



Record of Decisions 2010

**Fire Brigades Union
85th Annual Conference
Southport 19th-21st May 2010**

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2010
Annual
Conference
Decisions
Southport**

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Motions Carried ...

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STATEMENT TO CONFERENCE AS AMENDED BY CONTROL STAFF NATIONAL COMMITTEE IT'S ABOUT TIME

The Executive Council notes with great concern the fact that emergency response times in the Fire and Rescue Service have increased over more than a decade.

The Executive Council notes that such slower responses to fires will have increased the damage caused by fire and are likely to have led to avoidable deaths and injuries among the public. Slower response times will also have been a factor in increasing the risks faced by fire crews attending emergency incidents.

The Executive Council is alarmed at the complacency demonstrated at this trend by some policy makers and others. We believe that, unless challenged, this complacency will seriously damage the reputation of our profession and our Service.

Central Government Complacency

Government commissioned research in 1997, and in 2002 confirmed what is already common knowledge among fire service professionals and what is self evident to the public: *that slower response times for the fire and rescue service would increase the number of deaths and increase fire damage.*

Yet in 2007 without providing any evidence a senior civil servant claimed to MP's in Westminster that slower response times for the Fire and Rescue Service did not equate to a poorer service to communities. This claim, which has never been refuted or even clarified by Government, is an insult to Firefighters and to any member of the public who has ever been through the tragedy of experiencing a fire. It is part of a cynical agenda which seeks to denigrate and undermine our profession so as to support further cuts to our Service.

During the past two years similar comments have been made by politicians within local Fire and Rescue Services and even by Chief Fire Officers. Response times have recently been described by one Chief Fire officer as a 'defunct measure'. The apparent spread of this view follows from misguided and dangerous attempts to undermine and weaken the importance of emergency intervention within our Service.

The Communities and Local Government (CLG) report *Review of Fire and Rescue Service response times, Fire Research Series 1/2009* confirms that response times have slowed. The report concluded that this is likely to have resulted in 13 additional deaths in dwelling fires and other buildings in 2006, possibly 65 additional deaths in

road traffic collisions and an £85m increase in other buildings fire damage that would not have occurred if the 1999 attendance time had been maintained. This latest research wholly supports the FBU's view that response times remain a vital aspect of the effective and efficient functioning of our service.

Emergency response remains a vital and central function of the Fire and Rescue Service and an essential feature of the Firefighting profession. There has been a concerted effort by government departments and CFA to prioritise preventative activities **at the expense** of emergency intervention. Unless challenged, this view will seriously damage the Firefighting profession, will further undermine investment in our Service and will over time weaken the confidence and trust which the public place in Firefighters.

In contrast to this approach, the Executive Council supports the building of a genuinely integrated service achieved through proper fire protection standards, improved prevention **and** awareness activity and improved emergency response.

Policy in Devolved Administrations

The Executive Council welcomes the fact that a more enlightened debate on Fire Policy has been possible in the devolved administrations of the UK and in particular in Wales and Scotland. However, despite service standards being set by the Welsh Assembly Government, the Executive Council notes with concern that a similar trend (towards slower responses) exists within Welsh FRS's. In Wales, the proportion of dwelling fires attended within 10 minutes has fallen from 91.6% in 2000 to 88.2% in 2007. We note that in Scotland, progress towards national response standards remains slow.

It's About Time

The Executive Council notes the campaign launched by the FBU in Scotland around the theme ***It's About Time*** and congratulates the Scottish region of the FBU for this initiative aimed at achieving a Scottish response standard. The Executive Council agrees to make the need for rapid and adequate emergency intervention (speed and weight of attack) a central theme of campaigning across the UK.

This will include building the case for sufficient investment to allow local Fire and Rescue Services to plan properly for emergency intervention. This must include ensuring adequate resources (Firefighters, Firefighters' (Control), appliances and equipment) to enable fires and other emergency incidents to be tackled safely and professionally. The first intervention in any emergency incident will be the receipt of a call for assistance by Fire Control. We must ensure adequate Firefighter (Control) numbers on duty to answer such emergency calls. There should also be continued assessment against rigorous performance standards for receipt and mobilisation of calls by Control.

