

10. FIRECONTROL PROJECT

This AGM is extremely concerned about the recent revelations concerning the inability of EADS to deliver a system fit for purpose for the FiReControl project. We call upon the executive council of the FBU to seek an immediate meeting with the CLG minister responsible for the fire service to determine the impact that this has on FBU members in current control rooms and further demand that CLG provides funding for existing fire controls to maintain their systems until such a time as the situation is resolved.

REGION 12 – CARRIED

It was decided by the committee at the end of the AGM that resolutions 1 and 10 would be taken to the EC directly to action.

Resolutions to be taken to annual conference 2011 by the CSNC will be:

- 2, 5 and 9 to be composited to include all points, as agreed by the AGM;
- 4 and 7 to be composited to include all points, as agreed by the AGM; and
- 8 as amended.

Delegates to attend annual conference 2011

Mandy Buchanan	Region 3
Tim Gerrard	Region 5
Sasha Farley	Region 7
Simon Jones	Region 13
Norman Rees	Region 8 – Observer

G9 Final appeals committee

In accordance with the rules of the union, one official from each region/section was appointed by the 2010 annual conference to serve on the final appeals committee.

Region/section	Name
Region 1	Gavin Barrie
Region 2	Brian Stanfield
Region 3	Peter Wilcox

Region 4	Graham Wilkinson
Region 5	Neil Thompson (now vacant)
Region 6	Tom Murray
Region 7	Brian Moss
Region 8	Chris Howells
Region 9	Brian Hooper
Region 10	Joe MacVeigh
Region 11	Mark Simmons
Region 12	Allison Burrows
Region 13	Phil Jordan
NWC	Kerry Baigent
NLGBT	Pat Carberry
NRC	Harry Cotter
B&EMM	Samantha Samuels
ONC	Pete Moss
CSNC	Sue Offland

There were no appeals to the final appeals committee in 2010.

G10 Firefighter magazine and communications

Firefighter magazine is distributed to 55,000 addresses and is the most widely read fire and rescue service publication. It is direct mailed to members and out of trade members at home, with copies also going to all branches. The magazine is also sent to all MPs and to key opinion formers and policy makers within the fire and rescue service.

During 2010 the union published nine issues of Firefighter, as in the previous year. It featured articles on the Cumbria floods, the Marlie Farm and Southampton firefighter fatalities, FiReControl, fire and rescue service cuts, response times, the Blitz, the Comprehensive Spending Review and the union's lobby in November 2010. Other issues featured were pensions, education, pay, Colombia and the general election.

The magazine won "trade union magazine of the year" at the TUC Communications Awards in the previous year, and it continued with broadly the same format and columns as before, such as the Day Off feature and the impertinent Station Cat. However, from October 2010 it was refreshed to incorporate new fonts and styles, in line with publishing industry best practice.

The communications and research department also published three issues of the women members' magazine, Siren; two issues of the new officers' magazine, The Officer Issue; one issue of the black and ethnic minority members' magazine, Advisor; and one issue of the LGBT members' magazine, Flagship. These were also refreshed as part of the Firefighter redesign.

The department continued to produce authoritative reports with College Hill Press. It published a detailed report on Climate Change, a response to the Audit Commission, the response campaign report It's About Time, and A Service to be

Proud of in advance of the Comprehensive Spending Review. It also assisted with the publication of Firefighters and the Blitz, written by Francis Beckett for the FBU, and which had wide media coverage on the 70th anniversary of those events.

In addition, we also produced one A5 bulletin on the general election and four A5 bulletins for the national lobby. Other publications included an A4 four-page Response bulletin for control members, an A4 four-page bulletin Pay more, work longer, get less on pensions, as well as two A5 Vote yes strike bulletins and public leaflet to assist London members with their dispute.

This year the executive council instructed the department to revamp the FBU website, which had become dated. Work began in October 2010, with a new site in operation from January 2011. This work is ongoing, but should enable the union to integrate its communications and make better use of new media such as social networking.

Firefighter and other publications are available on the national website which contains key information about the union, campaigns and publications. All officials have access to all Labour Research Department publications online to assist with campaigning and support for local negotiating initiatives. LRD publications and the FBU pay and conditions database – also available to officials – are both fully searchable.

G11 National LGBT committee report 2010

National representatives:

Executive council member	Stewart Brown
Chair	Yannick Dubois
Secretary	Pat Carberry

Regional representatives:

Region 1	Stephen Mitchell
Region 2	Vacant
Region 3	John Arnold
Region 4	Vacant
Region 5	Vacant
Region 6	Vacant
Region 7	Vacant
Region 8	Lloyd Ketcher
Region 9	Kevin Gutherson
Region 10	Norman Perry (to October) Lucy Masoud (post October)
Region 11	Vacant
Region 12	Alli Burrows
Region 13	Vacant

The LGBT committee met throughout 2010 on the following dates:

22 February	
Full business meeting	Head office

18 May	
Annual conference delegation meeting	Southport
18 June	
Full business meeting	Regional office, Region 13, Bristol
30 June	
TUC LGBT conference delegates meeting	Thistle Hotel, Russell Square
1 October	
Full business meeting	Head office
16 December	
Full business meeting committee AGM	Head office

The following dates have been booked for LGBT committee meetings for 2011:

17 February 2011
17 June 2011
7 October 2011
12 December 2011
13 December 2011 – AGM

All meetings are scheduled to be held at FBU head office.

FBU committees:

National fairness at work committee	Alli Burrows
Final appeals committee	Pat Carberry
Education committee	Yannick Dubois
Health and safety coordinators	Pat Carberry

FBU annual conference 2010

Our presence at conference 2010 consisted of Alli Burrows, Kevin Gutherson and Pat Carberry as delegates with Yannick Dubois as the delegation official.

On the programme of business we had a total of three resolutions. The first one to be debated was resolution 66, Membership database. We withdrew this resolution as by the time conference had occurred most of the content of the resolution had been achieved and Paul Woolstenholmes was in the process of revising and updating the database by means of an all-members' survey.

Resolution 53, Census – exclusion of the question on sexual orientation 2011, was withdrawn with the right to speak. Pat Carberry addressed conference and explained that the reason for withdrawal was down to the fact that the draft census order had passed through both Houses of Parliament which makes it law. Therefore the campaigning called for in the resolution would not have achieved any change in the census content. Conference was appraised of the motives behind bringing the resolution to conference and the concerns about the exclusion of the question in the census.

Resolution 57, International LGBT campaigning, was moved by Pat Carberry and seconded by B&EMM. The resolution carried unanimously.

Alli Burrows seconded resolution 51, Domestic violence, being moved by the women's committee.

Conference endorsed the necessary rule change to acknowledge we are no longer the G&L but the LGBT committee.

CLG equality and diversity strategy

Following the general election we have witnessed a change of government and also a change in commitment to the equality and diversity strategy. Within weeks of election the new coalition government fire minister Bob Neill, whilst addressing the Fire and Rescue conference, announced that this government would no longer be setting national targets on who fire authorities should be employing and would leave such decisions up to those local authorities. This decision has impacted on the CLG fire and rescue service equality and diversity strategy and effectively removed it, giving no overall central guidance on what is expected in terms of achievement in this area. All of the FBU minority sections had worked with CLG in the production of the strategy and believe that there still remains a need for bench marking.

Comprehensive Spending Review

In light of the position stated by the fire minister with regards to equality and diversity in the service and the application of an expectation to produce 25% savings, the LGBT committee is concerned that equality and diversity will suffer as a result of these imposed spending cuts.

Flagship

As in recent years, once again in 2010 we published one edition of Flagship. We are very grateful for the assistance and support of Paul Hampton from head office and look forward to working with him in the production of future editions.

TUC LGBT conference 2010

We sent our usual delegation to the TUC LGBT conference on 1-2 July this year. Once again Stewart Brown, our executive council member, was elected onto the TUC LGBT committee. This year our FBU delegation brought a motion on domestic abuse (details can be found on the TUC LGBT conference report).

LGBT conference, East Sussex

On 6 August a conference specifically aimed at LGBT issues was hosted by East Sussex fire and rescue service and endorsed by the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA). Members of the LGBT committee, particularly our chair Yannick Dubois, were instrumental in the planning and delivery of this conference. Relationships with CFOA are at times strained but it is worth noting that on occasions we can work together to achieve benefits for all the stakeholders of the fire and rescue service.

Pride events

Members of the LGBT committee attended fewer Pride events for 2010 in order to reduce expenditure and more effectively use resources. Members of the committee attended two main events, London Pride and Brighton Pride. Committee members were able to attend London Pride as it occurred immediately after the TUC LGBT conference, so keeping costs to a minimum. The committee and members were able to attend Brighton Pride as it coincided with the LGBT conference

hosted by East Sussex fire and rescue service with the support of their own fire authority.

Of note this year, was a change in policy with London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA). London Pride is our national pride event by virtue of it occurring in the nation's capital. Over the last decade LFEPA has hosted a pride celebration on the morning of the Pride event to which members of the FBU LGBT committee have been invited as well as members of any other fire authority attending Pride. The LFEPA Pride breakfast was traditionally a good opportunity for getting all fire service stakeholders together prior to the Pride march. LFEPA has withdrawn support for this event and the loss of this support will impact on the organising of our members attending this event.

Stonewall workplace equality index 2010

The LGBT committee continues to support Stonewall and to encourage fire authorities to work with this organisation and be members of the Workplace Equality Index. In 2010 a total of 42 fire services were registered as members. Of these, four made it onto the list of Britain's top 100 gay-friendly employers.

In March 2010 Stonewall hosted its workplace conference in London. For the first time a workshop was held at the conference on the specific issue of the fire and rescue service (FRS) and this was facilitated by members of West Yorkshire FRS and East Sussex FRS.

Putting the T into LGBT

In the last year we are pleased to report that we have been contacted by many more members who are progressing through transition. Currently we have five members who have sought advice and support. It is encouraging that so many members are finding the courage and confidence to move forward on gender identity issues and we shall continue to work closely with those members and their employers to ensure their needs are met.

G12 National LGBT committee AGM report 2010

On 17 December 2010 members of the LGBT section met at FBU head office, Kingston for their annual general meeting.

The meeting was opened by the committee chair Yannick Dubois and committee secretary Pat Carberry presented the annual report on all the work the committee had been involved with over the last year.

A total of 11 resolutions were submitted and debated with the following being passed:

RESOLUTION 1 – TRANSGENDER MEMBERS' AWARENESS DAY

This AGM of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) members is delighted that so many members of the section who identify

as transgender/transsexual or transvestite are becoming more self-assured and confident enough to confront head on the issue of "coming out" at work. We congratulate them and wish to offer any further assistance we can to enable them to continue the process with their respective employers. It is vital that we as a union support and encourage our members in any way we can, and the LGBT section has been able to provide this support for many of our members.

We therefore request that the executive council organise, in conjunction with the LGBT section, an awareness/networking day for our trans members within 12 months of conference 2011.

REGION 10

RESOLUTION 2 – MEDIA PORTRAYAL OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY

This national LGBT committee is frustrated at the way in which the media portrays the LGBT community.

The media is a powerful tool; television, radio, newspapers and magazines have the capacity to educate, inform and challenge individuals, but they can also be damaging to the LGBT community by perpetuating homophobic attitudes. The media also plays a huge part in influencing public opinion towards our community. It is all too easy to dismiss clichéd stereotypes as inoffensive harmless fun, but stereotypes when they are the only images portrayed are harmful and can encourage victimisation of LGBT people.

This LGBT AGM calls on the executive council to work with the TUC and affiliate trade unions who represent staff within the media industry to seek an initiative to begin to address the damaging and offensive way in which some of the media consistently portray LGBT people.

REGION 8

RESOLUTION 3 – THE FIRE SERVICE EQUALITY STRATEGY

October 2010 finally saw the Single Equality Act come into law. The act consolidated equality law under one single act and introduced a new public sector equality duty that includes sexual orientation. The equality duty will take effect from April 2011.

Progress with equality and diversity in the fire and rescue service has been problematic. Many members and officials of the FBU have worked to improve our performance in this field and gradually we have witnessed positive changes.

Within weeks of the general election we saw the new fire minister announce that the fire service equality strategy was scrapped. This has left the service in limbo without clear direction on what is expected in the continued promotion of equality and diversity.

This AGM of LGBT members calls on the general secretary to raise this issue with the employers and fire minister to ensure that progress in equality continues and that statutory duties are monitored to ensure compliance.

REGION 9

RESOLUTION 4 – EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR THE UK FIRE SERVICE

The Fire Brigades Union notes the equality and diversity targets for women and BME firefighters within the national framework have supported the embedding of diversity and equality, fairness and inclusion in all that the fire and rescue service does. Although targets were not set regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) staff under the new Equality Act, as of April 2011 a new equality duty that includes sexual orientation will apply and delivery of this duty will depend on the strategy. The coalition government have stated that they are not going to monitor, or impose the strategy or targets.

Without such strategy or targets many services have already questioned their need to maintain equality and diversity activities and there is evidence that some are considering ceasing such work.

Conference calls on the executive council to campaign for the national framework, post 2011, to include a commitment to support the fire and rescue equality and diversity strategy 2008-2018, with FRAs being required to demonstrate that they are continuing with plans to deliver its outcomes.

REGION 3

RESOLUTION 5 – LGBT SCHOOL: SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS' NEEDS

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) members congratulate the officials responsible for organising the successful LGBT School in October 2010. The school was a great triumph, despite a large number of our members from London being unable to attend as a result of London Fire Brigade withdrawing trade union leave facilities, as a consequence of industrial action taking place over imposed changes to duty systems.

Our members have benefited from access to an annual LGBT school for over a decade. Although the function of the school is primarily trade union education, it also provides a unique opportunity for our members to access their officials and discuss issues in a safe environment. For many members the school has been the first step in a process of "coming out" and many of our officials first active trade union involvement has been at the school.

In previous years, as a result of financial hardship to the union, the LGBT School has had to be cancelled. Last year again faced with financial constraint, the school had its budget cut by 50%, the largest reduction applied to any education event. The impact of such a reduction meant the promotion of the school was reduced and student numbers greatly restricted.

LGBT members call on the national officer with the remit for education and executive council to ensure that prior to future cuts in education, full consideration be given to the function of the LGBT School not only in terms of education but also support. LGBT members ask that consideration be given to the fact that we have already received the heaviest burden in requirements to make savings in education and ensure the LGBT officials tasked with planning the school are fully consulted on any efficiencies that need to be made.

REGION 9

RESOLUTION 6 – OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS INTEGRATED HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

LGBT members are still angry and disappointed at the refusal of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to include the question of sexual orientation in the 2011 census. The ONS offered compromise by including the question in the 2010 integrated household survey (IHS). The IHS is very different from the census; it involved a sample of nearly 450,000 being surveyed. The survey was conducted on doorsteps or over the phone and this can affect how people choose to answer questions of a very personal nature.

The results of the IHS indicate that the size of the LGBT community was around 1.5%. This figure is much lower than the figure of 5-7% which has been more widely used. Many of the enemies of LGBT equality have now seized on this new figure as the definitive measure of our community's size.

LGBT members recognise the value of monitoring, however they also realise that it is a long term process in building confidence for people to feel safe answering questions relating to gender identity and sexual orientation. We call on all officials when negotiating on LGBT issues to avoid the use of the IHS statistic as a definitive and would ask that they continue to encourage employers to engage and utilise workforce monitoring.

REGION 8

RESOLUTION 7 – LGBT RIGHTS IN IRAN

The Fire Brigades Union applauds the decision of the Iranian government to remove the mentally ill label from transgender people and to give them legal rights. However within the country same sex acts remain punishable by death. Recent human rights campaigns have focussed on the sentencing of Sakineh Mohammadi-Ashtiani to death, by stoning. This has led to massive international pressure upon the Iranian government and so far saved her from this punishment. We fully support the action to save Sakineh, however there are other human rights issues, especially for LGB people, which are not receiving the same attention.

Conference calls on the executive council to campaign for the human rights of LGB people in Iran, especially those facing the death penalty for expressing their love, and to publicise all human rights abuses wherever and whenever they occur.

REGION 3

RESOLUTION 8 – IDAHO DAY

This AGM of LGBT members is concerned at the lack of participation in IDAHO Day (International day against homophobia) and urges the union to do more.

The international day against homophobia aims to coordinate international events to call for respect for lesbians and gay men worldwide. May 17 each year provides a focus for the whole world because homosexuality was removed from the international classification of diseases of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The TUC/LGBT committee has provided the focus in the UK over the last few years for this event for trade unionists, but it

is essential that individual trade unions start to do more themselves.

We therefore call on the FBU, through the executive council, to coordinate an event that this union and its members can be proud of. This event should be organised for IDAHO Day 2012, and be an annual event in the FBU's calendar with the general secretary taking the lead.

REGION 10

RESOLUTION 9 – DEFENDING EQUALITY FOR LGBT MEMBERS

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) members of the FBU recognise the economic constraints that the union faces as a result of a reduced income at a time our members are under attack and campaigns in defence further add to the financial burden.

Under the previous government our members witnessed great advances towards LGBT equality but note that during this period the conservative party consistently opposed such advances. Now that we have a coalition government with the conservatives holding the power LGBT members are fearful of the attacks that are being mounted against equality.

Since the general election the new fire minister has sent a clear message that equality in the fire service does not matter and has scrapped the FRS 10 year equality strategy.

Not only is this government intent on smashing trade union rights but also has little regard for equality. It is now that our LGBT officials must work hardest to ensure our rights are not eroded.

Conference calls on the EC to ensure that any internal financial savings applied do not impact disproportionately on our LGBT officials' ability to continue to defend our members' rights. If financial savings must be applied it should be across the board to all officials, all sections and regions in a fair and equal manner.

REGION 9

The meeting decided that the three resolutions to be forwarded for consideration for the programme of business for annual conference 2011 would be:

Resolution 4 – Equality and diversity strategy

Resolution 5 – LGBT School: supporting our members needs

Resolution 9 – Defending equality for LGBT members

Following debate of the resolutions the following officials were elected and endorsed by the AGM for 2011.

Vice chair	Alli Burrows
Assistant secretary	Kevin Gutherson
Education rep	Yannick Dubois
FAW rep	Alli Burrows
Minutes secretary	Kevin Gutherson
Health and safety rep	Pat Carberry
Final appeals rep	Pat Carberry
FF magazine rep	Lucy Masoud
Flagship editor	Pat Carberry

G13 National retained committee report 2010

Pensions case update

Negotiations took place throughout 2010 to attempt to reach agreement that would allow retained duty system (RDS) firefighters access into a modified New Firefighters' Pension Scheme (NFPS) which had the benefits of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). A blueprint of what this scheme will look like is expected early in 2011 following which statutory consultation will take place.

In addition to this, conditions of service should have been modified to remove any potential discrimination against RDS firefighters. As part of the settlement a compensation package will also be paid to eligible members for less favourable treatment in respect of sick pay and conditions of service. The paperwork for this is being prepared at the time of writing of this report.

RDS recruitment and retention

2010 continued last year's trend with RDS membership of the Fire Brigades Union showing an increase as a result of the efforts being made across the UK by the FBU national organiser, officials and activists. As well as recruiting members who were not in any trade union, these figures included firefighters who felt that they were better served by the FBU than the organisation they were previously part of.

Education and union learning

Involvement and participation in regional education has again been positive in 2010. Some courses have been designed to fit around the commitments of RDS members and were specifically run at times and dates chosen to maximise RDS member attendance.

Region 8 rep Lyndon Jones highlighted that, because the regional ULF bid had secured further funding till 2011, valuable courses that many RDS members had been involved with could continue.

The cuts agenda and RDS

Reports to the committee throughout 2010 indicate that 2011 is also likely to be a very busy year for the national retained committee (NRC) given the current economic and political climate. Many fire and rescue services are considering cuts to frontline services with many of these directly affecting RDS members and stations. Already Northern Ireland members and activists are preparing themselves for campaigns to defend cuts that could potentially see the removal of over 20 RDS second pumps, plus equally severe cuts at wholetime stations. Warwickshire fire and rescue authority has recently reintroduced some of the station closures that were avoided last year. In Mid and West Wales reports are emerging that potentially seven RDS stations could be affected as well as changes to shift systems for wholetime crews. In Kent ongoing proposals for the structure of the retained duty system have the potential to remove hundreds of RDS jobs

despite assurances to the contrary by principal management. Other reports suggest that many brigades are considering options to reduce RDS posts, appliances and training, making the coming year one that will be extremely busy for all activists and members involved.

The NRC has and will continue to support local officials, activists and members in campaigns opposing cuts, station closures, and attempts to introduce worsening conditions.

