



FIRE BRIGADES UNION

BRIEFING

Death by a thousand cuts

Government breaks promise over firefighter jobs

The Fire Brigades Union has found that around one thousand firefighter posts have been cut over the last year, with more than 1,300 jobs in the service cut overall. These figures, which cover Wales, Scotland and England, prove that our frontline service has not been protected from the government's spending cuts.

Promise broken

On the eve of the general election, David Cameron visited to Carlisle fire station and promised that a Conservative government would strive to protect vital sectors such as the fire and rescue service from spending cuts.

He said: "We want to get money to the front line. That's what matters. We want a really good fire service but where we can get savings in back-office costs, we should" (*News and Star*, 5 May 2010). This promise has been shown to be empty.

The fire minister has persistently refused to answer questions about firefighter job cuts. So the FBU asked the Labour Research Department to obtain the figures directly from each individual fire and rescue service. The figures show that 1,024 firefighters in wholetime, retain and control roles have been cut between 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2011. Some 1,348 jobs have been cut across the fire and rescue service in all roles.

All but one region has seen firefighter posts lost (see tables). The exception was London, where management have to contend with the Olympics in 2012.

The FBU argues that these job cuts will wreck the fire and rescue service. They will put the public and firefighters at risk. That's why the FBU will oppose job cuts, with all industrial and political means available.

Country totals

Fire and rescue service	FFs 2010	FFs 2011	Net jobs
England	42816	42119	-697
Scotland	7741	7455	-286
Wales	3425	3384	-41
UK	55897	54831	-1024

All regions

	FFs 2010	FFs 2011	Net jobs
Scotland	7741	7455	-286
North East	2324	2254	-70
Yorkshire	4355	4250	-105
North West	5555	5461	-94
East Midlands	3177	3154	-23
West Midlands	4459	4355	-104
Wales	3425	3384	-41
Eastern	4787	4746	-41
London	5972	6034	62
South East	3685	3592	-93
Southern	3419	3342	-77
South West	5083	4931	-152

England

Fire and rescue service	FFs 2010	FFs 2011	Net jobs
Cleveland	619	596	-23
Durham	577	558	-19
Northumberland	364	349	-15
Tyne and Wear	764	751	-13
Humberside	1035	1044	9
North Yorkshire	718	717	-1
South Yorkshire	934	901	-33
West Yorkshire	1668	1588	-80
Cheshire	723	737	14
Cumbria	684	644	-40
Greater Manchester	1959	1944	-15
Lancashire	1224	1210	-14
Merseyside	965	926	-39
Derbyshire	675	688	13
Leicestershire	633	649	16
Lincolnshire	736	725	-11
Northamptonshire	538	508	-30
Nottinghamshire	595	584	-11
Hereford and Worcester	655	641	-14
Shropshire	573	560	-13
Staffordshire	860	871	11
Warwickshire	429	436	7
West Midlands	1942	1847	-95
Bedfordshire	503	502	-1
Cambridgeshire	604	579	-25
Essex	1319	1306	-13
Hertfordshire	782	790	8
Norfolk	859	830	-29
Suffolk	720	739	19
London	5972	6034	62
East Sussex	511	493	-18
Kent	1687	1611	-76
Surrey	757	774	17
West Sussex	730	714	-16
Berkshire	551	540	-11
Buckinghamshire	577	565	-12
Hampshire	1463	1428	-35
Isle of Wight	178	174	-4
Oxfordshire	650	635	-15
Avon	901	883	-18
Cornwall	642	644	2
Devon and Somerset	1840	1788	-52
Dorset	641	619	-22
Gloucestershire	515	487	-28
Wiltshire	544	510	-34

Scotland

Fire and rescue service	FFs 2010	FFs 2011	Net jobs
Central	425	403	-22
Dumfries and Galloway	351	329	-22
Fife	501	493	-8
Grampian	777	760	-17
Highlands and Islands	1145	1143	-2
Lothian and Borders	1047	1043	-4
Strathclyde	2789	2607	-182
Tayside	706	677	-29

Wales

Fire and rescue service	FFs 2010	FFs 2011	Net jobs
Mid and West Wales	1191	1164	-27
North Wales	865	864	-1
South Wales	1369	1356	-13

All figures were obtained through Freedom of Information requests by the Labour Research Department, April –July 2011. The request was to know how many (a) wholetime firefighter, (b) retained firefighter, (c) fire control room and (d) total posts (firefighters and other support staff) were employed by Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service on 31 March 2010 and on 31 March 2011, expressed as full-time equivalents. Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.