This campaign will build on work already undertaken around the central importance of emergency intervention (for example, our work around IRMP, Operational Guidance and Firefighter safety).

The Executive Council reiterates its support for a fully integrated and modern fire and rescue service incorporating prevention, protection and intervention. Speed and weight of emergency response must be a central component of a genuine risk based approach to improving safety for our communities and for firefighters.

The Executive Council will develop and campaign for the introduction of national standards of emergency response. We support such an approach in all parts of the UK and will pursue this aim through all the appropriate government bodies.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STATEMENT TO CONFERENCE EDUCATION REVIEW 2009 A REVIEW OF CURRENT TRADE UNION EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE WITHIN THE UNION

1. Introduction

The 2008 Annual Conference adopted the Executive Council Statement: “Education – Responding to Modernisation”. This recognised that the union is now working in “the biggest period of change in the Fire service since the years immediately following the Second World War” and went on to highlight the fact that “the ‘modernisation’ agenda has affected all aspects of the work of the Fire Brigades Union resulting in various strands of work and discussion as the Union develops strategies for the way forward.”

The report went on to focus on the new challenges facing local Officials, challenges very different from those being faced a decade earlier. New issues confronting Officials, along with changes and developments affecting the structures in which they operate that were noted in 2008 included for example: Negotiations on Shift and Duty Systems; Second Contracts; New Pensions arrangements; Grey Book procedures, including the Protocol on Industrial Relations; New Equality legislation.

Issues and arrangements such as those mentioned above have informed the development of the National Education programme since then and this is detailed later in this report.

The 2008 Executive Council Statement identified that the development of a programme of education and training which matches fully the needs of the Union would be a major task and went on to suggest that some of the issues which may need to be addressed include:

- Full details of the current position within each Region;
- Demands for training and development from Sectional Officials;
- Training Needs Analysis;
- Development of a series of new seminars/training events dealing with specific aspects of union activity;
- Ensuring an integrated approach across Regions/Sections and the national programme;

- Preparing the FBU for various possibilities in relation to the external regime for trade union education.

During 2009 Head Office conducted a Training Needs Analysis to help inform this review. All FBU Officials were invited to complete a questionnaire and in addition all Regions were invited to complete an additional questionnaire. 126 Regional, Brigade and Branch Officials participated in the survey and all Regions have now provided the information requested on their Education programmes covering the recent past, the present and future plans.

A particular point of interest from the survey of Officials is that a majority of Officials at both Regional and Brigade level hold more than one position in the Union, and some of those Officials have numerous positions within the structures outlined in the Rule Book. This is often the case at Branch level as well.

Most education and training provided at the moment within the Union is supported by Trade Union Education Tutors trained and approved by the TUC Education Service and working through TUC approved TUC Education providers. Courses accessed by FBU Officials in this way are accredited within the TUC Education Service/National Open College Network (NOCN) framework and are nationally recognised, being part of the new qualification system for England and Wales, the Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF).

Trade Union Education and training has a range of objectives including:

- Helping Union Representatives improve their performance both in their workplace and in the Union;
- Achieving a greater understanding of trade union policies and priorities;
- Gaining an understanding of the wider political context within which they work;
- Encouraging and developing future activists and Officials;
- Developing their study skills and personal confidence whilst participating in educational activities;
- Recognition of learning achievements through accreditation.

2. Trade Union Officials – Scope of Roles and Functions

During 2009 the TUC published a major research paper “Training Needs for Union Professionals”^{*} that identified both the variety of job titles and roles that Officials have within the trade union movement and also listed the main functions of Trade Union Officials today. These Officials may be directly employed by trade unions, either appointed or elected, or be operating as lay elected Officials, sometimes referred to as trade union voluntary officers. An understanding of those roles and functions can help inform the design of relevant trade union courses and programmes. This section summarises key points from that TUC research.