Transfer across duty systems:

During 2010 work continued on the ability of RDS members to transfer duty systems. Factors that also had to be considered were the RDS part-time workers case settlement had not yet reached its conclusion and a tribunal on an associated issue in Region 2. NRC reps are reporting that many brigades are still facilitating the transfer of their RDS firefighters to full-time posts using locally agreed processes.

G14 National retained committee AGM report 2010

The 2010 retained members' annual general meeting was held in Birmingham on 28 November. Guest speakers included outgoing president Mick Shaw, national officer Sean Starbuck, FBU organiser Daniel Giblin and executive council member for retained Tam Mitchell. The main subjects covered were RDS pensions, conditions of service, recruitment and activism. AGM attendees raised several issues relevant to the topics discussed and took part in a detailed debate.

The following six resolutions were passed at the meeting:

Resolution 1:	
Injury or illness sustained on duty	Carried unanimously
Resolution 2:	
Cuts to RDS firefighter posts	Carried unanimously
Resolution 3:	
Duty systems	Carried
Resolution 4:	
Fitness training	Carried
Resolution 5:	
Education for RDS members	Carried
Resolution 7:	
Training time	Carried

The three resolutions selected to be taken to annual conference 2011 were resolutions 1, 3 and 7.

The FBU national retained committee comprises the following officials and representatives:

Executive council member retained	Tam Mitchell
National retained committee secretary	Pete Preston
National retained committee chair	Harry Cotter

Region 1 representative
Region 2 representative
Region 3 representative
Region 4 representative
Region 5 representative
Region 6 representative
Region 7 representative
Region 8 representative
Region 9 representative
Region 11 representative
Region 12 representative
Region 13 representative

Position vacant
Sean-Paul Bailey
Position vacant
Position vacant
Miles Parkinson
Paul Revill
Paul Brownhill
Lyndon Jones
Position vacant
Steve Martin
Bob Dewis
Leigh Redman

G15 Officers' national committee report 2010

During 2010 the officers' national committee (ONC) held six business meetings at various locations throughout the UK. These coincided with separate FBU fire safety committee meetings held in conjunction with the FBU's fire safety and IRMP adviser.

Four National Joint Council (NJC)/Middle Managers Negotiating Body (MMNB) meetings were attended where members of the ONC are either full members of the MMNB or advisers to it. There was prior liaison with the Fire Officers Association to ensure that a cohesive employee position on issues was achieved. Under the MMNB constitution there are 13 FBU reps and one from FOA.

A number of individual officer representatives undertook work for the FBU in various national forums, including technical and political arenas. Additionally, representatives supported brigades and regions by attending local officer and other meetings at locations around the UK.

The union's annual conference in Southport was attended by four officer delegates and three officials who undertook to ensure that officer members were well represented in all aspects. They contributed to many of the debates.

The 2010 officer members' seminar, held at Wortley Hall near Sheffield, was a well attended and worthwhile event, helping to set the agenda for the future.

G16 Organising and recruitment

The FBU recruitment and organising campaign continued in 2010 with some notable successes. The union continued to see the benefits of the work that was produced over this period.

The FBU national organiser attended branch meetings in several regions and brigades including South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Humberside, North Yorkshire, Hampshire, Fife, Grampian, Surrey, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

A decision was made to pay specific attention to Region 12 and in particular Hampshire where several meetings were attended for the purposes of recruitment and organising. Visits were made to stations in the New Forest which is traditionally an area of Hampshire which has very low FBU membership and historically firefighters working in this area have held negative attitudes towards the union. A particular effort was made to encourage firefighters from this area to join the FBU and they were encouraged to become active on their branches. Further to this, significant efforts have been made locally to support the new members, when talking to other retained duty system (RDS) firefighters in the New Forest area, to ensure that they also encourage them to join the FBU.

Hampshire brigade committee and brigade retained duty system (RDS) meetings were both attended throughout the year and further opportunities were given to encourage officials and members to play an active role in the recruitment campaign. It was especially pleasing to see that the brigade RDS meetings were very well attended and should be encouraged as an important resource for officials from Hampshire FBU.

In addition to the recruitment work within the region, significant resources were utilised for the purposes of creating an organising strategy within Buckinghamshire. This was the first attempt at designing an organising strategy within the region and it was crucial to this work that the brigade committee maintained full control of its content and aims throughout the process and that they were constantly involved in all the decision making from the draft period right up until the final copy being produced. Future work designed to assist officials in Buckinghamshire in implementing the aims that were set out within the document has been planned.

Following on from this, Oxfordshire also started work on a draft strategy. The content has been agreed in principle and is expected to be completed in the very near future. As in the case of Buckinghamshire, it is vital that brigade committee members are the main contributors. A draft version of this document was nearing completion at the end of 2010.

In Region 4, organising and recruitment work has continued and April 2010 saw the establishment of a designated organising committee, attended by the executive council member, regional chair, FBU national organiser and brigade membership secretaries, aiming to assist with all membership and organising issues within the region. Brigade membership secretaries were encouraged to map their membership and were encouraged to obtain as much information as possible about dual-contract members within their brigades in order to record true membership information. Subsequent coordinated recruitment campaigns were planned in all brigades, the first of which took place in November. This recruitment month required all brigades within the region to commit as much of their resources as possible into recruitment and organising meetings. In addition to the designated organising month, continued efforts have been made by all the brigades in the region to increase FBU membership and activism within their respective brigades.

In South Yorkshire local officials built on the existing organising campaign which was successful during the industrial dispute in late 2009 and early 2010 and several RDS branches were visited due to these current efforts. Members were keen to get an update on the part-time workers settlement, and this led to a number of new members joining the FBU.

As reported by local officials at annual conference 2010, principal management in West Yorkshire attempted to introduce a co-responding scheme at four stations. Local officials arranged branch meetings in an attempt to counter this and were very successful as all branches refused to take part in this initiative and this initiative also led to a number of new members. It was clear to everyone involved that it was vitally important to visit the branches targeted for this scheme early to give the FBU's position on co-responding in order to mitigate the principal management propaganda that was distributed and to increase the success of avoiding such schemes being implemented.

Recruitment meetings also took place in both Humberside and North Yorkshire as both brigades had issues specific to both retained duty system and wholetime conditions to discuss with members. It was encouraging that these meetings have also resulted in new members joining the FBU from all duty systems.

A series of meetings took place in Region 1 and resulted in successful recruitment in Fife and Grampian. It was especially encouraging to note that in Grampian a large number of these new members chose to join the FBU and resign from the RFU.

Surrey and Staffordshire held meetings to discuss and develop organising strategies and provided excellent opportunities to discuss benefits of mapping, issue-based recruitment and lessons that were learnt from the South Yorkshire dispute. Brigade committee members in Surrey were keen to see examples of organising strategies from other brigades and were looking at a future strategy document for their own brigade. In Staffordshire a different approach to assisting the brigade committee was requested, including the development of a basic brigade mapping exercise on which local officials could expand.

Early in 2010 Region 4 executive council member Ian Murray attended the London Organising School and highlighted the essential work carried out during the South Yorkshire dispute. Subsequent organising input was given by the FBU national organiser at the July London regional committee. The experience from South Yorkshire demonstrated the need for accurate brigade mapping and picket line planning. The merits of regular branch meetings, engaging with members and the additional campaigns within the major dispute such as the United against Bullying Week were discussed.

Invitations to speak at regional committees in Wales and the South East were also received. Officials from these regions were keen to hear about the organising work that had taken place throughout other brigades in the UK and what work

could be adopted to be utilised within their brigades in the near future.

Northern Ireland RDS annual general meeting was attended in October, which gave a great opportunity to discuss the importance of branch organisation in this current climate. This AGM was very well attended with firefighters from most parts of Northern Ireland in attendance.

The FBU national organiser also attended further meetings throughout the extended trade union movement and represented the FBU at the Public Sector Group organising subcommittee and at the Stronger Unions conference 2010. The Public Sector Group organising subcommittee in June was the first meeting of its kind and was attended by representatives from Unite, Unison, ATL, NAPO, and NASUWT. The main theme was the organising challenges faced by public sector unions and tactics to deal with any future attacks from government. There was a clear message from all representative bodies that senior management was using the budgetary constraints as an excuse to attack trade union facilities. In turn this was being used in order to encourage officials to resign their union position.

The Stronger Unions 2010 conference took place at Congress House in July. The main focus of the day was organising in the current political climate. The event was also attended by regional officials from Regions 9 and 12. The conference was opened by TUC deputy general secretary Frances O'Grady, with supporting speeches from Sally Hunt, general secretary of UCU, and Dave Prentis, general secretary of Unison. The workshops attended by FBU representatives included: 21st century organising and Speaking up for public services.

Several meetings looking at membership issues were arranged during 2010 at head office. Attendees at these meetings included the assistant general secretary, national officer, FBU national organiser and staff from the head office membership and IT departments. Issues discussed included membership initiatives, membership database information requirements and ideas around simplifying membership application.

The FBU national organiser has continued to attend Union Learning meetings and has worked with RELOs and ULRs to expand opportunities for the current RDS recruitment and retention campaign. Where possible all future regional recruitment drives will be assisted by the relevant RELOs and ULRs who can promote both FBU education and Union Learn opportunities as well as assisting with access on to the more difficult branches.

The national retained AGM was attended in late November and an opportunity was provided to present delegates with an update of the RDS national organising campaign. Further to this, RDS members were encouraged to become involved in all recruitment and organising initiatives within their own regions whenever possible.

A CSNC meeting was attended in late 2010 to discuss opposing cuts which are facing members working in fire

control. General issues around membership and recruitment and organising were also discussed. Committee members were keen to produce an organising strategy specifically aimed at members working within fire control rooms and it was initially agreed that a document will be produced in time for annual conference 2011.

A meeting was attended at Congress House with TUC national organiser Carl Roper and head of the TUC Organising Academy Liz Blackshaw to discuss any potential opportunities for further FBU involvement in the Organising Academy. A number of options were discussed around how the TUC could assist with any initiatives concerned with organising. National officer Sean Starbuck outlined that the FBU was looking at a more internal-based training package for organisers in the FBU and this might include expanding the role of the brigade membership secretary. TUC officials outlined potential courses that may be amended to suit a more internal-based training idea and national officer Sean Starbuck agreed to take these options back to the executive council for consideration.

The organising work which has been progressed by the FBU national organiser has continued to be a vital resource for the FBU throughout 2010 and all brigades are encouraged to utilise the FBU organiser to assist with building and strengthening the FBU for the future.

G17 Political fund

The political fund continues to be used to support campaigning political work as well as some of the union's political education and international campaigning.

In addition, donations were made totalling £86,000 to the following candidates for the general election on 6 May 2010.

David Anderson MP
Celia Barlow MP
Roger Berry MP
Roberta Blackman-Woods MP
Dawn Butler MP
Katy Clark MP
Michael Connarty MP
Rosie Cooper MP
Jeremy Corbyn MP
Ian Davidson MP
Andrew Dismore MP
David Drew MP
Robert Ffello MP
Nia Griffith MP
David Hamilton MP
Kate Hoey MP
Kelvin Hopkins MP
Tony Lloyd MP
Rob Marris MP
Kerry McCarthy MP
John McDonnell MP
James McGovern MP
Austin Mitchell MP

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

George Mudie MP
Linda Riordan MP
Marsha Singh MP
Dennis Skinner MP
Dari Taylor MP
Joan Walley MP
Robert Wareing MP
Mike Wood MP

G18 RAFT

RAFT (Restoration of Appearance and Function Trust) is a registered charity, dealing with people suffering from physical disfigurement and awful wounds, including those injuries sustained by severe burning. As a result of this work, several of our own FBU members have benefitted from specialised treatment.

The union has continued its association with RAFT throughout 2010.

G19 Regional offices and officials

Region 1 – Scotland

FBU Regional Office

4th Floor
52 St Enoch Square
Glasgow
G1 4AA
Tel: 0141 221 2309
Fax: 0141 204 4575

Brigades

Central
Dumfries and Galloway
Fife
Grampian
Highland and Islands
Lothian and Borders
Strathclyde
Tayside

Executive council member

Mr R D Robertson

Regional secretary

Mr J Duffy

Acting regional chair

Mr G Barrie

Regional treasurer

Mr G Barrie

Regional official

Mr J Malone

Brigade secretary

Mr G McQuade
Mr G McLeod
Mr S McCabe
Mr A Paterson
Mr M Cooper
Mr A Fulton
Mr J McFadden
Mr R Costello

Brigade chair

Mr S Thomson
Mr S Chaudhry
Mr G Birtley
Mr L Murray
Mr C MacNeill
Mr B J Banks
Mr A Stewart
Mr T Whyte

Region 2 – Northern Ireland

FBU Regional Office

14 Bachelors Walk
Lisburn
Co Antrim
BT28 1XJ
Tel: 02892 664622
Fax: 02892 667844

Executive council member

Mr J E Barbour

Regional secretary

Mr J Quinn

Regional chair

Mr B Stanfield

Regional treasurer

Mr S Boyd

Regional official

Mr D Rooney

Region 3 – North Eastern

FBU Regional Office

1 Carlton Court
5th Avenue
Team Valley
Gateshead
NE11 0AZ
Tel: 0191 487 4142
Fax: 0191 487 4161

Brigades

Cleveland
Durham
Northumberland
Tyne and Wear

Executive council member

Mr A McLean

Regional secretary

Mr P Wilcox

Regional chair

Mr S Watson

Regional treasurer

Mr K Brennan

Regional official

Vacant

Brigade secretary

Mr S Watson
Mr A Curry
Mr K Brennan
Mr A Noble

Brigade chair

Mr D Howe
Mr L Brown
Ms A Cregin
Mr D Turner

Region 4 – Yorkshire and Humberside

FBU Regional Office

9 Marsh Street
Rothwell
Leeds
LS26 0AG
Tel: 0113 288 7000
Fax: 0113 288 7888

Brigades

Humberside
North Yorkshire
South Yorkshire
West Yorkshire

Executive council member

Mr I Murray

Regional secretary

Mr P Smith

Regional chair

Mr I Watkins

Regional treasurer

Mr G Wilkinson

Regional official

Vacant

Brigade secretary

Mr R Walker
Mr I Watkins
Mr J Gilliver
Mr M B Wilson

Brigade chair

Mr N Trenchard
Mr S Atkinson
Mr G Wilkinson
Mr A Imrie

Region 5 – North Western

FBU Regional Office

The Lighthouse
Lower Mersey Street
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire
CH65 2AL
Tel: 0151 357 4400
Fax: 0151 357 4409

Brigades

Cheshire
Cumbria
GMC
Isle of Man
Lancashire
Merseyside

Executive council member

Mr W Gee

Regional secretary

Mr K P Brown

Regional chair

Mr I McGill

Regional treasurer

Mr S Shelton

Regional official

Mr S Harman

Brigade secretary

Mr D H Williams
Mr M Hind
Mr P Taylor
Vacant
Mr S Harman
Mr B L Skarratts

Brigade chair

Mr A Price
Mr D Greenway
Mr P Fogerty
Vacant
Mr K Deacon
Mr M Rowe

Region 6 – East Midlands

FBU Regional Office

Above Seymours
Little Tennis Street South
Nottingham
NG2 4EU
Tel: 0115 947 2042
Fax: 0115 947 2721

Brigades

Derbyshire
Leicestershire
Lincolnshire
Northamptonshire
Nottinghamshire

Executive council member

Mr D Limer

Regional secretary

Mr G Mitchell

Regional chair

Mr T D Murray

Regional treasurer

Mr P Wilkins

Regional official

Mr T Neal

Brigade secretary

Mr J Cooke
Mr N Mayne
Mr C Tuck
Mr S Mason
Mr B Mould

Brigade chair

Mr C Tapp
Mr C Doughton
Mr C Hides
Mr S Fenning
Mr P Coates

Region 7 – West Midlands

FBU Regional Office

195/7 Halesowen Road
Old Hill
West Midlands
B64 6HE
Tel: 01384 413633
Fax: 01384 561243

Brigades

Hereford and Worcester
Shropshire
Staffordshire
Warwickshire
West Midlands

Executive council member

Ms R Jones

Regional secretary

Mr C Downes

Regional chair

Mr B Moss

Regional treasurer

Mr P W Goulden

Regional official

Mr M Giles

Brigade secretary

Vacant
Mr M Lamb
Mr G McLeod
Mr M Rattray
Mr A Dennis

Brigade chair

Mr S Gould
Mr S Morris
Mr R Williams
Mr M Giles
Mr R Moore

Region 8 – Wales

FBU Regional Office

4 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
Bridgend
CF35 5LJ
Tel: 01656 867910
Fax: 01656 864087

Brigades

Mid and West Wales
North Wales
South Wales

Executive council member

Mr M Smith

Regional secretary

Mr G Mayos

Regional chair

Mr C Griffiths

Regional treasurer

Mr C Howells

Regional official

Vacant

Brigade secretary

Mr L Larmond
Mr C Burns
Mr A Smith

Brigade chair

Mr G Lewis
Ms S Williams
Mr M Watt

Region 9 – Eastern and East Anglia

FBU Regional Office

28 Atlantic Square
Station Road
Witham
Essex
CM8 2TL
Tel: 01376 521521
Fax: 01376 503758

Brigades

Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Essex
Hertfordshire
Norfolk
Suffolk

Executive council member

Mr K Handscomb

Regional secretary

Mr A Clarke

Regional chair

Mr B Hooper

Regional treasurer

Mr D Godfrey-Shaw

Regional official

Mr N Day

Brigade secretary

Mr J Hollamby

Mr K Napier

Mr M Rogers

Mr A Smith

Mr J Wyatt

Mr A Message

Brigade chair

Mr M Ball

Mr P McQuillen

Mr M Kinsalla

Mr S Duncan

Mr P Greeves

Mr A Vingoe

Region 10 – London

FBU Regional Office

John Horner Mews
Frome Street
Islington
London
N1 8PB
Tel: 020 7359 3638
Fax: 020 7359 3686

Executive council member

Mr I Leahair

Regional secretary

Mr J MacVeigh

Regional chair

Mr G Fielden

Regional treasurer

Mr L Brightman

Regional official

Mr P Embury

Region 11 – South Eastern

FBU Regional Office

Unit 11, Hunns Mere Way
Woodingdean
Brighton
BN2 6AH

Executive council member

Mr J Parrott

Regional secretary

Ms D Armstrong

Regional chair

Mr M Simmons

Regional treasurer

Mr B Woodfine

Regional official

James Tigwell

Brigades

Kent
Surrey
East Sussex
West Sussex

Brigade secretary

Mr M Simmons

Mr R Jones

Mr S Huggins

Mr F Bishop

Brigade chair

Ms J Impey

Mr P Greenwood

Mr M Dale

Mr M Cambers

Region 12 – Southern

FBU Regional Office

The Merlin Centre
Unit L
Gatehouse Close
Aylesbury
HP19 8DP
Tel: 01296 482297

Brigades

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Hampshire
Isle of Wight
Oxfordshire

Executive council member

Mr K Horan

Regional secretary

Mr R Matthews

Regional chair

S Allen

Regional treasurer

Mr D Dymond

Regional official

Ms A Burrows

Brigade secretary

Mr M Stollery
Mr J Wolfenden
Mr P Trew
Mr M Sainsbury
Vacant

Brigade chair

Mr M Whyte
Mr M Bliss
Vacant
Mr M Deacon
Mr S Allen

Region 13 – South West

FBU Regional Office

158 Muller Road
Horsfield
Bristol
BS7 9RE
Tel: 0117 935 5132
Fax: 0117 935 5916

Brigades

Avon
Cornwall
Devon and Somerset
Dorset
Gloucestershire
Wiltshire

Executive council member

Mr T McFarlane

Regional secretary

Mr J Drake

Regional chair

Mr P Jordan

Regional treasurer

Ms V Hampshire

Regional official

Mr K Herniman

Brigade secretary

Mr C D Jackson
Mr D Keen
Mr T French
Ms K Adams
Mr M Tully
Mr P Lawler

Brigade chair

Mr C Taylor
Mr M Tremellen
Mr B Walker
Mr S Dennett
Mr P Jordan
Mr T Littler

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

National black and ethnic minority members' committee

Executive council member	Mr M Nicholas
Secretary	Ms S Samuels
Chair	Mr L Ramsey

Region 1	Mr L Ramsey
Region 2	Vacant
Region 3	Mr L Brown
Region 4	Mr M Brown
Region 5	Vacant
Region 6	Mr D H Powell
Region 7	Mr C Jarrett
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	Vacant

National retained committee

Executive council member	Mr T Mitchell
Secretary	Mr P Preston
Chair	Mr D H Cotter

Region 1	Vacant
Region 2	Mr S Bailey
Region 3	Mr A Pattinson
Region 4	Vacant
Region 5	Mr M Parkinson
Region 6	Mr P Revill
Region 7	Mr P Brownhill
Region 8	Mr L Jones
Region 9	Vacant
Region 10	Vacant
Region 11	Mr C S Martin
Region 12	Mr R H Dewis
Region 13	Mr L P Redman

National control staff committee

Executive council member	Ms S Riley
Secretary	Ms S Offland (acting secretary Ms S Farley)
Chair	Ms K Smith

Region 1	Mr S Reid
Region 2	Ms L Rowan-O'Neill
Region 3	Ms J E Westwood
Region 4	Mr W G Sunderland
Region 5	Mr T Gerrard
Region 6	Mr T Stitt
Region 7	Ms S Farley
Region 8	Mr N Rees
Region 9	Ms S Thorndyke
Region 11	Vacant
Region 12	Mr P Watts
Region 13	Mr S Jones

National women's committee

Executive council member	Ms D Christie/ Ms V Knight (Jan – Sept 2010)
Secretary	Ms K Baigent
Chair	Ms D Feltham

Region 1	Ms D Christie
Region 2	Ms L Rowan-O'Neill
Region 3	Ms S Rye
Region 4	Vacant
Region 5	Ms H Tooley from September
Region 6	Ms H Tooley/ Ms C Hudson from September
Region 7	Ms H P Harrison
Region 8	Ms J Byrne
Region 9	Ms E Davis
Region 10	Ms S Harper
Region 11	Ms J Impey
Region 12	Vacant
Region 13	Ms D Critchlow

National lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans committee

Executive council member	Mr S Brown
Secretary	Mr P Carberry
Chair	Ms Y Dubois

Region 1	Mr S Mitchell
Region 2	Vacant
Region 3	Mr J Arnold
Region 4	Vacant
Region 5	Vacant
Region 6	Vacant
Region 7	Vacant
Region 8	Mr L Ketcher
Region 9	Mr K Gutherson
Region 10	Ms L Masoud
Region 11	Vacant
Region 12	Ms A Burrows
Region 13	Vacant

National officers' committee

Executive council member	Mr J C Ford
Acting secretary	Mr M Pottinger
Chair	Mr P Moss

Region 1	Mr G Kerr
Region 2	Mr J Denvir
Region 3	Mr J Arnold
Region 4	Vacant
Region 5	Mr P Moss
Region 6	Mr G Platts
Region 7	Mr R Moore
Region 8	Mr R Martin
Region 9	Mr M Osborne
Region 10	Mr P Poullais
Region 11	Mr R Sherwood

Region 12
Region 13

Vacant
Vacant

Education officers

Region 1	Mr P Wilson
Region 2	Ms L Rowan-O'Neill
Region 3	Mr P Wilcox
Region 4	Mr G Wilkinson
Region 5	Mr M Dunne
Region 6	Mr D Limer
Region 7	Mr S Roberts
Region 8	Mr M Davies
Region 9	Mr A Mayhew
Region 10	Mr B Sprung
Region 11	Mr R Fitzgerald
Region 12	Mr K Hall
Region 13	Mr P Jordan
B&EMM education rep	Ms S Samuels
CSNC education rep	Ms J E Westwood
LGBT education rep	Ms Y Dubois
NRC education rep	Mr D H Cotter
NWC education rep	Ms K Baigent
ONC education rep	Vacant

Regional health and safety reps

Region 1	Mr S McCabe
Region 2	Mr D McPoland
Region 3	Mr R King
Region 4	Vacant
Region 5	Mr I McGill
Region 6	Mr A Smyth
Region 7	Mr P W Goulden
Region 8	Mr S Fleming
Region 9	Mr S Kerridge
Region 10	Mr G Fielden
Region 11	Mr M Brown
Region 12	Mr D Dymond
Region 13	Mr K Herniman
B&EMM H&S rep	Mr C Jarrett
CSNC H&S rep	Ms K Smith
LGBT H&S rep	Mr P Carberry
NRC H&S rep	Mr L Jones
NWC H&S rep	Ms S J Harper
ONC H&S rep	Mr R Martin

Regional fairness at work reps

Region 1	Vacant
Region 2	Mr D Nichol
Region 3	Mr B Gibson
Region 4	Mr N Bailey
Region 5	Ms V Salmon
Region 6	Mr N Mayne
Region 7	Ms K Baer
Region 8	Mr J Byrne
Region 9	Mr D Godfrey Shaw
Region 10	Mr G Lester
Region 11	Mr S De Fraine Ford
Region 12	Mr E Cardoso
Region 13	Mr J Tray
B&EMM FAW rep	Mr C Jarrett
CSNC FAW rep	Ms B Sunderland
LGBT FAW rep	Ms A Burrows
NWC FAW rep	Ms K Baigent
NRC FAW rep	Mr L Redman
ONC FAW rep	Mr P Poullais

G20 Retired officials

The following officials retired during the calendar year 2010:

Executive council members

Jerry Pagan, Region 4 Yorkshire and Humberside executive council member

Brother Jerry Pagan retired after almost 31 years' dedicated service to the public of South Yorkshire and the Fire Brigades Union. Jerry joined the South Yorkshire fire service in 1979 and after completing basic training served for 21 years at Royston fire station, his later 10 years serving at CHQ and regional office, seconded to union duties. Jerry became active within the union and was elected as a branch representative in 1995 before becoming divisional representative in 1997. In 2000, Jerry was elected as brigade membership secretary then brigade chair in 2001. He became brigade secretary in 2004 where he remained in post until 2007. During this time he was also elected as regional treasurer in 2006 and finally the executive council member for region 4 in 2007 until his retirement in May 2010.

Jerry will be remembered for his passionate belief in the trades union movement and his commitment to assisting FBU officials improve their skills and for providing help to members throughout the region and beyond. Jerry has been a source of encouragement and support to all within the region and played a major role organising members in both the national dispute of 2002/2003 and the recent South Yorkshire dispute that succeeded in fighting off the threat of mass sackings to implement contractual changes, for a negotiated settlement. The FBU would like to thank Jerry for his loyal service and wish him a long and happy retirement, whilst looking forward to still seeing Jerry involved in the trade union movement and local politics.

Regional/sectional officials

Steve Hedley	Region 3
Chris Wood	Region 7
Dave Beverley	Officers' national committee

G21 Membership statistics

Membership statistics as at 31 December 2010															
Region	Brigade name	Whole-time	Retained	Control	Total	Political Fund	Political Fund non-party	No Levy	Total	AIF – Yes	AIF – No	Total	Male	Female	Total
Head office total	National official	6	0	0	6	3	3	0	6	6	0	6	6	0	6
		6	0	0	6	3	3	0	6	6	0	6	6	0	6
1	Central	232	82	11	325	155	111	59	325	323	2	325	308	17	325
	Dumfries and Galloway	90	167	15	272	70	43	159	272	272	0	272	240	32	272
	Fife	341	65	11	417	164	208	45	417	407	10	417	392	25	417
	Grampian	289	135	27	451	299	111	41	451	448	3	451	409	42	451
	Highland and Islands	125	530	16	671	250	149	272	671	653	18	671	623	48	671
	Lothian and Borders	689	138	31	858	275	543	40	858	830	28	858	773	85	858
	Strathclyde	1838	380	79	2297	1092	1073	132	2297	2288	9	2297	2181	116	2297
	Tayside	377	160	21	558	152	250	156	558	555	3	558	517	41	558
Total		3981	1657	211	5849	2457	2488	904	5849	5776	73	5849	5443	406	5849
2	N.I.F.B.	879	783	49	1711	298	282	1131	1711	1709	2	1711	1635	76	1711
Total		879	783	49	1711	298	282	1131	1711	1709	2	1711	1635	76	1711
3	Cleveland	454	71	28	553	183	218	152	553	514	39	553	509	44	553
	Durham Co.	357	83	28	468	251	177	40	468	464	4	468	430	38	468
	Northumberland Co.	160	121	26	307	182	104	21	307	302	5	307	272	35	307
	Tyne and Wear	801	13	57	871	423	156	292	871	860	11	871	798	73	871
Total		1772	288	139	2199	1039	655	505	2199	2140	59	2199	2009	190	2199
4	Humberside	536	213	21	770	482	175	113	770	723	47	770	730	40	770
	North Yorkshire	307	156	13	476	206	112	158	476	449	27	476	440	36	476
	South Yorkshire	660	48	17	725	283	333	109	725	699	26	725	678	47	725
	West Yorkshire	1281	81	42	1404	511	388	505	1404	1332	72	1404	1325	79	1404
Total		2784	498	93	3375	1482	1008	885	3375	3203	172	3375	3173	202	3375
5	Cheshire	489	115	22	626	394	207	25	626	617	9	626	589	37	626
	Cumbria	216	162	5	383	197	90	96	383	347	36	383	358	25	383
	GMC	1645	17	46	1708	982	494	232	1708	1668	40	1708	1634	74	1708
	Isle of Man	0	37	0	37	34	1	2	37	37	0	37	37	0	37
	Lancashire	788	265	41	1094	767	321	6	1094	1085	9	1094	1022	72	1094
	Merseyside	669	0	33	702	383	289	30	702	664	38	702	645	57	702
Total		3807	596	147	4550	2757	1402	391	4550	4418	132	4550	4285	265	4550
6	Derbyshire	387	180	27	594	334	150	110	594	581	13	594	551	43	594
	Leicestershire	415	119	23	557	256	108	193	557	533	24	557	519	38	557
	Lincolnshire	160	228	17	405	255	111	39	405	392	13	405	364	41	405
	Northamptonshire	260	93	17	370	130	156	84	370	359	11	370	345	25	370
	Nottinghamshire	536	150	27	713	264	337	112	713	709	4	713	670	43	713
Total		1758	770	111	2639	1239	862	538	2639	2574	65	2639	2449	190	2639
7	Hereford and Worcester	291	152	17	460	236	142	82	460	443	17	460	418	42	460
	Staffordshire	365	234	17	616	280	268	68	616	603	13	616	566	50	616
	Shropshire	171	100	12	283	131	57	95	283	274	9	283	267	16	283
	Warwickshire	238	81	18	337	98	63	176	337	325	12	337	312	25	337
	West Midlands	1445	0	55	1500	568	782	150	1500	1468	32	1500	1390	110	1500
Total		2510	567	119	3196	1313	1312	571	3196	3113	83	3196	2953	243	3196
8	Mid and West Wales	420	468	35	923	477	424	22	923	919	4	923	858	65	923
	North Wales	257	494	30	781	441	286	54	781	779	2	781	718	63	781
	South Wales	846	443	52	1341	851	389	101	1341	1291	50	1341	1268	73	1341
Total		1523	1405	117	3045	1769	1099	177	3045	2989	56	3045	2844	201	3045

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

Membership statistics as at 31 December 2010 (continued)															
Region	Brigade name	Whole-time	Retained	Control	Total	Political Fund	Political Fund non-party	No Levy	Total	AIF – Yes	AIF – No	Total	Male	Female	Total
9	Bedfordshire	263	63	24	350	146	142	62	350	344	6	350	313	37	350
	Cambridgeshire	219	132	12	363	85	165	113	363	350	13	363	335	28	363
	Essex	841	217	21	1079	622	358	99	1079	1059	20	1079	1029	50	1079
	Hertfordshire	383	91	14	488	265	170	53	488	481	7	488	463	25	488
	Norfolk	254	177	21	452	196	234	22	452	451	1	452	424	28	452
	Suffolk	186	119	9	314	141	147	26	314	294	20	314	294	20	314
	Total	2146	799	101	3046	1455	1216	375	3046	2979	67	3046	2858	188	3046
10	London	5579	0	0	5579	3349	1934	296	5579	5369	210	5579	5298	281	5579
Total		5579	0	0	5579	3349	1934	296	5579	5369	210	5579	5298	281	5579
11	Kent	781	409	27	1217	529	231	457	1217	1170	47	1217	1154	63	1217
	Surrey	537	49	24	610	428	132	50	610	606	4	610	572	38	610
	East Sussex	411	119	16	546	114	96	336	546	530	16	546	512	34	546
	West Sussex	300	84	18	402	202	118	82	402	388	14	402	371	31	402
	Total	2029	661	85	2775	1273	577	925	2775	2694	81	2775	2609	166	2775
12	Berkshire	380	73	28	481	265	147	69	481	473	8	481	438	43	481
	Buckinghamshire	349	117	19	485	203	90	192	485	471	14	485	456	29	485
	Hampshire	534	130	17	681	140	228	313	681	640	41	681	643	38	681
	Isle of Wight	78	77	12	167	69	54	44	167	166	1	167	154	13	167
	Oxfordshire	224	153	13	390	124	109	157	390	360	30	390	355	35	390
Total		1565	550	89	2204	801	628	775	2204	2110	94	2204	2046	158	2204
13	Avon	590	103	35	728	325	255	148	728	681	47	728	681	47	728
	Cornwall	200	188	4	392	102	115	175	392	386	6	392	381	11	392
	Dorset	265	112	24	401	122	121	158	401	386	15	401	362	39	401
	Devon and Somerset	610	340	45	995	346	245	404	995	929	66	995	932	63	995
	Gloucestershire	213	103	15	331	117	68	146	331	312	19	331	292	39	331
	Wiltshire	176	97	12	285	109	101	75	285	283	2	285	264	21	285
	Total	2054	943	135	3132	1121	905	1106	3132	2977	155	3132	2912	220	3132
TOTAL		32393	9517	1396	43306	20356	14371	8579	43306	42057	1249	43306	40520	2786	43306

G22 Union trustees

The executive council wishes to place on record its 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.

G23 National women's committee annual report 2010

1. The national women's committee

National representatives:

EC Member	Vicky Knight until September/ Denise Christie (from November)
National women's committee chair	Dona Feltham
National women's committee secretary	Kerry Baigent
National women's committee vice-chair	Denise Christie until November

Regional representatives:

Region 1	Denise Christie
Region 2	Lynda Rowan-O'Neil
Region 3	Samantha Rye
Region 5	Helen Tooley from September
Region 6	Helen Tooley until August/ Clare Hudson from September
Region 7	Helen Harrison
Region 8	Joanne Byrne
Region 9	Emma Davis
Region 10	Sally Harper
Region 11	Jenny Impey
Region 12	No Rep
Region 13	Diane Critchlow

2. National women's committee meetings

The national women's committee met on the following occasions this year:

25 February	NWC full business meeting <i>Wortley Hall</i>
30 April	NWC annual conference delegation meeting <i>Birmingham</i>
25 June	NWC full business meeting <i>Wortley Hall</i>
30 Sept	NWC full business meeting <i>Wortley Hall</i>

3. Committees that the NWC was represented at in 2010

FBU executive council subcommittees

EC international subcommittee	Vicky Knight (until September)
National education committee	Vicky Knight (until September)

FBU committees

National fairness at work committee	Kerry Baigent
National fairness at work strategy group	Kerry Baigent
National education committee	Kerry Baigent
Regional education officers' committee	Kerry Baigent
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
FF fatalities campaign	Kerry Baigent
Firefighter representative	Sam Rye

TUC committees:

TUC women's committee	Vicky Knight (until September)
TUC gold badge panel	Vicky Knight
Wales TUC women's committee	Jo Byrne
Scottish TUC women's committee	Denise Christie
Northern TUC	Sam Rye

Other committees:

Charter for Women	Kerry Baigent
CLG workplace facilities sub-group	Vicky Knight (until September)
CLG exit interviews sub-group	Vicky Knight (until September)
Equality and diversity stakeholder group	Vicky Knight (until September)

4. TUC women's conference and STUC women's conference

TUC women's conference

On 10-12 March the TUC held its 80th annual women's conference in the Winter Gardens, Eastbourne, where 253 delegates debated a wide and varied trade union agenda for working women, representing almost 52% of the TUC's membership.

That week was particularly important to trade union and labour movement women, not only for marking 80 years of organisation under the umbrella of the TUC on gender issues and campaigning for women's rights, but also for marking the 100 year anniversary of International Women's Day (IWD).

IWD is a day of recognition and celebration of the political, social, and economic achievements of women, and the continuous campaign for women's rights. Whilst at women's conference, we looked back over history and recognised

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

progress and effective political change that had been made with amazing successes seen from the resolutions put forward at this conference.

This centenary also recognised that campaigns for women's rights need re-doubling. The conference agenda showed both new and historic attacks on women, with oppression, imprisonment, slavery and abuse all being high on the agenda required for positive change.

One of the main themes which ran through the conference agenda was public sector cuts. We heard how a report produced by the TUC shows that these cuts would hit female employment the hardest as 4 in 10 women work in the public sector compared to less than 2 in 10 men. Women view the public sector as offering secure work with a good work life balance and a decent retirement income – all of which will be under threat if deep public sector cuts go ahead.

The TUC also launched the report "Women and the Recession – One Year On" depicting the crisis of how the economic downturn has affected women at work.

(The report can be found on the TUC website www.tuc.org.uk)

FBU motions

As agreed, the FBU put the issues of women in Afghanistan and domestic abuse on the agenda for conference and both were unanimously supported. The domestic abuse motion became part of a composite, but the motion on women in Afghanistan stood alone with a large number of speakers in the debate and full support of the TUC women's committee.

It was agreed that the motion going forward to congress in September on behalf of working women would be the motion "A workplace agenda for women", calling upon the TUC and affiliated unions to remain vigilant in opposing attacks on campaigning and bargaining for women's equality, support organising women in unions and devise a trade union and workplace agenda for women, highlighting outstanding workplace issues and, finally, to be part of an ITUC campaign for decent work for women.

The FBU delegation spoke on the following issues:

Composite 1	Women and the threat of the far right
Composite 2	Ending violence against women
Composite 3	Sexualisation of girls and young women
Motion 9	The price of motherhood
Motion15	Flexible working
Motion 21	Domestic violence awareness in schools
Motion 36	Afghanistan
Motion 38	Sexual violence against women as a weapon of war
Motion 41	Health and safety for women in the workplace
Motion12	Public debt and the gender equality duty
Emergency resolution 2	Civil Service Compensation Scheme
Question	TUC Women's Summer School

Vote of thanks for the chair

STUC women's conference Perth

The STUC women's conference was held in Perth on 1-2 November 2010.

Delegation:

Denise Christie
Colleen Devine
Yvonne Campbell
Kerry Walker

Observer:

Vicky Stonebridge

The following FBU resolutions were passed by conference:

Domestic violence

This women's conference is deeply concerned about the impact the forthcoming public sector cuts will have on the services provided to women in Scotland, suffering from domestic violence. Violence against women is a human rights violation and domestic abuse is an ongoing scourge of modern society, requiring a co-ordinated response from the Scottish government, trade unions, employers and individuals amongst others.

Conference acknowledges that Scotland did rate above average in the Map of Gaps report concluded by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the End Violence against Women (EVAW) coalition but believes there is so much more room for improvement and are concerned at the lack of local, available and adequately funded services in Scotland.

Support services are a postcode lottery with Glasgow coming out top and in many areas of Scotland there are failures to ensure that women have access to vital support services such as Rape Crisis Centres, refuges and domestic violence outreach projects.

Conference therefore instructs the STUC general council and women's committee to;

- lobby the Scottish government to oppose any cuts to domestic violence support services;
- introduce awareness of domestic violence to the classroom, as we believe that education, awareness and the politics of equality must set the foundation stone for a just and fearless future for women and girls; and
- ensure affiliates are aware of the issues surrounding domestic violence and that support and advice is available

Menopause

This women's conference is concerned that there is no real evidence based information on how the menopause can affect women in those industries where menopause symptoms can cause a health and safety risk.

Symptoms such as hot flushes, bloating and sleep irregularities to name a few may have direct health and safety implications on women in certain industries.

We believe that women should be supported when going through the menopause and employers should have supportive policies and procedures in place.

In order to assist affiliates in negotiating menopause policies with their employers we therefore call upon the STUC Women's Committee to;

- investigate further the effects the menopause may have on women working in those industries that will have direct health and safety implications; and
- produce and distribute to affiliates, a report on the findings.

The findings of this report are to be included in an information leaflet on the menopause which is to be distributed to all affiliates.

All the delegation contributed and spoke at the conference with some reps making their first public speech.