Union Professionals

Union professionals have a variety of job titles/roles including:

- *National Officer*
- *Regional Officer*
- *Full Time Officer (FTO)*
- *Regional Organiser*
- *Union Staff*
- *Union Education Officer*
- *Union Project Worker*
- *Case Worker*

*** Source: “Training Needs for Union Professionals” Doug Gowan, Open Learning Partnership, for Unionlearn with TUC Education 2007.**

Union professionals describe their main functions as:

- *Directly helping activists and branches to organise*
- *Providing back-up, advice and support on organising*
- *Casework and representing members to management*
- *Providing information and advice to members*
- *Providing direct support, e.g. training in organising, bargaining, workplace learning or casework*
- *National, regional or local bargaining*
- *Managing regional/national staff and/or resources*
- *Liaising with lawyers on legal cases*
- *Representing members at tribunals*
- *Organising union promotions, campaigns and/or events*
- *Representing the union*

The same review of union professionals’ training, undertaken by the Open Learning Partnership, included the following observations:

- *The trend noted previously towards an increasingly diverse professional union workforce appears to be continuing;*
- *While the problem of an aging trade union workforce is real, it is counterbalanced by an influx of younger project workers and organisers, many of them women;*
- *Organising work has strengthened in its priority in union work;*
- *In spite of the dominance of the organising model, pressure for support for individual members through casework continues to grow apace;*
- *External factors including litigation culture, legal changes, and rapid communications available from workplaces are in part behind this trend.*

Union Representatives

Most Union Representatives, like most FBU Officials are not paid by the union. A majority hold paid employment at their workplace and perform the representative duties additionally in a voluntary capacity.

Some representatives undertake more than one representative role. The time spent in their union role varies considerably between representatives, depending upon the size and type of the union, employer, the facilities provided and the number of roles performed.

*Union representatives spend on average 6.2 hours a week on union work.**

Representatives include the following categories:

- *Workplace Representatives (“Shop Steward”)*
- *Union Learning Representatives*
- *Safety Representatives*
- *Equality Representatives*
- *Environmental Representatives*

*** Source: “Workplace representatives: a review of their facilities and facility time”
TUC response to the DTI consultation document, March 2007.**

Some unions advised that their representatives are not divided into different categories but undertake a range of representatives’ tasks as members’ needs dictate.

Branch Officials/Workplace Representatives

FBU Branch Officials or Workplace Representatives carry out some, or all, of the following duties:

Recruiting and Organising Members:

- *Building workplace organisation*
- *Recruiting new members*
- *Encouraging existing members to become more involved in the union*
- *Keeping members informed of what is going on in the Union and in their Workplace.*

Representing Members:

- *Investigating member’s problems*
- *Discussing solutions with management*
- *Representing members regarding grievances, disciplinaries and other issues*
- *Attending meetings with management and reporting back to members*
- *Bargaining regarding wages and conditions*

Communication:

- Taking union policies forward
- Communicating with members regarding policies
- Providing information, for example, using union leaflets and newsletters
- Ensuring the flow of information between the union and its members

Representing the union to a range of public and private bodies, including:

- Trades Councils
- Sector Skills Councils/Standards Setting Bodies
- Public Bodies
- Schools/Educational organisations
- Local Councils/Fire Authorities etc.
- Employers

Union Learning Representatives

Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) are responsible for the promotion and representation of the collective and individual learning needs in their workplace. This may include activities such as negotiating with an employer for learning facilities or supporting someone learning a new skill.

The key role of Union Learning Representatives is to raise demand for learning, especially among workers with low skills levels and Skills for Life needs – those who need help the most and who employers and training providers find it hard to reach.

The Employment Act 2002 gives statutory recognition to Union Learning Representatives and rights to time off. Under this law Union Learning Representatives are entitled to reasonable paid time off for:

- Analysing their members' learning or training needs
- Providing their members with information and advice about learning or training matters
- Arranging learning or training for their members
- Promoting the value of learning or training to their members
- Consulting the employer about carrying out these activities
- Preparing for carrying out any of the above activities
- Undergoing training relevant to their functions as learning representatives

Safety Representatives

Safety Representatives focus specifically on workplace health and safety issues. They usually cover a defined area or group of workers in the workplace where they themselves work.

The issues they deal with can be very wide ranging, from the general workplace environment (uncomfortable working temperatures, lack of breaks) to more specific health and safety hazards (such as manual handling, stress and RSI).