5. Affiliations and donations

Abortion Rights
National Assembly of Women (NAW)
Cuba Solidarity Campaign CSC
Amnesty International
Hands off Venezuela
Unite Against Fascism
Working Class Movement Library
ACTSA (Action for Southern Africa)
Fawcett Society Campaign for Equal Pay
Charter for Women

6. Annual Women's School

Students: 60
Children: 35
TUC tutors: Julie Weekes, Michele Marshall and Anne Moreton

The FBU Women's School was held at Wortley Hall on 9-11 April 2010. Women members from all over the UK attended the school and the reviews that were received have been fantastic.

The school opened with the students being asked to consider their background and personal history in an exercise called "dig where you stand". The women were also asked to discuss and feed back to the school what they believe are the top three issues for women members. This information has helped to shape the priorities and agenda of the NWC for 2010.

Due to the general election being imminent and the rise of the far right, the women's school's main theme was campaigning against the far right and Lorraine Fitzsimons from Hope not Hate spoke to the students. A DVD from the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust was shown and Matt Wrack, general secretary, addressed the school about the rise of the far right and took some questions from the students. The students then worked in their regions to discuss and develop ways of working to campaign against the far right, particularly prior to the general election.

Gloria Mills from Unison was our inspirational speaker and as usual the students were given the opportunity to take part in

two workshops which they were able to choose from a variety which were on offer.

7. Other areas of work

Brigade women's committees

Brigade women's committees have continued to meet throughout 2010. These committees continue to grow in attendance.

Website

The website has continued to be updated throughout the year with details of up and coming meetings and events being placed in it.

FBU minimum workplace facilities best practice document

The campaign for decent facilities at work has been ongoing and the most success has been seen with 19 FRSs around the UK providing fire ground facilities for our members. We will continue to campaign for this.

New/old reps

The committee has seen the election of one new regional NWC rep in the year 2010, Clare Hudson for Region 6, with Helen Tooley moving brigades and into Region 5 becoming the Region 5 women's rep.

This year also saw the resignation of Vicky Knight from her position as EC member for women. Denise Christie was elected into post in November and we welcome her to this role. We wish Vicky all the best for the future and thank her for her hard work over many years.

Siren

We have produced three issues of Siren this year, which have been distributed to branches and women members' home addresses. They have been great campaigning tools and we have received many calls from women members who have been inspired by the contents. A thank you must go to the communications team at head office for all their assistance on the production of the magazine.

NWC banner

The NWC designed our own banner and it had its first outing at the mass rally in Scotland against the cuts.

London women's belated 20 year celebration

The London WAC eventually managed to hold their anniversary school this year. It was a very successful school with 30 students. The school covered a variety of trade union subjects and the women left feeling empowered and educated.

TUC negotiators guide for family friendly policies

The FBU maternity policy got a huge mention in the TUC document and was highlighted as best practice by the TUC.

PPE/uniform

We continue our campaign for properly fitting PPE and uniform for all our members. Siren covered this subject and we have conducted a UK wide survey in order to establish the state of

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

play for our members across the UK. The findings of this survey will be written up in 2011 and shared with the health and safety committee.

Negotiating maternity, paternity and adoption rights document

This year saw the negotiation of the maternity section in the Grey Book, with some improvements being made. However, the FBU policy remains our vision and as such we should continue to strive to achieve this.

Firefit

The NWC has actively pursued the problems regarding the VO2 max and is looking forward to forming part of the subcommittee that is looking into this.

This information should be available by the NWC AGM 2011.

Region 8 – CARRIED

Amendment 1:

Amend para 2 to read:

Para 2, line 2, after “of” delete up until “who” and insert “Firefighters – Wholetime, RDS and Control”

REGION 2 – CARRIED

Amendment 2:

Para 1, line 3 – after “NVQ” insert “and / or their brigades alternative system”

Para 2, line 3 – after “process” insert “and / or their brigades alternative system”

REGION 6 – CARRIED

G24 National women's committee AGM report 2010

Record of decisions for NWC AGM 27 January 2011

1. SHIFT CHANGES

This Women's AGM is disgusted at the aggressive agenda of shift changes being seen across the country. Women are often used as part of the excuse to change the shift pattern with little or no discussion with them from their respective Fire and Rescue Service.

Women members are adamant that the shifts should remain 2, 2, 3 but with flexibility built in. The start and finish times should be negotiated and not imposed. Day shifts should not be so long that members would not see their children or carry out their caring responsibilities at either end of the shift. Women members are well aware that many male members take on the responsibility of childcare but it is statistically proven that women tend to bare the brunt of this responsibility.

This Women's AGM instructs the EC to act now to protect our 2, 2, 3 shift system and stop the disproportionate discrimination of women members.

REGION 3 – CARRIED

2. NVQ AND PREGNANCY

This National Women's Committee AGM is concerned at the potential number of women who may be financially disadvantaged due to becoming pregnant before completion of their NVQ.

This AGM requests the Executive Council, in conjunction with the NWC, to conduct a national survey of FRS into the number of wholetime and RDS firefighters who become pregnant prior to completion of the NVQ process. This AGM also requires information regarding the measures, if any, which are in place to assist pregnant firefighters who find themselves in this situation.

3. TRAINING FOR ADVOCATES

This Women's AGM believes that in the interests of achieving the best for its women members training is needed to become advocates. This training is about complementing the role that the FBU solicitors currently take and assisting them with their workload. The FBU solicitors are not always freely available to members that need to discuss their case; the advocates can provide this service as a go between.

This Women's AGM calls upon the Executive Council to immediately develop and implement appropriate training for FBU women members to become Employment Tribunal advocates. This will provide a pool of FBU advocates that can assist and advise members at ET cases or before the decision is taken to pursue an ET. This training should be made available within the next education schedule for 2012.

REGION 10 – CARRIED

4. UNISEX FIREKIT

This Women's AGM is appalled that the Fire and Rescue Services within the North West Region have purchased unisex fire kit as part of a regional procurement. This AGM is further concerned to learn that there are moves for procuring unisex fire kit within other regions within the UK. Considering women have been firefighters for over 30 years, this AGM is concerned about this huge backward step which makes women firefighters feel undervalued and not protected to the same standards as their male colleagues.

We call upon the Executive Council to challenge this decision and prevent further Fire and Rescue Services putting their women firefighters at unnecessary and unfair risk.

REGION 5 – CARRIED

5. MATERNITY PAY

This Women's AGM appreciates the difficult times Fire and Rescue Services are facing at present, however, feel it is wholly unacceptable that women firefighters are singled out at any point during this. A firefighter's pay isn't negotiated at local level. A Firefighter's sick pay isn't

negotiated at local level so why is it acceptable for a firefighter's maternity pay to be?

This Women's AGM calls upon the Executive Council to place maternity pay and conditions firmly back on their agenda, re-raise at the NJC the issue of an enhanced national maternity package, and report quarterly to the National Women's Committee on their progress.

REGION 3 – CARRIED

6. WALES TUC EQUALITY COMMITTEES

This National Women's Committee AGM, is extremely disappointed that the Wales TUC general council has followed the coalition government's trend of totally disregarding the equality agenda by suspending its equality committees in an attempt to save money.

This Women's AGM, requests that the Executive Council contacts the Wales TUC general secretary for a report on these suspensions, and demands his assurance that equality issues are still a priority for the Wales TUC in line with National TUC policy.

This report should be available within 3 months of this AGM.

REGION 8 – CARRIED

7. BEST PRACTICE

This Women's AGM believes that in the interests of achieving the best for all FBU women members, the Grey Book Fairness at Work section should include a 'best practice' clause for Maternity and Breast feeding policies.

This AGM notes that due to the Grey Book providing a set of minimum standards, women FBU members in different Fire and Rescue Services are being subjected to different arrangements.

This AGM calls upon the Executive Council to negotiate, at the NJC, the provision of a 'best practice' clause within the Grey Book. This would encourage all Brigades to adopt the best negotiated policies, with a view to continual improvements for our members.

REGION 10 – CARRIED

8. EQUALITY TARGETS

This Women's AGM is appalled at the Coalition Government's scrapping of centrally driven "equality targets" for under-represented groups in the Fire and Rescue Service.

Instead, this responsibility has been handed over to the control of local Fire and Rescue Authorities, sending out a clear message that a centralised equality strategy for the UK Fire and Rescue Service is unimportant to this Government.

Fire and Rescue Services have been historically reluctant to actively recruit women firefighters and are renowned for using positive action solely as a tick box exercise to achieve a "gold standard" in auditing processes. The

removal of centrally driven targets has not been equality impact assessed and will undoubtedly have a detrimental effect on women.

This Women's AGM calls upon the Executive Council to actively lobby Government to reinstate reflective targets and closely monitor the recruitment and retention of women firefighters within the UK Fire and Rescue Service.

REGION 3 – CARRIED

9. IRAN

This National Women's Committee AGM is appalled and outraged at the continued abhorrent treatment of women in Iran, in particular those who have been 'convicted' of adultery, a so called criminal offence that sentences women to death by stoning.

This women's AGM calls upon the Executive Council in conjunction with the TUC and Amnesty International to put pressure on the UK Government and its foreign office to urgently demand that the Iranian authorities immediately release Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani from death row, and her lawyer from custody.

Furthermore, we urge the Executive Council to raise the profile of this woman's plight and encourage our members to petition the Iranian Government on her behalf.

REGION 8 – CARRIED

Emergency resolutions

1. THE BBC

This Women's AGM is disgusted at yesterday's announcement of cuts within the BBC's world service broadcasting. Alongside the job losses, estimated at approximately 600 by the NUJ, services to Serbia, Albania, Macedonia, Portuguese Africa, English Caribbean and Russia will be cut. This cuts agenda defies belief, as incidents necessitating an impartial vehicle for reporting facts, garnering international support and response will not be provided by the BBC.

It is thought that Voice of America will be the service replacing the BBC in many areas; this is unacceptable following over 70 years of trusted broadcasting.

We call upon the EC to show support to the NUJ in campaigning against job losses and make clear in all political arenas that a trusted BBC is a minimum requirement in times of political difficulty, fiscal challenges and civil unrest.

REGION 7 – CARRIED

Delegates

Region 1

Vicky Stonebridge
Ruth Winters
Rebecca Smith

SECTION G — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

Region 2

Lynda Rowan O'Neill
Natalie Doyle
Angela Catney

Region 3

Sam Rye
Natalie Mortimer

Region 4

Sharon Scott

Region 5

Helen Tooley

Region 6

Clare Hudson

Region 7

Helen Harrison
Louise Jones
Leanne Byrne

Region 8

Jo Byrne

Region 10

Sally Harper
Sian Griffiths
Katy Lane

Region 12

Alli Burrows
Pauline Perry

Region 13

Val Hampshire

Officials

Denise Christie
Kerry Baigent
Dona Feltham

Guest

Vicky Knight

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.

Members of the group are:

Andy Dark	Assistant general secretary
Sharon Riley	Executive council member for control members
Sue Offland	Secretary to CSNC
Danni Armstrong	Region 11
John Drake	Region 13
Jack Ford	Executive council member for officer members
Duncan Milligan	Head office

2010 has seen further key developments in the government project for the regionalisation of controls. The union's responses to these developments, alongside our own initiatives in dealing with the project, have been robust.

The work of CRAG has also been shaped to a large extent in the light of the developments surrounding the control room regionalisation project, which is reported in Section B of this executive council annual report.

CRAG's work in 2010 was focussed around:

- preparing for the CLG select committee hearing in February 2010 on FiReControl;
- continuing the campaign against regional control centres (RCCs);
- assisting TUPE negotiations in FBU regions across England;
- revising the campaign timeline in the event of FiReControl not being cancelled.

G26 Reorganisation subcommittee

The reorganisation subcommittee met on several occasions during 2010:

28 January
26 May
2 September
2 October
7 December

Membership of the committee comprised:

General secretary Matt Wrack
President Mick Shaw
Vice president Alan McLean
Bro Jack Ford
Bro Mick Nicholas
Bro Roddy Robertson
Bro Jim Barbour
Bro Dave Green
Bro Mike Smith
Bro Warren Gee

G25 CRAG

In September 2004 the executive council established the control regionalisation advisory group (CRAG).

CRAG collates and distributes 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 of incidents can be best handled by the regionalisation of these functions.

Annual conference 2010 ratified the recommendations from the executive council that a major reorganisation of the union may be due and that the deliberations of the reorganisation subcommittee should include financial considerations.

In light of this the reorganisation subcommittee spent most of the year considering various strands of union activity. The committee then split itself into five working groups who considered these strands and reported back their deliberations to the subcommittee. A paper incorporating all the report-backs was compiled and then submitted for the consideration of the executive council on 3 November. Following agreement by the executive council this was then issued for consultation to regional/sectional committees.

The meeting of the executive council in December then considered the outcome of this consultation period and agreed a series of decisions and recommendations for inclusion in an executive council statement to annual conference 2011.

G27 IRMP board

The IRMP board comprises:

Andy Dark	Assistant general secretary
Mick Shaw	President
Matt Wrack	General secretary
John McGhee	National officer
Keith Handscomb	Executive council member
Jim Parrott	Executive council member
Tam McFarlane	Executive council member
Kath Smith	CSNC
Pete Preston	NRC
Dave Beverley	ONC
Dave Sibert	IRMP/fire safety advisor

Also invited to attend are representatives from Region 1, Region 2 and Region 8. In 2010 these regions were represented by:

Roddy Robertson	R1
Jim Barbour	R2
Mike Smith	R8

The national official leading on IRMPs is the assistant general secretary, Andy Dark.

The IRMP board serves as an advisory body to the executive council.



Section

Education

H1 Introduction

Educational courses and seminars have been run successfully within regions, brigades and sections with assistance and input from head office officials and staff where requested and as appropriate.

Meetings of the national education committee have been held as agreed. In addition, meetings with section education officers have taken place to try and ensure that all schools and courses fit in with the overall direction of education within the union.

Trevor Cave, the director of education, has continued to coordinate the development of the union's education programme, including working on the production of new materials in support.

National education

Discussions nationally within the union have continued to highlight education priorities for regional and brigade officials and this year priority was given to providing and supporting courses that attracted over 500 participants. Courses delivered during 2010 included the following:

January

Bargaining skills for union officials	18/1 – 20/1/10
Qualifications and workforce development	18/1 – 20/1/10

February

Bargaining skills for union officials	15/2 – 17/2/10
Qualifications and workforce development	15/2 – 17/2/10

March

Bargaining skills for union officials	15/3 – 17/3/10
---------------------------------------	----------------

Understanding equality impact assessments
Health and safety update 2010

15/3 – 17/3/10
23/3 – 25/3/10

April

The Women's School 2010
Understanding IRMP and challenging within the process
The ONC seminar
The CSNC seminar

9/4 – 11/4/10
12/4 – 14/4/10
14/4 – 15/4/10
14/4 – 15/4/10

May

Time management for union officials

24/5 – 26/5/10

June

Qualifications and workforce development

14/6 – 16/6/10

July

Fairness and equalities introductory – part 1
Promoting and developing union learning

5/7 – 7/7/10
8/7 – 9/7/10

October

The B&EMM School 2010
The LGBT School 2010
Developing union education and union learning

8/10 – 10/10/10
15/10 – 17/10/10
20/10 – 21/10/10

November

National School 2010
Year 1 and Year 2

7/11 – 12/11/10

Due to financial constraints it was necessary to postpone the following courses until next year:

- Pensions update and handling medical appeals; and
- Discussion leaders and education methods.

SECTION H — EDUCATION

The review of the union's education provision agreed at the 2010 conference in part focussed on the education support that will be required to help officials face the industrial relations challenges ahead. Since the approval of that approach, planning for the 2011 programme has identified the need for priority to be given to several new courses targeted at brigade and regional officials. As a consequence, two new courses will be piloted during 2011: "An introduction to fire and rescue service funding and public sector financial information" and "Rising to the challenge – contingency planning". Materials for these courses are in the process of being drafted and will be piloted during the spring and summer.

All courses have been designed to be delivered within the TUC Open College framework for accreditation and the union has been assisted by TUC tutors from a number of TUC education centres.

The union now has a standardised system for course evaluation and feedback from each course/school is summarised by head office and provided for discussion at the appropriate committees including the national education committee, regional education meeting and the executive council.

Regional education

All regions continued to receive funding for educational courses and seminars as part of their overall financial allocation each quarter. Most regions have run successful courses on occasion in conjunction with other regions, a practice it is hoped will continue.

National officials and the director of education/education advisor have continued discussions with regions regarding a range of issues including:

- assistance with programme planning;
- development of course materials;
- TUC discussion leaders courses; and
- support from TUC education centres.

Several regions have requested assistance with course materials for use with their regional TUC education centres and materials have been provided. Courses delivered have included:

- Introductory branch officials;
- Introductory health & safety representatives;
- Introductory fairness at work;
- Handling internal (ADAE) investigations;
- Using the media;
- Dealing with accidents, injuries and claims;
- Engaging with politics – introductory;
- Engaging with politics – campaigning and organising skills;
- Handling discipline and grievance;
- Handling medical appeals;
- Time management for union officials;
- Tackling bullying and harassment;
- Conference skills/ public speaking;
- Discussion leaders and education methods; and
- Pensions briefing – update.

Union Learning Project

National officials and the director of education have continued to support the union's Union Learning Project, working with

the national team and also the regional coordinators. Course programmes and materials for both the national ULR seminar and the joint regional courses were written and delivered during the year. Particular emphasis has been given to producing materials that can assist officials handling workforce development, Skills for Life etc.

Courses provided have included:

- Promoting union learning in regions;
- Union learning and organising in the UKFRS; and
- Developing union education and union learning.

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 National School 2010

National School 2010 was held from Sunday 7 November to Friday 12 November at Wortley Hall, Sheffield, attracting 41 students in all.

The programme was designed by national officials with the assistance of Trevor Cave, director of education, and TUC tutors John Botterill, Katherine Fry, Julie Heselwood and Paddy Hutchinson.

National School Year 1 was attended by 27 members and supported by three TUC/FBU tutors: John Botterill, TUC tutor at Leeds City College School of Trade Union Studies; Julie Heselwood, TUC tutor at Leeds City College School of Trade Union Studies; and Paddy Hutchinson, TUC tutor at Newcastle College Department of Trade Union Studies.

National School Year 2 was attended by 15 members and supported by Trevor Cave, director of education, and Katherine Fry, TUC/FBU tutor at Leeds City College School of Trade Union Studies.

The class chairs assisting the tutors were: Ian Murray, EC member/national education committee, Region 4; Karl Horan, EC member/education committee, Region 12; Pete Smith, Region 4; and Pete Wilcox, national education committee, Region 3.

The school was designed to help participants:

- 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 wider issues of concern to trade unionists, including an opportunity to update themselves on fairness, equality and employment law;

- consider how the union might develop strategies for building an 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;
- discuss how to tackle racism and challenge far right ideas in the workplace; and
- understand the broader trade union and labour movement, both national and international, and factors affecting its development, both now and in the past.

As outlined above, the school was delivered to two groups in Year 1 and one group in Year 2. A range of discussion activities was supported by inputs from both tutors and guest speakers. The school included separate programmes of study for Year 1 and Year 2. The programme of work for Year 2 was built on the assumption that learners have previously covered the work of the first year. All students were sent written pre-course reading covering both study skills and issues to be discussed during the school.

The school was opened on Sunday afternoon by Sean Starbuck, national officer, and Trevor Cave, director of education. Participants then divided into their respective classes in either Year 1 or 2 for introductory sessions with their tutors and class chairs. The sessions covered an introduction to studies and a discussion of learning aims, methods and skills.

On Monday the school was opened by Matt Wrack, general secretary, who introduced a session entitled “Defending quality public services and the fire and rescue service – new challenges with a new government”, followed by a question and answer session. The school then broke into group sessions to further develop the discussion.

After lunch the school met again in plenary session for an introduction by Trevor Cave, FBU director of education, on “The National Joint Council for local authority fire and rescue services – understanding and defending the NJC; knowing and using your agreements”. This was followed by Year 1 group discussions on understanding the NJC and Year 2 considering national and local campaign priorities.

The penultimate session of the day for Year 1 was introduced by Sean Starbuck who delivered a briefing for the next day’s visits to the National Coal Mining Museum, the exhibition of banners and the 25th anniversary of the miners’ strike 1984-85 at the NUM headquarters, Miners’ Hall, in Barnsley, and the Huskar pit disaster memorial in Silkstone churchyard.

The penultimate session of the day for Year 2 was introduced by Trevor Cave who delivered a briefing for the next day’s visit to the Wilberforce House Museum in Hull.

On Tuesday Year 1 visited Silkstone churchyard where participants were given the opportunity to view the Huskar pit disaster memorial of 1838. The group then proceeded to the National Union of Mineworkers headquarters in Barnsley

where they were met by officials from the NUM who gave a talk on the exhibitions and the hall itself. This was followed by a visit to the National Coal Mining Museum where participants went on an underground tour to see for themselves the conditions that prevailed in the mining industry and to put the visit to the memorial and the miners’ hall in context.

Year 2 made a visit to the Wilberforce Museum in Hull where they were given the opportunity to discover the history of the slave trade and the campaign to have it abolished. Participants also had the opportunity to examine the modern trade in slaves and make comparisons. This visit was a departure from previous years and, along with the visit to the mining museum, was hailed as a great success.

On return to Wortley Hall the groups prepared presentations on their respective visits. These presentations were in response to activities around the themes of the visits and were to be presented in plenary session on day five.

On Wednesday the morning started with a contribution entitled “Trade unions and contemporary employment relations – understanding what’s happening today”, given by guest speaker Professor Gregor Gall from the University of Hertfordshire. This was followed by a question and answer session before the school broke into groups for the classroom activities. Year 1 concentrated upon attacks on trade unions whilst Year 2 looked at dealing with hostile employers and management. Gregor Gall joined the group as guest tutor.

At lunchtime all participants gathered on the steps of Wortley Hall for the traditional group photograph.

The afternoon commenced with a lively plenary session led by Colin Burgon, retired Labour Member of Parliament for the Elmet constituency 1997-2010 and member of the FBU Parliamentary Support Group. The session was entitled “Understanding the current political situation” and was followed by group work developing the same theme.

The final session of the day was the international session “Defend the rescuers – attacks on medics in Gaza”, led by guest speaker Sharyn Lock from the organisation Access for Peace. Sharyn gave a brief introduction followed by a sometimes harrowing film on her visit to Gaza, followed by a question and answer session.

On Thursday the school opened with a plenary session led by guest speakers Alan Freeman and Bob McKee, entitled “Providing quality public services: what they cost and why we need them – countering myths and propaganda”. The groups from both years then went off to prepare for radio interviews on the government cuts to public services before returning for a plenary session where they gave their interviews.

The afternoon plenary session on “Race and trade unions” was led by Dr Brian Kelly, director of the After Slavery Project, Queen’s University, Belfast. This was followed by questions and answers before splitting into groups to consider how best the FBU can go about building unity in the workplace.

The final session of the day was a plenary event to receive presentations from all the groups on the results of their visits to the National Coal Mining Museum and Wilberforce House. These were excellent presentations and clearly demonstrated the learning that had taken place during the whole school and highlighted the value of the visits. The participants were congratulated for their lively and passionate contributions.

The highlight of the evening was the National School quiz organised by the FBU national organiser, Daniel Giblin.

Friday, the sixth and final day, started with a plenary session entitled "Challenges facing the FBU and the wider trade union and labour movement under the coalition government" led by Matt Wrack, general secretary. This was followed by a question and discussion session with the school then breaking off into groups to consider their action plans following on from the whole of the school.

Members, in a review of the school, scored it as extremely successful. Some of the attendees' comments are worth recording in this annual report:

"Intense, but of excellent value, I learnt a lot of things."

"Very good; fantastic speakers, extremely valuable."

"This course is essential for officials. It gives great knowledge and most importantly, instils confidence and beliefs."

"Very high value course. Allows members to obtain the confidence to change things."

"Excellent course, very valuable; good learning points from tutors and other members."

"Excellent content pitched at the right level, the subjects all connected well together."

"Essential for all active officials, networking with others."

"Great experience – feel informed and prepared to move forward."

"Brilliant, it consolidated last year's education, thank you."

The closure of the 2010 National School was overseen by Sean Starbuck, national officer, who thanked all those who had participated in whatever capacity for their contribution to the school.

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 its thanks in particular to the class chairs – Ian Murray, Karl Horan, Pete Smith, Pete Wilcox – and the tutors – John Botterill, Katherine Fry, Julie Heselwood and Paddy Hutchinson – for their assistance in the planning of the school and their active and enthusiastic involvement, and also to Daniel Giblin for his work behind the scenes. Special thanks must also be given to Trevor Cave and Sean Starbuck for all the work that they put in before and during this year's event.

H3 B&EMM School 2010

B&EMM School 2010 was, as always, over-subscribed and received 61 applications to attend, of which 12 were first-time students. Due to the financial restraints placed on the school, student numbers were reduced to 45, and therefore some B&EMM members had to be informed that a reservation list had to be used to regulate places.

Due to industrial action in London only members who were off duty were able to attend, as all trade union leave had been withdrawn. Regrettably this meant that only 10 members were able to attend from London Fire Brigade.

The school TUC tutor was Theresa Bennett and guests included retired B&EMM national chair Leroy Phillpotts, FBU president Mick Shaw, Frank Bailey (honorary B&EMM), Jagtar Singh (Asian Fire Service Association) and Cordell Pillay, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers (Napo). Members attended from across all roles and heritage, from Turkey, Seychelles, the Middle East, India, Pakistan, the Caribbean and Africa.

The 2010 school was officially opened by B&EMM vice chair Carole Brown (Region 11), who welcomed all and introduced FBU president Mick Shaw to the school for the last time as he was due to retire at the end of the year.

The first session discussed B&EMM and its development, structure and progression. It consisted of an introductory session and showed the B&EMM film *Rise to the Challenge*, followed by a discussion about the aims and objectives of the school from an individual's perspective.

The president then gave a presentation on the current situation for FBU members in light of the anticipated spending review from the new government and outlined the expectation that the union faced attacks on our terms and conditions, pensions and jobs like never before. The students then had a lively and informative Q and A session with the president for over an hour before adjourning for the day.

The first session of the second day continued with more detail on the part that B&EMM plays in the FBU and trade unionism as a whole.

The FBU president gave an overview of the current situation in London and outlined that the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) was trying to force its workforce to accept changes by dismissing everyone and then forcing them to sign new contracts. He reported on the fact that the members had responded, with an overwhelming majority voting to take strike action.

B&EMM national secretary Samantha Samuels gave a report of the national committee's representation over the last year and spoke about the new challenges facing the union due to the change of government and their dilution of the equality and diversity agenda. She also told the school about the B&EMM

emergency motion to FBU annual conference in May about the devastating situation in Haiti, and asked for continued assistance to the country.

The next session explored the role of the B&EMM national officials and committee. Students were asked to discuss in groups what they thought the duties of the committee should be and to suggest other tasks it might undertake. Feedback from this activity highlighted the need for more information and explored a number of ways to get this information out to members. These ideas have been taken into consideration and the committee is working towards using social networks to keep members up to date.

The next activity looked at union roles and responsibilities. Students were asked to look at the responsibilities of three roles and decide which of these they would be most interested in undertaking. Within the groups, students were tasked with answering some questions regarding the role and then to select a problem they might face and discuss possible solutions. From the feedback given to the school following the group discussions, this activity seemed to be very useful for a number of students who were new to the school and wished to progress further.

Guest speaker Cordell Pillay spoke about Race 4 Justice's work in the community. The presentation outlined the organisation's aims and objectives and was followed by an activity looking at how people could become involved in working in the community. The school was updated about Haiti and the Operation Futureproof project, a new organisation which aims to help the people of Haiti for the long term by providing the training and means to rebuild their communities. A presentation was given outlining the needs of the impoverished country and the plans the organisation had to address those needs.

Following dinner, students took part in the B&EMM quiz based on black history and trade unions.

The final day started with a closed session chaired by new B&EMM national chair Lud Ramsey. This session was set aside to discuss confidential B&EMM-specific issues.

In the session, entitled "B&EMM presentations and achievements", acknowledgement was given to the achievements of Leroy Phillpotts, Sis Pamela Oparocha, Bro Darren Caine and Bro Andy Phillips. With the presentations made and thanks proffered to the guests and tutor Theresa Bennett, another successful B&EMM School was closed and students handed in their evaluation form which assists in planning the following year's school.

H4 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) School 2010

The annual FBU LGBT School was held at Wortley Hall, Sheffield on the weekend commencing 15 October. A total of

18 students attended this event. Those that attended found the school to be well organised and thought provoking as usual.

The school was once again organised through our national chair Yannick Dubois in conjunction with national officer Sean Starbuck, Trevor Cave, director of FBU education, and Catharyn Lawrence, TUC tutor.

Unfortunately, due to illness Yannick was unable to attend the school this year, but students did pass on their sincere thanks to Yannick for her hard work in organising this and many other schools before. Sean Starbuck attended the school on the Saturday to help out with the finances.

It should be noted that attendance at this year's school was greatly restricted. A large proportion of our members are London based and in response to the industrial action that was taking place at that time in London the local employers withdrew support to any members of staff wishing to attend any FBU event. The consequence of this decision meant our members were denied time off to attend the school. In the past other TUC-affiliated trade unions have supported members who they represent in the fire service to attend our school. In a display of solidarity with our members in London those unions also withdrew from the school.

H5 Women Members' School 2010

Students: 60

Children: 35

TUC tutors: Julie Weekes, Michele Marshall and Anne Moreton

The FBU Women's School was held at Wortley Hall on 9-11 April 2010. Women members from all over the UK attended the school.

The school opened with the students being asked to consider their background and personal history in an exercise called "dig where you stand". Students were also asked to discuss and feed back to the school what they believe are the top three issues for women members. This information has helped to shape the priorities and agenda of the national women's committee for 2010.

Due to the general election being imminent and the rise of the far right, the Women Members School's main theme was campaigning against the far right. Lorraine Fitzsimons from Hope not Hate spoke to the students on this issue. A DVD from the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust was shown and Matt Wrack, general secretary, addressed the school about the rise of the far right and took some questions from the students. The students then worked in their regions to discuss and develop ways of working to campaign against the far right, particularly prior to the general election.

Gloria Mills from Unison was an inspirational speaker and as usual the students were given the opportunity to take part in

two workshops which they were able to choose from the following:

Representing members on bullying and harassment

This workshop was aimed at members who were or would like to be involved in representing or supporting members facing bullying and/or harassment. Students identified what is bullying and harassment, what the law says about these as workplace issues and which procedures can be used to take them up. By the end of the workshop students would feel more confident about planning and presenting a case.

Working through the change: health and safety and the menopause

Most advice to women on menopause-related issues highlights lifestyle choices, but what about “workstyle” – lifestyle at work? This workshop enabled participants to discuss the occupational health and safety problems which can exacerbate menopausal symptoms and put women’s longer term health more at risk. Students identified what employers and the FBU can do to overcome these problems and to change attitudes and improve workplace culture around women’s health and the menopause.

Being a rep

This workshop gave women the opportunity to raise workplace issues that are of concern to them and to look at different ways they could be progressed either within the FBU or with their employer. The session also aimed to give women the opportunity to identify and practise some of the skills reps need when taking up problems, for example, speaking up at meetings or talking to management. Students looked at the problem information plan (PIP) approach to tackling problems and at some basic information on rights at work.

Negotiating gender

This workshop was facilitated by Jo Winrow-Jones and explored gender in the workplace based on the findings of her recent research into the experiences of women firefighters in their predominantly male working environment. The workshop was not designed to discuss the poor or extreme treatment that some women experience. The purpose was to increase understanding of the role gender plays in women’s lives and translating that into our work. This workshop did not require prior knowledge of the gender debate but it did need women to be open to that discussion.

Maternity workshop

This workshop was facilitated by Sohagi Patel (Thompsons solicitors) who explained maternity legislation and other relevant family legislation. The Grey Book was looked at in comparison to legislation. Students had the chance to input into updating the FBU best practice maternity document, which was due for a review.

Women’s health

This workshop was facilitated by Maggi Williams from the Women’s Health, Information and Support Centre in Liverpool. Students explored a healthy approach to the menopause, ways of dealing with stress and depression, the impact of domestic abuse, and the process of change, specifically in the context of health at work.

The school closed at 1.30pm on Sunday and the feedback has been very positive. There were some great suggestions which will be considered for the 2011 school agenda.

H6 National education grants

The executive council is pleased to report the continued take-up 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.

H7 TUC day release and extended courses

Officials and members throughout the regions have, for the period covered by this report, attended a variety of extended and day release courses organised by the TUC education service and run by TUC providers. These courses have included the following:

- Union representatives stage 1
- Stepping up – union representatives stage 2;
- Health and safety representatives stage 1;
- Next steps for safety representatives stage 2;
- Diploma in employment law;
- Diploma in occupational health and safety;
- Union learning representatives;
- Equality representatives;
- Disability champions at work;
- Introduction to pensions;
- Pensions champions;
- TUC activists’ academy;
- Introduction to COSHH;
- Risk assessment;
- Employment law update;
- Cancer in the workplace.

All courses from the TUC education service are notified to all regional education officers and regional secretaries both from head office and directly from regional TUC offices. Both officials and members are encouraged to attend all courses that will benefit them and other members as well as the wider trade union movement.

According to data published in the 2010 TUC education annual report the FBU, which represents 0.72% (0.69% in 2009) of TUC membership, is responsible for 3.17% (1.25% in 2009) of the take-up on TUC 10-12 day release courses and 2.71% (2.80% in 2009) of the take-up on short courses. The union’s participation has risen significantly on the TUC 10-12 day programme and continues to be extremely effective in utilising the TUC short course programme. Regional and brigade

officials who have encouraged these outstanding levels of participation are thanked for their continuing effort in supporting the training and development of our officials.

H8 Tutors

In accordance with the policy of the FBU, all trade union education tutors used on courses should be TUC-approved tutors, except in exceptional cases where a TUC tutor is not available.

The executive council wishes to place on record its thanks to all tutors and officials who have assisted in the union's education provision throughout the period covered by this report.

The executive council would like to thank in particular for their contribution to the education programme for officials and active members: John Botterill, Katherine Fry, Julie Heselwood, Catharyn Lawrence and Neil Harrison, TUC tutors, Leeds City College, Department of Trade Union Studies; Paddy Hutchinson, TUC tutor, Newcastle College, Department of Trade Union Studies; Richard Young, TUC tutor, Bridgend College, Department of Trade Union Studies; and Brian Corrigan, TUC tutor, Stow College, Glasgow.

H9 Union Learning Fund

It was pleasing to report that following the submission of a new FBU Union Learning Fund (ULF) bid at the end of 2009, approval was given to a further £1m of funding over two years (2010-2012), but with the caveat that second year contractual arrangements would be reviewed following the general election given the possibility of a new government being elected.

The focus of the FBU ULF project bid was built on future sustainability and, with the agreement of senior officials, the delivery of previous projects was reviewed with a recommendation that the number of project workers should be reduced. This resulted in the reorganisation of the ULF team and the reduction of the nine regional coordinators to five project support organisers (PSOs) with wider responsibilities. These new posts were advertised throughout the union and, following interview, the five PSOs were appointed during February and March 2010.

In November 2010 the new government announced its skills strategy, which included plaudits for the work done in increasing the skills and qualifications of workers through Unionlearn, the ULF and union learning representatives (ULRs). Further to this was a commitment to maintain the current levels of investment in the ULF. Given the proposed reductions in funding across so many different areas of public life and the abolition of numerous quangos this can only be seen as a massive vindication for the investment in the ULF and

acknowledgment of the role that unions play in delivering learning and education on behalf of their members.

Unfortunately not all is so positive within the skills strategy and there are numerous changes to the way that further education funding and the funding of qualifications will be allocated – especially for adults. The introduction of a “shared cost” for Skills for Life qualifications and a no-funding clause for Level 3 learners (outside of an apprenticeship) are just a couple that come out of the strategy. And, of course, we should not forget the imposition of a huge fee increase for higher education. The FBU ULF staff and FBU ULRs will continue to support and offer guidance on access to qualifications and guide our members on costs and who pays.

The ULF has provided the FBU with the opportunity to make further progress in embedding and mainstreaming lifelong learning across the union structure and, importantly, to allow us to continue in the delivery of learning opportunities to thousands of FBU members, families and friends. The FBU continues to sit on the Unionlearn Advisory Group and on the Unionlearn U-net Steering Group.

The FBU ULF has engaged with over 20,000 members. Around 8,000 members have obtained qualifications in subjects such as numeracy, literacy, information technology and leadership and management.

During the last year the project has widened its ability to deliver qualifications and following approval from the executive council has been involved in two pilot areas. Firstly, in conjunction with Wigan and Leigh College we have provided over 500 courses in leadership and management and, secondly, have provided a distance learning health and safety course.

The health and safety course has particular relevance. Using resource materials from the distance learning company Tribal, badged with the FBU logo, the course is being delivered by our own project staff and accredited through the national awarding body NCFE via the FBU learning centre in Northumberland FRS HQ. It is, in effect, the first such course that the FBU has overall responsibility for and all 30 courses were snapped up by FBU members within days of being made available!

The ongoing take-up of courses by FBU members confirms that lifelong learning provision is another clear benefit of being a member of the FBU.

The 2010 National ULR School was held in July at Wortley Hall, Sheffield and as with previous years' schools, was fully subscribed. The programme covered: developing union learning, workforce development, the right to request time off to train, and dyslexia. Guest speaker Tom Wilson, director of Unionlearn, covered the changing political climate for union learning.

A joint seminar between the ULF project staff and the regional education and learning organisers (RELOs) took place at Stoke Rochford Hall, Lincolnshire. This was held as part of the transfer of knowledge and responsibility from the ULF team to RELOs as agreed by annual conference.

SECTION H — EDUCATION

The new FBU education and learning website – www.fbueducation.org – was launched in October 2010. It hosts information on the FBU national trade union education programme, while each region has its own page to publicise local and regional TU courses and lifelong learning. Information on the ULF project, lifelong learning and the FBU learning centres is also covered as well as a comprehensive library of education material and documents.

The website also has a dedicated area where union members can access a dyslexia screening tool (Quickscan) with support from a trained ULR/official – the first across the FRS community.

The FBU continues to deliver courses through our learning centres in the north east. However, the centre in Tyne and Wear FRS became a victim of a funding shortfall and closed. In order to continue delivery of Learndirect and other courses a restructure of the remaining centres and staff took place and they continue to operate on a regional basis from Northumberland FRS and Cleveland FRS. The learning centres have also become part of the UK Online network and work with a number of community groups to help people who have never used a computer before and make their first journey on the internet.

SULF, NIULF and WULF

Changes to the funding allocation in Scotland saw a successful project application made to the STUC Learning Development Fund. The project delivers sign language and dyslexia awareness courses and promotes a culture of lifelong learning in the Scottish FRS. The publication of a new strategy document to address the workplace skills gap in adult literacy and numeracy in Scotland will see the project reviewing its work in this area. The FBU learning development manager sits on the advisory group of Scottish Union Learning.

With the current funding due to finish in April 2011, the STUC Learning Forum is putting together a new bid for funding from the Scottish Executive and the European Social Fund (ESF).

The Northern Ireland union learning project manager has organised courses in deaf awareness, computer studies, sign language and drug awareness.

WULF has successfully delivered a number of courses in the three Welsh FRSs during the last year and FBU members took part in the pilot delivery of the health and safety distance learning course. The WULF strategic steering committee reviews progress and assists in setting the agenda for future development and has met three times during the last year.

A further application for three year's funding from WULF has been submitted and the outcome is expected in the near future.

Regional FBU projects have taken place and continue in Region 5 and Region 13 – with a stand-alone project in Cornwall. All three projects deliver learning opportunities and advice for FBU members using funding made available through Unionlearn. Finally, the executive council would like to place on record its thanks to all the members of the ULF committee and learning centre staff for their work over the last year.

FBU national union learning committee: Sean Starbuck (national officer), Dave Green (executive council member up to being elected national officer) Dave Limer (executive council), Ian Murray (executive council), Trevor Shanahan (national ULF manager), Adrian Slassor (ULF finance manager), Andy Brickles (project support organiser), Graham Humphrey (project support organiser), Steve Brinkley (project support organiser), Tim Davis (project support organiser), Bob Fitz-Gerald (project support organiser), Trevor Cave (FBU director of education), Jock Munro (SULF regional manager), Lynda Rowan O'Neill (NIULF regional manager), Nigel Williamson (WULF regional manager), Claire Wealleans (FBU learning centre manager), Lorna Taylor (FBU Skills for Life advisor/tutor) and Lara Hindhaugh (ULF administration assistant).

During the last year the union learning committee has held six meetings.

H10 Officer members' seminar 2010

Once again, to try to build on past achievements the officers' national committee (ONC) held the AGM of officer member representatives on a seminar basis at Wortley Hall, South Yorkshire on 14-15 April 2010.

More than 40 attendees came from across most regions of the British Isles, and the seminar was seen as a huge success being both current and informative in its content. Bro Andy Dark, FBU assistant general secretary, opened the seminar and welcomed all delegates.