Safety Representatives have specific rights enshrined in law (The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977, made under section 2(4) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974), which enable them to:

- *Represent employees in discussions with the employer on health, safety or welfare and in discussions with HSE or other enforcing authorities*
- *Investigate hazards and dangerous occurrences*
- *Investigate complaints*
- *Carry out inspections of the workplace and inspect relevant documents*
- *Attend safety committees*
- *Be paid for time spent on carrying out their functions*
- *Receive paid time off for union approved safety training.*

Employers are required to consult safety representatives, especially about:

- *The introduction of any new measures at a workplace that may substantially affect health and safety;*
- *Arrangements for appointing competent persons to assist the company with Health and safety and implementing procedures for serious and imminent risk;*
- *Any health and safety information required to be provided to employees;*
- *The planning and organisation of health and safety training for the workforce, such as induction training; and*
- *Health and safety implication of the introduction of new technology*

Equality Representatives

Equality Representatives work to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination in the workplace, relating to the following areas:

- *Women's Programmes*
- *Tackling Racism & Discrimination*
- *Equal Opportunities*
- *Lesbian & Gay Issues*
- *Disability*
- *Equal Pay*
- *Countering the Far Right*

The role of the equality representative is still evolving but duties include:

- *Identifying equality issues*
- *Raising awareness of the equality agenda among members and the union*
- *Where appropriate, encouraging employers to include equality and diversity as part of their collective bargaining agenda*
- *Supporting and advising other representatives and members with the aim that every worker receives fair treatment, irrespective of gender, race, disability,*
- *Gender reassignment, religion, age or sexuality*
- *Monitoring policies and procedures in the workplace and the impact they have on different groups.*

Drivers of Demand for Union Representatives and Professionals Education/Training

The main drivers of demand for Union Representatives and Professionals Education/Training reported by Unions are reflected in the data that emerges from the Union's recent TNA of Officials. These include the replacement of retiring Officials, the size of Union membership; Employers' needs and requests/Agreements; Workplace Changes; Union initiatives and Government and legal requirements/initiatives.

3. FBU Officials & Trade Union Education – Review

As detailed earlier during 2009 a Training Needs Analysis was conducted by Head Office and all FBU Officials were invited to complete a survey questionnaire that aimed to identify current and recent utilisation of both TUC and the Union's education programmes along with their future priorities for learning as FBU Officials. In addition all Regions were invited to submit a detailed report on recent, current and future education plans. 126 Regional, Brigade, Sectional and other Officials participated in the survey and education /training priorities identified by them were as follows:

Courses in Order of Priority

Equality Impact Assessments	36.4%	1
Employment Law Update	32.6%	2
Handling Internal Investigations ADAE	30.2%	3
Handling Discipline & Grievance	29.5%	4
Collective Bargaining/Negotiating Skills	27.9%	5
Time Management	24.8%	6
Using the Media	24.0%	7
Negotiation & Consultation Procedures	22.5%	8 =
Health & Safety Update	22.5%	8 =
Pensions & Medical Appeals Update	21.7%	10
Equality & Fairness Update	20.9%	11 =
Fairness at Work Introductory	20.9%	11 =
Handling Change – Shifts etc	20.2%	13 =
Tackling Bullying & Harassment	20.2%	13 =
Conference Skills/Public Speaking	17.1%	15 =
Accidents Injuries & Claims	17.1%	15 =
Qualifications & Workforce Development	14.7%	17
Handling Members Problems	14.0%	18
Engaging with Politics	13.2%	19 =
Discussion Leaders & Education Methods	13.2%	19 =
National School Year 2	11.6%	21
National School Year 1	10.9%	22
Promoting Union Learning Regions	10.1%	23
Health & Safety Introductory	8.5%	24
Branch Officials Introductory	7.0%	25

In addition the survey showed that Regions try to encourage and support both new and more experienced Officials accessing the TUC Education programme – in

England, Scotland and Wales and the ICTU Education programme – in Northern Ireland, wherever possible. These courses are usually accessed on a day-release basis requiring support from the Union and facilities for time-off to attend.