Ann Jones, a Welsh Assembly Member and a former FBU CSNC chair, gave a passionate account of the progress in Wales of legislation to make compulsory the installation of sprinklers in the home. Participants commended her determination to improve safety in the home for both residents and firefighters.

FBU education officer Trevor Cave led a very topical and enlightening session on officer recruitment and retention. Some delegates described the real difficulties faced in establishing effective industrial relations within their own brigade. Other members were able to demonstrate that, with flexibility and determination, positive working relationships can be forged.

National officer Sean Starbuck provided real food for thought on the application and management of development rates of pay. National opinion is divided but there are some more enlightened principal managers who recognise that an employee engaged in a development post will usually be delivering the full expectations of that role and should be remunerated appropriately.

The second day of the seminar was opened by FBU fire safety advisor Dave Sibert with a presentation on the impact of removing national attendance time standards and the resulting

variations in response times across the UK. Dave also gave examples of the consequences of reduced weight and response when attending confirmed fires.

This presentation was supplemented and supported by Rob Martin, ONC member for Region 8, who spoke about the problems encountered when fighting fires in high-rise buildings and voiced concerns about sporadic regulatory enforcement of measures intended to assist firefighters dealing with incidents.

Sean Starbuck closed the seminar by summing up the political situation and emphasising that as the only credible voice with the resources and the commitment to secure improvements to conditions of service and members' health and safety, we should all strive to maximise levels of officer membership within the FBU.

Judging by the end of course feedback forms the seminar was a huge success and the first step towards increased member involvement, organising and education.

H11 Control members' seminar 2010

The control staff national committee (CSNC) in conjunction with head office arranged the first seminar of its kind for control members which was held at Wortley Hall, South Yorkshire on 14-15 April 2010.

More than 30 attendees from brigades around the UK were testament to the fact that such a seminar was needed in order to develop future strategy and build awareness of control issues. The seminar was opened by Bro Andy Dark, FBU assistant general secretary. The seminar was run concurrently with the officers' national committee (ONC) seminar and some speakers were shared between the two groups.

Ann Jones, Welsh Assembly Member and a former FBU CSNC chair, gave a passionate account of the progress in Wales of legislation to make compulsory the installation of sprinklers in the home. Ann also entertained us with anecdotes of her time on the CSNC and some of the struggles she had during her time in the section.

Ivan Walker from Thompsons Solicitors gave an informative update on the changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme, once again making a dry subject interesting and informative.

Bro Sean Starbuck gave a joint session together with the ONC on workforce development issues.

We also had a session delivered by a National Union of Journalists member on media awareness which members found very interesting given the increased demands on local officials and members to speak to the press and get our messages across as clearly and concisely as possible.

Bro Andy Dark chaired the final session on future strategy for control issues which generated a lot of group interaction and feedback.

Section

Fairness at work

1 Introduction

Throughout 2010 fairness at work (FAW) officials continued to experience difficulty in securing trade union leave. However, despite these difficulties the fairness at work committee met on the following occasions in 2010:

31 March
17 June
2 September
24 November.

Members of the fairness at work committee:

Region 01	Lud Ramsey
Region 02	Jim Quinn
Region 03	Brian Gibson
Region 04	Nigel Bailey
Region 05	Val Salmon
Region 06	Neil Mayne
Region 07	Kate Baer
Region 08	Jo Byrne
Region 09	Derek Godfrey-Shaw
Region 10	Graeme Lester
Region 11	Stuart de Fraine Ford
Region 12	Eddie Cardoso
Region 13	Joe Tray
ONC	Pan Poullais
LGBT	Alli Burrows
B&EMM	Colin Jarrett
CSNC	Sue Offland
NRC	Leigh Redman
NWC	Kerry Baigent.

Some of the issues and areas which were dealt with or are being progressed by the meeting of the regional fairness at work officers include:

- discriminatory elements inherent in any VO2 Max testing in regard to fitness assessment;
- inputting into the FBU fairness at work national school;
- developing and coordinating a challenge to FRSs to put in place a policy rejecting members from extremist parties, especially the BNP;
- assisting local officials dealing with complexities around members' issues regarding phased return to work, job share and flexible working;
- pursuing and coordinating union policy regarding facilities in the workplace;
- coordinating a national approach to achieving proper facilities on incident grounds;
- assisting in coordinating challenges to lack of appropriate PPE;
- coordinating local information being inputted to CLG equality reports;
- assisting and consulting in the FBU negotiations on NJC maternity and paternity in the Grey Book;
- coordinating and assisting local officials dealing with questions and policies regarding religious issues such as Ramadan etc;
- coordinating and assisting local officials with the identification and proper spending areas of government grants for equality and diversity issues; and
- developing, coordinating and distributing guidance for officials on areas of the equality act and other legislation.

SECTION I — FAIRNESS AT WORK

There are some areas of work being undertaken by the regional fairness at work officers and they will continue to meet and develop, coordinate and assist brigade committees and other union committees within the context of equality and diversity in 2011.

Equality is a trade union issue and it is essential in providing working people with dignity in the workplace and within

wider society. There is no doubt that the right wing individualistic agenda being pursued by the ConDem coalition represents an enormous attack on our progressive agenda and this is illustrated by the attack on equality and diversity in the fire and rescue service. The FBU fairness at work officers are committed in pursuing the aims and policies of fairness at work and this work will be ever more necessary in 2011.

12 ADAE representation

	Requests for representation	Granted	Not granted	Appeals	Appeals rejected	Appeals upheld
Region 01	4	4				
Region 02	NIL					
Region 03	1		1			
Region 04	6					
Region 05	4	2	2			
Region 06	2		1			
Region 07	5	4	1	1		1
Region 08	2	2				
Region 09	1	1				
Region 10**						
Region 11	NIL					
Region 12	NIL					
Region 13	3*	1	1			
*One investigation commenced in 2010 and decision not yet made						
**No information received from region						

NB: Where numbers do not add up across the columns for certain regions this is due to either members withdrawing that request for representation or investigations which were still continuing/outstanding at the end of 2010.

13 Equality and diversity in the fire and rescue service

The new fire minister Bob Neill, Conservative MP for Bromley and Chislehurst, announced on 28 July 2010 that central government would be “stepping aside so fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) can decide what their priorities should be and what is in the best interests of the communities they serve”.

This announcement indicated that issues which will be left to local authorities will include workforce development and equality and diversity.

This announcement was then followed by the CLG document entitled “Fire and Rescue Service Monthly Bulletin 4: November 2010” which contained the following:

“The fire minister announced on 28 July 2010 that the department for Communities and Local Government is no longer expecting to enforce certain aspects of the National Framework 2008–2011 including monitoring fire and rescue authority compliance with the fire and rescue service equality and diversity strategy or enforcing the recruitment, progression or retention targets.

As a consequence of this announcement changes have been made to the arrangements regarding centrally developed and funded equality and diversity initiatives. The department will no longer be progressing the following:

- enforcing the recruitment, progression or retention targets set out in the Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Report 2009;
- publishing annual equality and diversity reports;
- administering the National Equality and Diversity Awards;

- chairing and facilitating the National Equality and Diversity Delivery Partnership;
- continuing the national awareness campaign: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Career.

In making his announcement the minister has made clear that the government believe equality and diversity to be important issues which should be mainstreamed within the work of the fire service. It will be for the sector to consider.”

For many years the Fire Brigades Union has been at the forefront of the fight to ensure that our service reflects the communities we serve. In 2008, along with CLG, CFA, LGA and all other stakeholders, we supported the equality and diversity strategy for England. This strategy was dealt with in other ways in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland but in a manner which reflected the principles.

The Tory minister’s announcement will now mean that no one other than individual FRAs will monitor recruitment in the fire service.

Without this monitoring taking place we are likely to see FRAs making cuts in the work which has been essential to making improvements in the recruitment procedures and retention in the past 10 or so years. The minister is putting this responsibility back to chief fire officers who for many years failed to deliver improvements.

The challenge for the FBU at national level is to convince the minister that he has made an error of judgement and is failing in his duty under legislation.

At local authority level, the challenge for the FBU will be to make sure that they do not back off from the modest targets set in the CLG strategy. FRAs must show commitment to making sure that the work to improve the recruitment, retention and progression of women and black and ethnic minority members continues.

In order to pursue this issue the FBU regional fairness at work officers developed a standard letter which could be used by brigade committees in order to challenge local authorities not to back off from the modest targets that had been set previously. Updates as to returns will be given to future meetings of the regional fairness at work officers.



Section

**Health
and safety**

J1 Introduction

The end of another decade provides us with an opportunity to review and take stock of firefighter safety.

For 50 years, the Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council and Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate ensured national standards of firefighter safety. These structures, along with the National Joint Council, also made the UK's fire service the most effective and efficient public service and had brought worldwide respect and recognition.

During the early years of the last decade the government began its modernisation of the fire service. This so-called process of reform should have been carefully planned and included the suggestions of professional stakeholders to ensure the safety of firefighters. Instead the government put a wrecking ball through national structures. Planning was put in the hands of local fire authorities. Investigation reports have identified that fire authorities were unprepared for their new role.

It is the view of the Fire Brigades Union, and indeed the wider fire community, that risk management has not been a success. It has been unable to develop successfully because of financial restraints imposed by successive UK governments. Officially, fire and rescue authorities are responsible for risk management planning. However, the Fire Brigades Union believes the Audit Commission has maintained a tight grip and has been in control of the process. The Audit Commission became the guardian of the fire and rescue service. It is the firm belief of the Fire Brigades Union that the Audit Commission was entirely the wrong body to be charged with overseeing this process.

The opinion of the Fire Brigades Union is that the Audit Commission has focussed on the direct costs of providing public services and has not sufficiently assessed the indirect costs that are borne by communities. Many of the Fire Brigades Union's concerns were raised in our report "Falling to the lowest common denominator – how the Audit Commission got it wrong on the fire service".

2010 was another disastrous year for firefighter safety. The deaths of Bro Alan Bannon and Bro James Shears on 6 April 2010 bring the number of firefighters killed at work to 17 since 2003. It remains a national disgrace that fire and rescue services are failing to learn from these deaths.

The work that firefighters do is dangerous; it takes meticulous planning and scrutiny to deal with emergencies safely. Fatal accident investigations have found a catalogue of human errors that are the result of poor planning, inadequate training, and lack of scrutiny.

The only body left with the ability to scrutinise the safety record of the fire and rescue service (FRS) is the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). During 2009 and 2010 the HSE inspected eight FRSs. In October 2010 it produced a consolidated report of its findings. It was of no surprise to the FBU that the report identified major flaws in fire service planning and training.

One arm of government has identified the need for central guidance and centralised scrutiny and belatedly new central guidance is being produced, but this has yet to lead to improvement.

Another arm of government has ignored all findings and is pushing forward with an agenda of cuts that will be a further disaster for firefighter and public safety. The government has

shown its contempt for worker safety by imposing a 35% reduction in the Health and Safety Executive's budget.

The Fire Brigades Union considers the 25% reduction to the formula grant announced as the spending review for the fire and rescue service as unsafe. The FBU believes that it will put at risk the ability of the FRS to deal with emergencies. Furthermore, the FBU believes that the impact of the spending review for the fire and rescue service will be worsened by inadequate risk management planning processes being operated within fire authorities.

J2 Regional health and safety coordinators

Regional health and safety coordinators are organised into six task and finish national subcommittees. Meetings of the regional health coordinators were convened on four occasions in 2010 to sign off subcommittee work and to coordinate safety representative work with the FBU regions.

The main area of work for the regional health and safety coordinators has been the chief fire and rescue advisor (CFRA) operational guidance programme.

The regional health and safety coordinators have focussed on the revision of the 32 generic risk assessments for emergency response activities. The priority has been to identify the significant hazards of emergency response activities and to recommend control measures that must be built into operational guidance. Fatal accident investigations had identified the improper use of dynamic risk assessment (DRA) as a significant cause of these accidents. Improper use of DRA failed to control four significant hazards. These are:

- the operational imperative;
- the uncontrolled situation;
- inappropriate and/or insufficient resources to provide safe systems of work for the FRS task; and
- limited experience.

Regional health and safety coordinators have recommended the development of national and local worst-case planning scenarios as a control measure for these significant hazards.

Personal protection equipment (PPE) subcommittee

This committee met three times in 2010 to discuss and formulate a best practice document for the use of respirators within the fire and rescue services across the country. This work was necessary following emergency resolution no. 4 at annual conference 2010.

Following an article in the Firefighter magazine about PPE, Du Pont, the manufacturers, invited the FBU to attend their factory to witness tests on PPE on the "Thermo" manikin. This was due to go ahead in February 2011 but some fire and rescue services pulled out. Hopefully this will now go ahead in April 2011. A full report will be sent to the national officer.

J3 FRS health and safety group

The fire and rescue service health and safety group met on four occasions in 2010. The topics covered included:

- Hepatitis B;
- HSE inspections;
- firefighter fatalities;
- firefit/firefighter fitness standards;
- carbonaceous BA training;
- review of FRS circulars;
- operational guidance workshop;
- occupational health and safety;
- flu pandemic;
- firefighter safety;
- generic risk assessments;
- HSE high level statement;
- Draegar PS7000BA;
- health and safety data;
- incident command and the use of dynamic risk assessment;
- Hampshire fatalities;
- HSE consolidated inspection report;
- reporting of near misses and dangerous occurrences;
- reporting of significant safety events;
- dissolution of the FRS Practitioners' Forum and the FRS health and safety group.

J4 HSE proactive inspections

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) commissioned a series of inspections of fire and rescue services. Its justification was as follows:

- HSE has decided to carry out this programme of planned inspections because;
- The FRS employs around 55,000 staff in 57 fire and rescue services throughout Great Britain, most in operational duties;
- Little or no proactive inspection of the FRS has been carried out for a number of years;
- Over the past few years there have been a number of multiple fatalities during operational incidents, and the incidence of fatal accidents appears to be higher than over the preceding period (note that the numbers are too small for any statistical significance to be drawn from the figures);
- There is a concern within HSE and also the service that a number of issues are contributing to a lower level of competence of operational staff, especially front-line supervision;
- More widely, there is continuing high level interest in the way that the FRS balances operational and health and safety responsibilities.

In October 2010 the HSE released its consolidated report based on the eight inspections carried out so far. The report concluded that:

- 1.11 There are 2 specific areas where the findings across all the inspections are consistent. They confirm the fundamental importance of 2 complementary aspects of effective safety management, namely:
- Competence assessment for firefighters at all levels including management;
 - A proportionate approach to risk assessment.
- 1.15 Some other matters that need to be further considered and addressed by the FRS as a whole also emerged. These are:
- The extent to which firefighters should or should not take risks to save property;
 - Whether retained duty staff can fulfill all of the operational duties of a firefighter given the time they have available for training;
 - Clarity about how FRS can meet public expectations on water rescue;
 - How best to develop and implement consistent national guidance and improve interoperability on those matters that affect every FRS.

The HSE intends to carry out four additional inspections of fire and rescue services. It has indicated that it will use guidance published by CFRA as a benchmark and it expects to find significant improvement in the areas identified in the consolidated report.

J5 Brigade safety representatives' training course

This course was held in March at Wortley Hall. Head office input included John McGhee, national officer, and Trevor Cave, FBU education. The TUC tutors supporting the course were John Botterill and Katherine Fry, Leeds City College, Trade Union Education Department.

Presentations came from Sue Parkyn, head of police, prisons, fire and sector support for the HSE, and Dave Sibert, fire safety and IRMP advisor for the FBU.

Tutor-led discussions focused on:

- the role of safety representatives within IRMP;
- fire service for 21st century presentation;
- operational guidance programme; and
- dynamic risk assessment.

Very positive feedback was received from students.

J6 Serious accident investigation

The serious accident investigation manual has been agreed and published. The serious accident investigation kit will be rolled out once the distribution list has been finalised. It is intended to develop a TUC-accredited course on serious accident investigation and roll this out over the next two years.

J7 CFRA operational guidance programme

In 2008 the chief fire and rescue advisor (CFRA) commissioned 12 projects under the general control and scrutiny of the Operational Guidance Programme Board. Each project has a director appointed by CFRA and board to oversee the project. The FBU has a position on each of the boards. The FBU fully support the development of central guidance. The projects are:

- Respiratory protection equipment (revision of TB 1/97);
- Management of risk at operational incidents (H and S, DRA);
- Hazardous materials including CBRN and decontamination;
- Tunnel/underground;
- Railway incidents;
- Major floods;
- National coordination and advisory framework;
- Information to operational staff on premises risk;
- Aircraft incidents;
- Marine incidents;
- Safe working in, on, or near water;
- Immediate emergency care;
- Fighting fires in timber-framed buildings; and
- Communications and mobilising.

Four operational guidance manuals are due for publication early in 2011. These are:

- Hazardous materials including CBRN and decontamination;
- Tunnel/underground;
- Railway incidents; and
- Aircraft incidents.

The FBU supports the publication of operational guidance with some reservations over the development and intended use of generic standard operating procedures (GSOPs). A clear area of weakness in fire and rescue service planning has been over-reliance on what is termed dynamic risk assessment (DRA) rather than thorough pre-planning for emergency response. It is now widely accepted (HSE, CFRA, FBU and CFA) that DRA does not provide safe systems of work.

The FBU has found that the process for emergency planning and software such as fire service emergency cover (FSEC) is flawed because a vital element has been neglected. This element became known as worst-case planning scenarios (WCPSs) during development of risk-based emergency cover.

WCPSs should be further developed nationally; however, until this happens FRSs will need to develop these locally. The FBU understands that GSOPs have been developed regionally and these may fill this gap. However, the FBU has not been invited to take part in this development so it will reserve judgement on the suitability of this approach until full and proper consultation has taken place.

J8 Generic risk assessment

Owing to the size and nature of the FRS and the wide range of activities in which it becomes involved, there is the potential for the risk assessment process to become a time consuming activity. To minimise this and avoid having inconsistencies of approach and outcome, Communities and Local Government has revised its series of generic risk assessments (GRAs).

1998 saw the first publication of 32 GRAs. These were divided into five sections which covered:

- responding to emergencies;
- carrying out rescues;
- fighting fires;
- incidents involving transport; and
- generic hazards.

The revised GRAs have been produced as a tool to assist FRSs in drawing up their own assessments to meet the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR).

This CFRA-led project to revise these began at the end of 2008. The first of the revised GRAs, Responding to emergencies, was published in September 2009. A further nine revised GRAs have been published and the rest are due for completion during 2011.

Consultation arrangements are an example of good practice for all FRS stakeholders. The FBU has been fully involved in the GRA project and endorses the published documents. However, some concerns remain unresolved. Successful safety management relies on a cycle of performance measurement and review. Since 2004 the fire and rescue service has relied on a process of self-assessment and peer review that has proved to be very inadequate. A health and safety framework for emergency response is being developed, but the FRS now faces severe budget cuts that will affect safety management systems prior to production and implementation of this vital project.

J9 CFRA dynamic management of risk at operational incidents

In 2010 CFRA agreed to review the use of dynamic management at operational incidents. This review is now part of the FRS health and safety framework for emergency

response. Three meetings of the project board have been held. The project board has identified emergency response planning as a key area for improvement and is focusing on delivery of safe and effective emergency response.

Human failures are responsible for up to 80% of all types of accidents and figure in almost every major accident. It is important to reduce those failures as much as possible. The HSE has produced guidance on human factors. The HSE's core guidance on human factors defines it as the interaction between the three main factors affecting human performance at work:

- the job;
- the individual;
- the organisation.

Acquiring and maintaining competence is an essential element. The HSE has also carried out comprehensive research into competence assessments in other safety-critical industries. The FBU believes this research and the recommendations can be easily adapted for FRS use.

J10 Operational guidance project – review of TB1/1997 BA command and control procedures

The national officer has attended many of these forums and meetings, but when he has been unable to attend then members of the PPE subcommittee have attended to represent the FBU. Trials were performed at the Fire Service College where members from all over the British Isles were offered the opportunity to attend. It was good to see members from Scotland and Northern Ireland making the long trip to sunny Gloucester.

The production of the final document has been delayed due to the negotiation process, but should be out sometime in 2011. This is still an area of concern to the FBU. Fatal accident investigations and the HSE consolidated report have identified that competence in BA wearing command and control needs to be addressed by the FRS as a matter of urgency.

J11 The national coordination and advisory framework

This document was published in September 2009 and it describes the purpose and scope of the national coordination and advisory framework (NCAF). The NCAF is a structure offering assistance during incidents that are of national significance or require national coordination.

J12 Marlie Farm, East Sussex

East Sussex fire and rescue service (ESFRS) has provided solicitors, acting on behalf of our members, with a summary report of its significant findings of the investigation into the fire and fatal explosion at Festival Fireworks Ltd, Marlie Farm, The Broyle, Ringmer, East Sussex on Sunday 3 December 2006.

ESFRS agreed to include the Fire Brigades Union's findings and recommendations as an appendix. In January 2011 ESFRS refused to honour this agreement. The Fire Brigades Union recommendations rejected by ESFRS are:

1. The FBU recommends a comprehensive review of ESFRS risk management systems. Until this is achieved the national guidance of a predetermined attendance with a minimum of nine firefighters should be followed. A predetermined attendance above the minimum should continue for emergencies that require it.
2. The FBU recommends a comprehensive review of ESFA risk management systems. The review will need to:
 - ensure that national guidance provided by the secretary of state responsible for fire and the secretary of state responsible for health and safety at work has been fully considered;
 - ensure that ESFA and ESFRS risk management systems are compatible and fully integrated;
 - ensure that national guidance for consultation with staff and communities has been fully considered.
3. The FBU recommends that the 35 scenario types known as worst-case planning scenarios are reviewed and developed further by CFRA to ensure they are an effective element in planning emergency response.
4. The FBU recommends that ESFRS carries out a review of its operational risk assessments to ensure that all significant hazards are identified and their control measures are sufficient to reduce the risk of the identified hazards of being realised to as low as reasonably practicable.
5. The FBU recommends that at all emergencies where there is a risk or a suspected risk of acetylene or explosives involved in fire, monitors should be made available as part of the predetermined attendance.
6. The FBU recommends that ESFRS reviews its operational risk assessments to ensure that adequate monitoring of hazardous substances is fully considered.
7. The FBU recommends that ESFRS reviews its risk assessments for arriving and getting to work in line with the revised GRA as a matter of urgency. Particular attention should be paid to the significant hazards identified as:
 - the operational imperative;
 - the uncontrolled situation;
 - the nature of the task to be performed.
8. The FBU recommends that ESFRS reviews its procedures for establishing competence in fire and rescue roles. This

review must take account of the need to, as far as reasonably practicable, eliminate human error. Human factors guidance provided by the HSE must be considered as part of the review.

9. The FBU recommends that ESFRS, through a review of its operational risk assessments:
 - assesses supervision of fire and rescue service roles in development;
 - assesses its methods of working to ensure that incident command spans of control are achieved (control measure);
 - assesses the personal/team approach to establish the minimum core of a team.
10. The FBU recommends that ESFA takes full consideration of the national guidance available to it and reviews its integrated risk management planning to reduce the risk of the hazards associated with its work practices to as low as reasonably practicable.
11. The FBU recommends that ESFRS health and safety committee and workplace safety representatives committees are fully involved in ESFRS health and safety management systems and ESFA integrated risk management planning.
12. The FBU recommends that a set of local performance indicators are developed for emergency response that measure operational effectiveness and firefighter safety.
13. The FBU recommends that ESFA and ESFRS review their current arrangements for reviewing to ensure they are clear and closely linked.
14. The FBU will remind the secretary of state responsible for fire of his/her duty to intervene should he/she consider that a fire and rescue authority is failing, or is likely to fail or to act in accordance with the framework prepared under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

J13 Atherstone on Stour, Warwickshire

Three years on from the incident on 2 November 2007 which resulted in the deaths of John Averis, Ian Reid, Ashley Stephens and Darren Yates-Badley, the health and safety investigation continues. National officer John McGhee has maintained overall responsibility for this work.

The investigation team, Marcus Giles, brigade health and safety representative, Pete Goulden, Region 7 health and safety co-coordinator, in addition to current and retired officials, have examined the evidence available to them and are in the process of drafting a report.

Warwickshire police still have primacy and therefore the criminal element of the incident continues. This has resulted in

a number of arrests of Warwickshire FBU members. Support mechanisms are in place for these personnel as it is also for the families of the deceased.

Co-operation with the HSE and Warwickshire police has continued but the investigating team is still coming up against barriers to accessing information.

The executive council recognises the extreme pressure placed on officials when carrying out the investigation and has endeavoured to provide all necessary support.

J14 Dalry Road, Edinburgh (Lothian and Borders)

It is now almost two years since the tragic death of Ewan Williamson at the Balmoral Bar on Dalry Road in Edinburgh.

At the current time Lothian and Borders police (LBP), who are working under the direction of the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), are continuing with the investigation into the circumstances of the fire at the Balmoral Bar.

We continue to have good contact with Lothian and Borders police and the HSE.

During the last 20 months the HSE has issued several safety critical bulletins to address concerns raised during the police investigation. We have followed that up by identifying seven safety critical issues which we have communicated to COPFS, LBP, HSE and Lothian and Borders FRS.

The legal process has been slow and, at times, frustrating. In Scotland, as a result of an accident at work, a fatal accident inquiry (FAI) will be held. An FAI is essentially a fact-finding exercise carried out in the public interest. The rules of evidence and the standard of proof are as for civil cases in Scotland. The purpose of an FAI is to determine:

- where and when the death took place;
- the cause of death;
- reasonable precautions whereby the death might have been avoided;
- the defects, if any, in any system of working which contributed to the death or any accident resulting in the death; and
- any other relevant facts relevant to the circumstances of the death.

We are hopeful that this legal process will ensure that any FBU recommendations can be accepted and incorporated into the procedures used in the FRS across Scotland and the rest of the UK.

The FBU investigation report will be completed in 2011.

J15 Shirley Towers, Southampton (Hampshire)

The Hampshire police have completed their part of the investigation into the deaths of Bro Alan Bannon and Bro James Shears. Their report has been submitted to the HSE for its consideration and they have discussed policies and procedures with specific Hampshire fire and rescue service (HFRS) managers, e.g. training.

The police have also handed to HFRS and the FBU most of the transcripts and recordings from the fire service witnesses, which include Hampshire control staff. The FBU has agreed with Hampshire FRS to share information with the aim of producing separate investigation reports and recommendations. Progress was slowed awaiting release of information by the police, due to a request of confidentiality clauses. This has now been sorted and the FBU and the HFRS accident investigation team (AIT) continue to meet regularly.

The FBU team is busy correlating the information from the witnesses into its report.

A modelling exercise has not been completed on the flat fire development in the high-rise block. This has delayed the release of the fire investigation report which cannot be concluded without it. A coroner's inquiry is still pencilled in for July 2011 but this timescale could easily slip due to the reports not being completed.

As an interim measure HFRS has consulted with West Sussex and has formed a strategic body to action any significant issues that have been uncovered as part of the joint investigation. The service and the FBU can put issues on the agenda here to be actioned.

The FBU has examined the HSE report of the inspection of Hampshire FRS carried out in May 2009 and the consolidated inspection report October 2010. The FBU team is focusing on the underlying causes, such as failures in risk control systems and management arrangements for fires in high-rise buildings as identified by the HSE, along with incident command, bridgehead command and BA control measures.

Before annual conference a review of the investigation will have taken place and it is hoped that we will be able to progress the safety-critical areas of a firefighter's work.

J16 SNSPP and FBU – Channel Tunnel

On 26 February 2010 representatives from all stakeholder trade unions attended a meeting called by the Channel Tunnel

Inter Government Commission to discuss specific safety rules relating to passenger trains running through the Channel Tunnel. The Fire Brigades Union's response to the consultation is set out below:

2010/H&S/JM

2 March 2010

Secretariat
Office of Rail Regulations
One Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN

Dear Sir/Madam

**CHANNEL TUNNEL INTERGOVERNMENT COMMISSION
CONSULTATION ON THE SPECIFIC SAFETY RULES
RELATING TO PASSENGER TRAINS TRANSITING THE
TUNNEL**

Terry Gates, Office of Rail Regulator, sent on behalf of Richard Clifton, Channel Tunnel Safety Authority, an invitation to a consultation meeting to be held on Friday 26 February at The Palace Strand Hotel in London.

The consultation was initiated by the Channel Tunnel Intergovernmental Commission and was on the Specific Safety Rules Relating to Passenger Trains Transiting the Tunnel. The invitation included a copy of a letter addressed "to all consultees," which was dated 21 July 2009.

When we subsequently attended this meeting we were informed by Richard Clifton that any response to the consultation needed to be received by Friday 5 March 2010.

The Fire Brigades Union would ask that the IGC recognise that this is a wholly unacceptable timescale for consultation to take place.

It is our view that despite the important role of unions and their safety representatives in respect of safety in the channel tunnel, that consultation with trade unions was an afterthought.

We would seek assurance that this will not happen in any future consultations.

However, in light of the meeting we give the following comments in relation to the consultation:

- In respect of overall special safety measures, and the Intergovernmental Commission's requirement, as a safety authority, requirement to maintain and where reasonably practicable improve safety levels, we do not believe that any case has been made in order to remove any safety measures currently in place.

Turning to the specific areas contained within the consultation:

- Continued running of a train that is on fire for 30 minutes – since the introduction of this safety measure it has been reported that on many occasions the average running time in the tunnel is greater than 30 minutes. We are therefore

of the opinion that this standard must be maintained and that when it is reasonably practicable to do so all rolling stock should be updated to one hour fire resistance. Full autonomy for batteries should be maintained at least to the same standards. This alteration would ensure safety when trains have an average running time of 45 minutes.

- Traction requirements – the FBU supports our colleagues in the rail industry and do not believe that there should be any lowering of the current standard.
- Traction systems and extinction of fires in traction units – it is the view of the FBU that power supply units should be positioned at the ends of trains transiting the tunnel. These units pose a significant risk as power supply convertors or traction units are a possible source of fire ignition/outbreak. The standard operating procedures currently in use by FLOR (First Line of Response), Kent FRS and Pas de Calais are designed to deal with these units at the ends of trains.
- Smoke penetration protection systems and door joints – the FBU agrees that the requirement for smoke penetration systems on all ventilation dampers and outside doors should remain in force. We are concerned that the current inflatable door seals do not operate when the trains are at a standstill. We believe that it is reasonable to ask that this situation is improved and that rather than discuss the issue with manufacturers or rail users, the CTSA should insist that the standards are achieved by all train providers.
- Minimum length trains and multiple unit trains – the FBU position is clear on these issues. The train length is designed to aid evacuation through access to cross passenger doors. Evacuation and firefighting procedures are designed with the knowledge that access to train compartments will always be close to a cross passenger door even with an uncontrolled stop. We believe that safety standards must be set and maintained by IGC and the minimum length of 375m should remain.

As for multiple train units, evacuation procedures rely on passenger trains having continued access from end to end. If this facility is not available passengers would be forced to alight the trains into the tunnel and could face extreme problems whilst trying to locate the nearest cross passage door. Single unit passenger trains should be maintained with the provision as through access.

- Split ability – our concern is that trains in use within the tunnel should be compatible in relation to coupling systems. i.e. all trains should be capable of rescuing the train ahead or behind in an emergency situation.
- Electric tractor – the FBU do not support the use of diesel powered trains within the Channel Tunnel. To allow this in our view would be to downgrade the current safety standards.
- Standards for the design and performance of vehicles and their fittings – we are in support of the position expressed by our colleagues from RMT who stressed the need for the CTSA to mandate one standard, no less safe than the present ones used for Euro star vehicles and fittings.

SECTION J — HEALTH & SAFETY

These comments are made without prejudice to the union making further submission to the CTSA on any issues of further concern at a date in the future.

Yours sincerely



John McGhee
National Officer
Health, Safety and Welfare

On 5 October a delegation from the FBU met with officials of the French firefighters' union SNSPP which represents French firefighters working in the tunnel. The meeting discussed contractual and safety arrangements affecting members working in the tunnel. A joint FBU/SNSPP statement was agreed and published. Further meetings are planned for 2011.

J17 Confidential stress helpline

The union continues to offer members access to the confidential stress helpline (0800 783 4778).

The service is provided by an independent company which maintains complete confidentiality on behalf of those who use the service.

J18 The Fire Service College

As we are all aware, the HSE has been proactive in inspecting FRSs and its reports are out in the public domain. It has also been proactive in inspecting the Fire Service College (FSC) at Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire. The FSC has been proactive in moving forward with recommendations from the HSE. This can only be beneficial to our members who use and work at the college.

J19 Practitioners' Forum – reporting of firefighter injuries and fatalities task and finish group

As a result of the In the line of duty report and the lobby of parliament, and a paper submitted to the Practitioners' Forum by the FBU, the reporting of firefighter injuries and fatalities task and finish group was set up.

The first meeting of this group took place on Tuesday 16 February 2010 at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service headquarters.

The group was chaired by deputy chief fire officer Andrew Beale, Nottinghamshire FRS, on behalf of the Practitioners' Forum.

The attendees included a number of representatives from CFOA regions, HSE, CLG (statistics officer), FOA, CFRAU, SW Ambulance NHS Trust, Northern Ireland FRS and the Scottish government.

The group discussed the issues as laid out in the agenda. The focus for most participants was information required under RIDDOR. On behalf of the union it was argued that this was an opportunity for the FRS to outline what the necessary information to gather was, in order to inform future policy and guidance.

Discussion around the recording of off-duty death was causing difficulty as were deaths such as heart attacks on duty.

Agreement was reached that the recommendations from the group should include the need for the FRS to review its guidance in light of any significant issues being identified through the analysis of data received.

The group agreed to take the definitions for "on-duty" contained in the FBU report, In the line of duty, and adapt them for this piece of work. Clarification is being sought from CLG on what currently happens to data collected. Further meetings took place in March and April.

In June 2010 a final report was agreed by the task and finish group and was sent to the FRS health and safety group for action.

This report was agreed by the FRS group in September and was due to go to the Practitioners Forum meeting in October but was not raised.

A total of nine recommendations were made in this paper which go some way towards satisfying the union's aims following the report into firefighter fatalities. This is an issue we will need to raise with the minister if the Practitioners' Forum is dissolved.

Recommendations made by the FRS's safety statistics group (formerly the Reporting of firefighter and fatalities task and finish group) report

That the Practitioners' Forum take the line-by-line recommendation contained in this report to the minister. In addition, that CFOA champion the recommendations made by this group and approach CLG with a view to implementing these recommendations to ensure that the data will prove more useful for comparative and trend analysis.

It is recommended that:

1. The data capture form is used by FRSs

There is an example of good practice developing with the CFOA National H&S Committee Key Performance

Indicators and RIDDOR reporting where detailed analysis is occurring within and across FRSs. This includes regional comparisons, service comparisons and detailed mining of data when discrepancies or trends have been discovered.

A spreadsheet has been produced by the group to ensure all relevant information is captured by each FRS for onward transmission to CLG. It is imperative that CLG take on board the information provided on the spreadsheet because their data will then prove more useful for comparative and trend-analysis purposes. (To ensure complete data is entered appropriately, the spreadsheet will not allow progression if fields are left blank but does require further refinement).

It is important that the supporting narrative in the Excel spreadsheet, as piloted by the South West region, is adopted as it allows dialogue between services and fuller analysis of each line.

Adoption of this line-by-line annual return will allow CFRAU and CLG to identify trends and suggest areas that FRSs should pay specific attention to. (This is in line with their current practice).

The Excel spreadsheet is not in its final format and merely indicates the data that this group recommends is collated. The final format would need to be developed around 'and/or' gates in relation to completion of the form. The analysis and correlation of submitted data is the key to the design of this particular form.

The form would need to be developed around the headings of: who is the injured person, what role were they undertaking, where they were doing it and whether they were deemed competent or not to do it.

2. Volunteers are classed as “non-employees”

Non-operational volunteers, such as Prince's Trust attendees, should not be classed as employees for reporting purposes. Instead they should be classed as “members of the public”.

3. FRSs record retained duty system (RDS) personnel responding to a call as “on-duty”

This group recognises that the recording of RDS responding to a call is different across the FRSs, CLG and HSE. For statistical collation however, it is recommended that all services submit to CLG accidents from the point of pager actuation.

4. The chemical type be recorded to allow for analysis and trend identification to occur

Currently there is no national collation of hazardous substance exposures. However, information is collected by the HSE who have a RIDDOR category for this with numbers but not the finer detail e.g. chemical type. Currently this is an area which has not adequately evolved and this group would recommend further research is undertaken – possibly with the Occupational Health sub-group of CFAO under the HR lead and/or CFRAU and/or CLG. The form recommended here would not be the right place to record hazardous substance

exposures which do not result in an immediate identifiable injury.

5. Employees classed as being “on-duty” or “off-duty” in relation to (a) sporting events and (b) assisting at operational duties as a passer-by.

- a) Confusion appears to be common when an employee is injured whilst representing their service at a sporting event (the cases of representing FRSs at sporting events is deemed to be with full managerial approval). The question is, are they on-duty or off-duty at the point of injury? This group recommends that, if the person has written permission to represent their service, they be considered as on-duty.
- b) Cases of accidents/injuries by firefighters involved at operational incidents whilst off-duty should not be recorded on this form because their involvement is as a member of the public and not in an on-duty capacity because invariably they would not have their PPE with them for instance.

6. Absence statistics are reviewed by a separate task and finish group undertaking this work

This group believes there is inadequate information gathered as to the reasons why people are absent from work. In particular issues with staff that have had a heart attack or a stroke at work – or not at work (which may be recorded as a direct result of work activity but not recorded under accident at work procedures).

The recommendation is that the separate CFRA work stream look at how to record details of non-accident fatalities of fire and rescue service employees.

7. A pilot and review of the form and the process be undertaken in a number of differing FRSs to include – a metropolitan service, a county council service and a combined fire authority service

If the recommendations here are accepted then a pilot and review is required in order to eliminate any double-reporting or statistical detail contradictions/anomalies.

8. CLG adopt the new FRS safety statistics data collection form

This group requests CFAO to champion the new safety statistics data collection form so it can be adopted by the Research and Statistics Division of CLG. This will ensure that the right data recommended by both strategic officers and practitioners will be collected and then disseminated to ensure constructive analysis can be undertaken by those same practitioners and strategic managers.

9. Ensure the right information is entered into the right boxes for the annual data returns to CLG

All members of this group identified the fact that fire services complete the annual data returns slightly differently, which, in turn, compounds data analysis. It is fundamentally important therefore that the drop-down menus in the annual returns are absolutely clear and unambiguous. Furthermore, all FRSs are encouraged to ensure absolute data quality on submission. CFRAU and

SECTION J — HEALTH & SAFETY

CFOA should actively encourage coherent and consistent submissions.

3 Financial Implications

3.1 CLG may incur some costs when adopting this form as it is an alteration to their current system. However, in the long run, it will be more cost effective to CLG as it will be easier to analyse the statistics, saving time and money which is, as yet, unquantifiable.

3.2 This group recognises and acknowledges that individual FRSs may have to change the manner in which they record this data to align themselves with an annual return that is more useful. There may be minor one-off costs associated with that alignment.



Section

Accounts 2010 and Financial Statement

K1 Foreword

National treasurer's and general secretary's foreword

The union's Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account details a 2010 surplus for the year of £267,644, compared to a 2009 deficit of £392,372.

The General Fund details a 2010 deficit for the year of £293,035 (2009 – surplus of £33,082).

This is the second consecutive year in which contribution income has decreased (2010 – £120,234 compared to 2009 – £13,613). This is due to the continued reduction of wholtime members.

Overall, expenditure has decreased, however, this reduction relates mainly to union learning and accident and injury costs. The general fund expenditure must be monitored closely with the aim of reducing costs.

The 2010 consolidated carried forward surplus is £4,472,200 (2009 £4,206,556), however, the General Fund carried forward deficit has increased to £956,679 (2009 – £661,644). The union must take immediate action to reverse this trend and generate a general fund surplus.

Matt Wrack
General Secretary

Warren Gee
National Treasurer

K2 Financial Statement

Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2010

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:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the union will continue to operate.

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

the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the union's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of accounts may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of the Fire Brigades Union

We have audited the financial statements of The Fire Brigades Union for the year ended 31 December 2010 which comprise the Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account, Consolidated Balance Sheet, Consolidated 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 auditor

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.

We read the report of the national treasurer and general secretary and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

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 2010 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.