There have been some attempts to address the problems of accessing day-release courses from more remote areas working with TUC Centres that offer forms of distance learning. There have been successes with some of this work, in Scotland for instance, especially when a blended approach can be introduced, but there are also issues especially related to tutor capacity and support and problems for some learners associated with working in isolation etc. We should continue to utilise these methods when appropriate and with caution, working closely with both providers and the TUC Education Service.

However it would appear that currently we are more much successful in assisting our Health & Safety Reps to access the TUC programme than with getting our Branch and new Brigade Officials onto the TUC Union Representatives programme. Regions should review arrangements to help new Officials access the TUC Reps programme as a priority as part of our strategy to improve our ability to deal with industrial relations issues at local level.

More experienced Officials do successfully complete the TUC Diploma courses, especially Employment Law and Occupational Safety & Health. With regard to ULR training there has been mixed success getting Reps onto the ULR Introductory course, again depending upon geography and to address the deficit we have arranged both distance and blended learning opportunities to help with this.

However Officials have differing priorities for courses depending on local factors and also the availability of courses geographically. The capacity of TUC Education Centres is varied and tends to be more limited and restricted in the more rural parts of the regions. This lack of provision in some areas puts more pressure on the Union's regions to provide their own courses, although it is still possible for these to be supported by TUC tutors from elsewhere.

TUC courses supported by Regions include:

- **Union Representatives Stage 1 (10/12 days)**
- **Stepping Up – Union Representatives Stage 2 (10/12 days)**
- **Diploma in Employment Law (One year 30-36 days)**
- **Health & Safety Representatives Stage 1 (10/12 days)**
- **Next Steps for Safety Representatives Stage 2 (10/12 days)**
- **Diploma in Occupational Safety & Health (One year 30-36 days)**
- **Union Learning Representatives (5 days)**
- **Equality Representatives (3 days)**
- **Disability Champions at Work (5 days)**
- **TUC Activists' Academy (5 days)**

It is essential that Regions continue to utilise the TUC Education programme wherever and whenever this is feasible as it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the Union

to replicate either the core TUC 10/12 day courses or the advanced Diploma courses that take a year to complete.

The following table shows the Union's recent performance in accessing the TUC programme and demonstrates how successful Regions have been in getting their Officials onto TUC courses. Most public sector unions would have a percentage take-up directly reflecting their % of TUC membership whereas the FBU is almost double on the 10/12 day programme and much more effective than most in utilising the TUC short course programme. Most of the courses being accessed will include courses organised with the assistance of the TUC with either national or regional courses.

FBU Percentage Take-up of Places on TUC 10/12 day and short courses

	FBU – % of total TUC membership	FBU – % take-up of TUC course places – 10/12 day courses	FBU – % take-up of TUC course places – short courses
2008	0.69	1.25	2.80
2007	0.71	1.45	3.00

Source: TUC Education Annual Reports – 2009, 2008

4. National Education Programme

4.1 Developing the National Programme

As stated in the introduction, Annual Conference 2008 agreed an interim education policy statement that included recognition that the Union nationally should prioritise organising a range of courses to assist Brigade and Regional Officials within their increasing workload especially taking up issues with employers/management. Subsequent EC discussion agreed that the Union should appoint a Director of Education to assist the National Officer with responsibility for education in developing a suitable programme. The programme has been well supported with Officials from all regions participating and in the main giving positive feedback. The following sections detail work to date with these priorities and also include those courses already regarded as part of the national programme including schools and seminars organised by Sections.

At one time it was felt that the Union should concentrate solely on developing a national programme of Political Education and encouraging Officials to access the TUC programme for their Industrial Relations/Trade Union Education needs. Unfortunately it is not possible for that to happen. Although the TUC offers a suitable programme of short courses within this category they rarely succeed in recruiting except where these are organised on a single union basis.

The FBU's national programme would be a good example of this in practice. Therefore if the Union wishes to continue to address the education/training needs of

its officials it has to develop effective working relationships with the TUC Education Service for both its national and regional programmes. Courses should have access to up to date classroom/learning facilities including access to ICT, interactive boards, multimedia etc. It is good practice in trade union education to encourage participants to undertake an element of pre-course work and this approach has now been introduced for national courses.