Gareth Jones (Senior Statutory Auditor)

HARD DOWDY

a trading style of

Chantrey Vellacott DFK LLP

Chartered Accountants

Registered auditors

London

Date 12 April 2011

Consolidated Income And Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 December 2010

	Note	General Fund £	Accident & Injury Fund £	Political Fund £	Union Learning Fund £	2010 £	2009 £
Income							
Contributions	1i	10,064,627	1,652,238	284,955	—	12,001,820	12,122,054
Investment Income		49,470	—	148	—	49,618	71,726
Grants		—	—	—	736,551	736,551	1,311,921
Sales of Publications and Merchandise		3,847	—	—	—	3,847	4,756
Other Income		137,936	—	—	—	137,936	—
Commission Received		3,193	—	—	—	3,193	3,367
VAT Recoverable		3,766	—	—	—	3,766	4,665
		<u>10,262,839</u>	<u>1,652,238</u>	<u>285,103</u>	<u>736,551</u>	<u>12,936,731</u>	<u>13,518,489</u>
Expenditure							
Benefits	2	797,617	923,243	3,678	—	1,724,538	2,499,215
Conferences and Meetings		396,631	—	—	—	396,631	429,811
Affiliations		149,442	—	1,476	—	150,918	147,196
'Firefighter'		210,314	—	—	—	210,314	220,254
Commissions		58,999	58,999	29,500	—	147,498	150,150
Union Learning Costs		—	—	—	736,551	736,551	1,312,739
Administration	3	8,619,531	144,841	214,925	—	8,979,297	8,890,888
Depreciation	1b	296,234	—	—	—	296,234	247,192
Loss/(Profit) on Disposal of Fixed Assets		12,398	—	—	—	12,398	(2,500)
(Profit)/Loss on Disposal of Investments		(18,292)	—	—	—	(18,292)	23,916
FRS17 Finance Cost	8	33,000	—	—	—	33,000	(8,000)
		<u>10,555,874</u>	<u>1,127,083</u>	<u>249,579</u>	<u>736,551</u>	<u>12,669,087</u>	<u>13,910,861</u>
(Deficit)/surplus for the year		(293,035)	525,155	35,524	—	267,644	(392,372)
(Deficit)/surplus brought forward		(661,644)	3,758,806	1,109,394	—	4,206,556	6,269,928
Pension scheme actuarial loss	8	(2,000)	—	—	—	(2,000)	(1,671,000)
(Deficit)/surplus carried forward		<u>(956,679)</u>	<u>4,283,961</u>	<u>1,144,918</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>4,472,200</u>	<u>4,206,556</u>

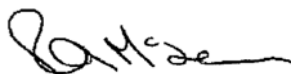
Consolidated Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2010

	Note	2010 £	2009 £
Fixed Assets	4	2,746,620	2,357,960
Investments and Long Term Loans	5	1,373,523	1,365,374
		<u>4,120,143</u>	<u>3,723,334</u>
Current Assets			
Stock		1,640	3,279
Debtors and Prepayments	6	920,640	967,013
Cash at Bank and in Hand		1,763,410	2,170,305
Total Current Assets		<u>2,685,690</u>	<u>3,140,597</u>
Current Liabilities	7	(1,645,633)	(1,741,375)
Net Current Assets		<u>1,040,057</u>	<u>1,399,222</u>
Total Assets before Pension Liability		5,160,200	5,122,556
Pension Liability	8	<u>(688,000)</u>	<u>(916,000)</u>
Total Assets after Pension Liability		<u>4,472,200</u>	<u>4,206,556</u>
Financed By			
General Fund		(956,679)	(661,644)
Accident and Injury Fund		4,283,961	3,758,806
Political Fund		1,144,918	1,109,394
		<u>4,472,200</u>	<u>4,206,556</u>



M. WRACK – GENERAL SECRETARY



A. McLEAN – PRESIDENT

Consolidated Cash Flow Statement

For the year ended 31 December 2010

	2010 £	2009 £
Cash Flow Statement		
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities	258,758	(552,554)
Purchase of Fixed Assets	(544,905)	(89,463)
Repayment of Hire Purchase Creditors	(138,090)	(152,336)
Sale of Fixed Assets	7,200	7,501
Purchase of Investments	(147,323)	(156,494)
Sale of Investments	138,905	111,180
Repayment of Mortgages	18,560	17,444
	<u>(406,895)</u>	<u>(814,722)</u>
 Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movement in Cash		
Decrease in Cash in the year	(406,895)	(814,722)
Net Cash as at 1 January 2010	2,170,305	2,985,027
	<u>1,763,410</u>	<u>2,170,305</u>
Net Cash as at 31 December 2010		

Note to Cash Flow Statement

Reconciliation of Operating Results to

Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities

Consolidated Income and Expenditure Surplus(Deficit) (page 167)	267,644	(392,372)
Depreciation	296,234	247,192
Loss/(Profit) on Disposal of Fixed Assets	12,398	(2,500)
(Profit)/Loss on Disposal of Investments	(18,292)	23,916
Change in Stock	1,639	3,278
Change in Debtors and Prepayments	46,373	(103,108)
Change in Creditors	(117,238)	131,040
Change in Pension Liability	(230,000)	(460,000)
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities	<u>258,758</u>	<u>(552,554)</u>

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2010

1 Accounting Policies

- (a) These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention. Income and expenditure is dealt with in the various fund accounts of the union.
- (b) Fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, except for freehold land, on a straight line basis, at rates estimated to write off the cost or valuation of each asset over its expected useful life.

The rates used are:

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

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

- (c) Rental payments in respect of operating leases are charged to the General Fund Income and Expenditure Account in the period in which they are incurred.
- (d) Investments are stated at cost. Provision is made against investments where there is a permanent impairment in value. Income from the investments is recognised when the monies are received.
- (e) Members' legal expenses are charged in these accounts net of reimbursements obtained in respect of certain cases, on an invoiced basis. No provision is made for outstanding legal costs not invoiced, or for reimbursements not received at the balance sheet date. All other income and expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.
- (f) Provisions for future expenditure are included in the accounts, only where the union has a present obligation to meet such expenditure.
- (g) Provision is only made for material corporation tax on investment income and capital gains arising in the year after relief given for provident benefits paid. No provision is made for any potential corporation tax liabilities arising as a result of revaluations of the union's properties or investments.
- (h) Value added tax (VAT) is only partially recoverable. The non-recoverable element is shown separately in the income statement. All expenditure is shown exclusive of VAT where applicable.
- (i) Contributions include those amounts receivable from members in respect of the year under review.
- (j) The union's pension schemes are defined benefit schemes.

The amounts charged to Income and Expenditure Account are the current service costs. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in the Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account.

The assets of the schemes are held separately from those of the union in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and a discounted rate equivalent to the current rate of return on high quality corporate bonds of equivalent currency and term to the scheme liabilities.

- (k) Accident and injury fund contributions are recognised on an accrual basis in accordance with union rules. Provisions for expenditure are included in the accounts when there is certainty that a future payment will be made as at the balance sheet date.
- (l) All union learning fund grant income is recognised as and when the union is entitled to the monies and matched against relevant expenditure.

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2010

2 Benefits	Note	2010 £	2009 £
Legal Fees		393,831	576,375
Education		356,253	286,949
Accident and Injury Claims		923,243	1,579,697
Payments for Support		10,000	30,795
Victimisation Payments		41,211	25,399
		<u>1,724,538</u>	<u>2,499,215</u>

3 Administration		2010 £	2009 £
Salaries, National Insurance and Pension Contributions		2,426,138	2,461,088
FRS 17 Pension Scheme Adjustment	8	(263,000)	(452,000)
Honoraria		29,958	30,228
Travelling		825,167	953,339
Hotels and Subsistence		984,588	1,113,614
Motor Expenses		742,097	568,762
Other Organising Expenses		226,036	267,458
Trade Union Leave		1,307,863	1,098,974
Reports, Journals and Subscriptions		83,341	97,148
Ballot Expenses		99,597	36,149
Donations		196,087	134,790
Goods for Resale, Presentations & Campaigning		58,455	123,059
Repairs and Renewals		125,575	167,765
Office Expenses		497,100	550,187
Communications		700,593	642,187
Printing and Stationery		403,056	472,808
Advertising		35,841	63,284
Insurance		27,377	28,395
Bank Charges and Interest Payable		44,314	33,392
Audit, Pension Audit and Accountancy		58,601	33,445
Professional Fees		361,679	408,285
Computer Leasing		8,834	58,531
		<u>8,979,297</u>	<u>8,890,888</u>

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2010

4 Fixed Assets

	Land & Buildings £	Fixtures Fittings & Equipment £	Motor Vehicles £	Total £
Cost				
1 January 2010	2,671,906	788,182	181,311	3,641,399
Additions	365,895	298,549	40,048	704,492
Disposals	—	(82,342)	(38,391)	(120,733)
31 December 2010	<u>3,037,801</u>	<u>1,004,389</u>	<u>182,968</u>	<u>4,225,158</u>
Depreciation				
1 January 2010	743,976	423,321	116,142	1,283,439
Charged	58,696	206,257	31,281	296,234
Disposals	—	(82,342)	(18,793)	(101,135)
31 December 2010	<u>802,672</u>	<u>547,236</u>	<u>128,630</u>	<u>1,478,538</u>
Net Book Value				
31 December 2010	<u>2,235,129</u>	<u>457,153</u>	<u>54,338</u>	<u>2,746,620</u>
Net Book Value				
31 December 2009	<u>1,927,930</u>	<u>364,861</u>	<u>65,169</u>	<u>2,357,960</u>

5 Investments and Long Term Loans

	2010 £	2009 £
Mortgages repayable	378,894	397,454
Quoted Equities and Unit Trusts		
Newton Investment Management Ltd – Market Value – £491,448 (2010), £452,324 (2009)	440,016	427,908
Newton Investment Management Ltd – Market Value – £329,443 (2010), £300,730 (2009)	291,048	276,447
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
	<u>1,373,523</u>	<u>1,365,374</u>

No provision for permanent impairment in value of investments is considered necessary.

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2010

6 Debtors

	2010 £	2009 £
Trade	550,784	615,043
Other	199,082	145,542
Prepayments	170,774	206,428
	<u>920,640</u>	<u>967,013</u>

7 Current Liabilities

Trade Creditors	402,235	297,793
Hire Purchase Creditors	232,520	211,024
Other Creditors	123,684	265,190
Accruals	887,194	967,368
	<u>1,645,633</u>	<u>1,741,375</u>

8 Pension Scheme Contributions

	£'000	£'000
Staff Scheme		
Opening Balance	(1,290)	(348)
Current service cost	(228)	(126)
Contributions by the union	347	385
	<u>119</u>	<u>259</u>
FRS 17 Pension Scheme Adjustment		
Interest cost	(291)	(241)
Expected return on scheme assets	244	226
	<u>(47)</u>	<u>(15)</u>
FRS 17 Finance Cost		
Actuarial gain/(loss)	45	(1,186)
	<u>(1,173)</u>	<u>(1,290)</u>
Officials Scheme		
Opening Balance	374	643
Current service cost	(132)	(80)
Contributions by the union	276	273
	<u>144</u>	<u>193</u>
FRS 17 Pension Scheme Adjustment		
Interest cost	(295)	(262)
Expected return on scheme assets	309	285
	<u>14</u>	<u>23</u>
FRS 17 Finance Cost		
Actuarial loss	(47)	(485)
	<u>485</u>	<u>374</u>

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2010

8 Pension Scheme Contributions (continued)	£'000	£'000
Both Schemes		
Opening Balance	(916)	295
Current service cost	(360)	(206)
Contributions by the union	623	658
FRS 17 Pension Scheme Adjustment	263	452
Interest cost	(586)	(503)
Expected return on scheme assets	553	511
FRS 17 Finance Cost	(33)	8
Actuarial loss	(2)	(1,671)
Closing Balance	(688)	(916)

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 2008 and 30 June 2008 respectively on each scheme and updated to 31 December 2010 by qualified independent actuaries.

The major assumptions used by the actuary for the National Officials' Scheme.

	At 31.12.10	At 31.12.09	At 31.12.08
Rate of increase in salaries	5.3%	5.4%	4.9%
Rate of increase of pensions in payment	3.3%	3.4%	2.9%
Discount Rate	5.4%	5.7%	6.7%
Inflation Rate	3.3%	3.4%	2.9%

The mortality assumptions are in accordance with the published PFA92 medium cohort year of birth tables.

The assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return for the National Officials' Scheme.

	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.10 £'000	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.09 £'000	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.08 £'000
With Profits Fund	5.1%	2,113	5.1%	2,006	7.1%	1,623
Secured annuities	5.7%	3,944	6.7%	3,562	5.8%	2,973
Total market value of assets		6,057		5,568		4,596

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2010

8 Pension Scheme Contributions (continued)

The major assumptions used by the actuary for the Clerical Staff Scheme.

	At 31.12.10	At 31.12.09	At 31.12.08
Rate of increase in salaries	4.9%	5.2%	4.2%
Rate of increase of pensions in payment	3.0%	3.3%	2.7%
Discount Rate	5.4%	5.7%	6.7%
Inflation Rate	3.4%	3.7%	2.7%

The mortality assumptions are in accordance with the published PFA92 medium cohort year of birth tables.

The assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return for the Clerical Staff Scheme.

	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.10 £'000	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.09 £'000	Long-term expected rate of return	Value at 31.12.08 £'000
Cash accumulation policy	6.2%	2,904	6.6%	2,294	6.6%	2,007
Secured annuities	5.4%	1,487	5.7%	1,433	6.7%	1,183
Total market value of assets		4,391		3,727		3,190

The union is only subject to corporation tax in line with note 9 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 2010

8 Pension Scheme Contributions (continued)

	2010 National Officials' Scheme £'000	2010 Clerical Staff Scheme £'000	2010 Total £'000	2009 National Officials' Scheme £'000	2009 Clerical Staff Scheme £'000	2009 Total £'000
The amounts recognised in the balance sheet are as follows:						
Present value of scheme liabilities	(5,572)	(5,564)	(11,136)	(5,194)	(5,017)	(10,211)
Fair value of scheme assets	6,057	4,391	10,448	5,568	3,727	9,295
Net asset/(liability) recognised	485	(1,173)	(688)	374	(1,290)	(916)
The amounts recognised in the income and expenditure account are as follows:						
Service costs	132	228	360	80	126	206
Interest on obligation	295	291	586	262	241	503
Expected return on scheme assets	(309)	(244)	(553)	(285)	(226)	(511)
Total	118	275	393	57	141	198
Actual return on scheme assets	362	365	727	827	218	1,045
Actuarial gains and (losses) recognised:						
Difference between expected and actual return on scheme assets	53	121	174	542	(8)	534
Experience gains and losses arising on scheme liabilities and effects of changes in the demographic and financial assumptions underlying the present value of scheme liabilities	(100)	(76)	(176)	(1,027)	(1,178)	(2,205)
Total recognised	(47)	45	(2)	(485)	(1,186)	(1,671)
Cumulative amounts recognised	240	(1,534)	(1,294)	287	(1,579)	(1,292)

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2010

8 Pension Scheme Contributions (continued)

	2010 National Officials' Scheme £'000	2010 Clerical Staff Scheme £'000	2010 Total £'000	2009 National Officials' Scheme £'000	2009 Clerical Staff Scheme £'000	2009 Total £'000
Reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the present value of scheme liabilities:						
Scheme liabilities at 1 January 2010	5,194	5,017	10,211	3,953	3,538	7,491
Current service cost	132	228	360	80	126	206
Interest cost	295	291	586	262	241	503
Contributions by scheme participants	39	39	78	35	38	73
Actuarial loss	100	76	176	1,027	1,178	2,205
Benefits paid	(188)	(87)	(275)	(163)	(104)	(267)
Scheme liabilities at 31 December 2010	<u>5,572</u>	<u>5,564</u>	<u>11,136</u>	<u>5,194</u>	<u>5,017</u>	<u>10,211</u>

Reconciliation of opening and closing
balances of the fair value of
scheme assets:

Fair value of scheme assets at 1 January 2010	5,568	3,727	9,295	4,596	3,190	7,786
Expected return on scheme assets	309	244	553	285	226	511
Actuarial gain/(loss)	53	121	174	542	(8)	534
Contributions by employer	276	347	623	273	385	658
Contributions by scheme participants	39	39	78	35	38	73
Benefits paid	(188)	(87)	(275)	(163)	(104)	(267)
Fair value of scheme assets at 31 December 2010	<u>6,057</u>	<u>4,391</u>	<u>10,448</u>	<u>5,568</u>	<u>3,727</u>	<u>9,295</u>

Amounts for the current and previous five years:

	2010 £'000	2009 £'000	2008 £'000	2007 £'000	2006 £'000
Present value of scheme liabilities	(11,136)	(10,211)	(7,491)	(8,809)	(9,099)
Fair value of scheme assets	10,448	9,295	7,786	7,811	7,365
(Deficit)/surplus in scheme	(688)	(916)	295	(998)	(1,734)
Experience adjustments on scheme assets	174	534	(964)	(352)	(414)
Experience adjustments on scheme liabilities	78	(1,169)	1,114	1,022	513

The best estimate of contributions to be paid by the employer to the schemes for the year ending 31 December 2011 is £611,000.

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2010

8 Pension Scheme Contributions (continued)

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.

9 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.

Analysis of officials' salaries and benefits

For the year ended 31 December 2010

Salaries

Name	Office held	Gross salary £	Equivalent rank	
Matt Wrack	General secretary	69,680	Area Manager	Competent "B"
Andy Dark	Assistant general secretary	65,729	Area Manager	Competent "A"
Sean Starbuck	National officer	60,673	Group Manager	Competent "B"
John McGhee	National officer	60,673	Group Manager	Competent "B"
David Green	National officer (from 1st June 2010)	35,393	Group Manager	Competent "B"
Paul Woolstenholmes	National officer	60,673	Group Manager	Competent "B"

Note: All national officials' salaries are in line with fire service ranks, endorsed by annual conference.

Benefits

Name	Office held	Employer's N.I. Cons. £	Employer's Pension Cons. £	Benefits in kind £
Matt Wrack	General secretary	8,188	45,536	4,748
Andy Dark	Assistant general secretary	7,682	42,954	9,255
Sean Starbuck	National officer	7,035	39,650	9,327
John McGhee	National officer	7,035	39,650	13,139
David Green	National officer (from 1st June 2010)	4,165	22,788	3,045
Paul Woolstenholmes	National officer	7,035	39,650	6,661

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

For the year ended 31 December 2010

Benefits

Name	Office held	Honoraria £	Car allowance £	Car and fuel benefit £
M. Shaw	President	1,875	—	5,047
A. McLean	EC and vice president	—	9,234	—
W. Gee	EC and national treasurer	—	9,234	—

The following executive council members were paid a car allowance at the rate of £7,784 per annum:

R. Robertson	K. Horan
J. Barbour	T. McFarlane
I. Murray	M. Nicholas
D. Limer	S. Riley
R. Jones	T. Mitchell
M. Smith	D. Christie
K. Handscomb	J. Ford
I. Leahair	S. Brown
J. Parrott	

Note: The union made reimbursement to local authorities of £1,307,863 (2009 – £1,098,974) in respect of trade union leave in connection with trade union duties by 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.”

Section



Obituary

The executive council records with deep regret the deaths of the following members:

<i>Forename</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Date of death</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Brigade</i>	<i>On/off duty</i>
Alan William	Kynoch	18-Jun-10	1	Grampian	
Gordon Robert	Watson	09-Aug-10	1	Lothian and Borders	
William	McMenamin	30-Sep-10	2	Northern Ireland	
Ruddy	Paul	16-Dec-10	2	Northern Ireland	
Ogden	Glen	17-Dec-10	3	Tyne and Wear	
Wayne	Stewart	04-Oct-10	4	West Yorkshire	
Norman Robert	McArdle	12-Mar-10	5	Cumbria	On duty
David John	Gilding	14-Dec-10	6	Leicestershire	
Matthew Colin	Wright	15-Mar-10	6	Lincolnshire	
Gary	Williams	20-Jul-10	7	Hereford and Worcester	
David Graham	Taylor	08-Aug-10	7	Hereford and Worcester	
Matthew Alexander	Evans	01-Jun-10	7	Shropshire	
Gwynfor John	Howells	18-May-10	8	Mid and West Wales	
Gareth Wyn	Rees	01-Jan-10	8	North Wales	
Robert Michael	Gallacher	01-Jan-10	8	North Wales	
Derrick Llywelyn	Williams	26-Sep-10	8	North Wales	
Alan	Cooper	03-Apr-10	10	London	
Kenny	Kingsley	30-Dec-10	10	London	
Damien Anthony	Smith	03-May-10	11	Kent	
Alan Iain	Bannon	07-Apr-10	12	Hampshire	On duty
James David	Shears	07-Apr-10	12	Hampshire	On duty
Merfyn Evans	Newport	31-May-10	12	Oxfordshire	
Robin Paul	Payne	22-Jul-10	13	Devon and Somerset	