All education and training provided nationally within the Union is supported by Trade Union Education Tutors trained and approved by the TUC Education Service and working through TUC approved TUC Education providers. Head Office is continuing to evolve an effective working relationship with the TUC Education Service, develop a diverse team of tutors who are able to make a positive contribution to the national programme. The team should aim to include a balance of tutors across all the equality strands with the skills, knowledge and experience to work with all the union's Equality Sections.

All courses organised within the national programme are monitored and reviewed by Head Office, the Director of Education and the National Education Committee on an on-going basis. As part of this process participants are invited to complete a standard FBU Evaluation and monitoring form during the closing session of each course. Completed forms are then processed by Head Office and a summary of learners' comments prepared. Any immediate action points requiring immediate attention are dealt with by the Director of Education, Head Office, and/or TUC course tutors as appropriate.

With regard to participation in the national or regional programmes there needs to be a process in place to prevent individuals attending courses, schools or seminars on an annual or repetitive basis if they do not contribute further to the wider scope of the FBU. This process to be agreed by the Executive Council.

There is a need to develop a database that records each individual member's education activity within the national and regional programmes. It would be helpful if this can be linked to current Union membership records and administrative systems. Once this is in place it will be possible to obtain a more accurate picture of activity, progression and success with an integrated programme and, for example, this information could be used to more effectively allocate places on future courses.

In addition the Director of Education has now formalised a process for inviting course tutors to write up their course assessments to help enhance the evaluation process and provide a more "rounded" picture. Copies of each course summary evaluation are provided for information and comment to the National Education Committee and the Executive Council.

National courses accessed by FBU Officials in this way are accredited within the TUC Education Service/National Open College Framework and are nationally recognised, being part of the new qualification system for England and Wales, the Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF).

The National Programme for the following year is now placed before the National Education Committee and meeting of Regional Education Officers before being considered by the Executive Council. Regions should therefore take the details of that into account when organising and integrating their programmes with that of the national Union.

Details of the Union's National Education Programme for 2008 and 2009 can be found in Appendix A of this paper.

Details of the Union's draft programme for 2010 can be found in Appendix B of this paper.

4.2 The National School

In recent years the National School has been very successful. It has been possible to re-introduce both a first year and second year school with differentiated learning taking place whilst sharing sessions with keynote speakers etc. There was some thought that demand for the School was declining but this has not been borne out by recent experience, the National School last year was fully subscribed with over 20 participants on Year 2 and around 36, in two groups on Year 1 and this year had similar numbers and was over subscribed.

FBU Officials and active members apply for the National School through their Regions. Those applying for the second year should have already completed the first year programme. Those applying for the first year should be signposted to the School only once they have some experience of participating in the Union's education programme within their regions. This practice should continue and regions, when planning their education programmes should consider introductory courses that give potential participants at the School an introduction not only to the work of Branch and Brigade Officials but also to Political Education and Equality and Diversity. This point is developed further in the Regional Education section.

In the survey of Officials there was a request from some for the Union to consider a third year school. Unfortunately, whilst this may be a positive aspiration for the future, given the current pressures on the education programme from elsewhere it should not be a priority at this time.

The National School is designed by Head Office, including the Director of Education in cooperation with the team of FBU TUC tutors from the TUC Education Service to help FBU Officials discuss a range of contemporary and relevant issues. The National Education Committee is also consulted during the planning process.

Topics include the development of trade union strategies to deal with modernisation of the Fire Service and the relevance of both public and private sector trade unionism today. The course therefore provides opportunities for participants to update their knowledge, and develop their skills and confidence to engage in debates covering current Fire Service employment issues; current issues at the National Joint Council and matters with a wider social and political relevance especially in support of fairness and equality in the workplace and community. In short the School looks at

contemporary industrial relations questions but is also a political school examining and discussing the societal context within which we work and live.

The School aims to help participants to:

- Understand the importance of trade union activities at both local, national and international levels and the ways in which these can interlink
- Discuss key current issues for the FBU within the UK Fire Service, of concern to the National Joint Council and to identify priorities for the union and its members
- Consider wider issues of concern to trade unionists including an opportunity to up date 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
- Understand the broader trade union and labour movement, both national and international, and factors affecting its development both now and in the past

4.3 Programme & Course Development

For the 2008 and 2009 programmes new materials were written, piloted and/or revised for the following courses and delivered with the assistance of TUC approved tutors and accredited within the TUC Education Service/National Open College framework:

- **“Handling Change & Restructuring”**
- **“Handling Change – Shifts etc”**
- **“Qualifications & Workforce Development – A Trade Union Approach”**
- **“Understanding Equality Impact Assessments”**
- **“Handling Internal Investigations (ADAE)”**
- **“Promoting Union Learning”**
- **“Health & Safety Update”**
- **“Pensions Update & Handling Medical Appeals”**
- **“Organising & Planning Trade Union Education”**
- **“Union Learning in the UKFRS”**
- **“Using National & Local Negotiation & Consultation Procedures”**

For the 2010 programme and beyond new materials that may need to be written could include, for example:

- **“Bargaining Skills for Brigade Officials”**
- **“Understanding FRS Financial Information”**
- **“Engaging with Fire Authorities and Fire Boards”**

5. Regional Education

5.1 Introduction

The Union has a history of its Regions planning a range of education courses to promote union policy and support local Officials, especially at Branch and Brigade level. Currently the Union's Regional Education Programmes are organised by Regional Education Officers.

The Conference decision to embed union learning within the Union's general programme of work included a proposal to combine the work of the Regional Education Officer with that of the Union Learning Co-ordinator into a new position – the Regional Education and Learning Organiser (RELO). Therefore from April 2010 the Official responsible for education will be the Regional Education & Learning Organiser.

In a number of regions this role is undertaken by one of the current Regional Officials but in some instances the role has been taken up by other Officials. The Regional Education Officers are invited to attend meetings by Head Office twice yearly to report on their programmes and discuss development issues. Head Office, through both the National Officer with responsibility for education along with the Director of Education, when requested, assists Regional Education Officers with a range of issues including:

- Assistance with programme planning
- Development and standardisation of course materials
- Support from TUC Education Centres and TUC approved tutors

5.2 Accessing the TUC Education Programme

Current policy with regard to training and education for new officials such as Branch Officials, Health & safety Reps and ULRs is to encourage and assist them to access the programme of TUC courses available within their regions and this should continue. All these courses are supported by nationally recognised accreditation within the TUC/NOCN framework.

Signposting Officials to appropriate courses within the TUC programme should remain a priority for Regions and Brigades. In some parts of the country it can be difficult to access the TUC programme due to lack of providers geographically, or limited capacity as a consequence of low trade union take-up. Where difficulties are experienced accessing courses due to lack of provision this should be raised with the TUC Education Service.

The TUC Programme of courses includes the following:

- **Union Representatives Stage 1 (10/12 days)**
- **Stepping Up – Union Representatives Stage 2 (10/12 days)**
- **Health & Safety Representatives Stage 1 (10/12 days)**
- **Next Steps for Safety Representatives Stage 2 (10/12 days)**
- **Diploma in Employment Law (One year 30-36 days)**
- **Diploma in Occupational Safety & Health (One year 30-36 days)**
- **Union Learning Representatives (5 days)**

- **Union Learning Representatives follow on units (3 days)**
- **Equality Representatives (3 days)**
- **Disability Champions at Work (5 days)**
- **Introduction to Pensions (2 days)**
- **Pensions Champions (3 days)**
- **TUC Activists' Academy (5 days)**
- **Introduction to COSHH (3 days)**
- **Risk Assessment (3 days)**
- **Employment Law Update**

In addition regions are recommended to provide FBU specific introductory training for Branch Officials and Health & Safety Reps within their programme, wherever possible supported by TUC approved tutors and accredited within the TUC/NOCN framework.

5.3 Regional Questionnaire – Training Needs Analysis

During 2009 Regions were invited to complete a questionnaire designed to obtain an up to date picture of what's happening with education in the regions. Most regions completed and returned the questionnaire, provided detailed information to Head Office separately or reported to the National Education Committee and key points within this section are informed by those returns.

Most Regions have appointed Regional Education Officers and some are now reporting that they have followed the 2009 Conference decision by appointing a Regional Education & Learning Organiser instead. It is clear that for many Regions there is a preference for one of the elected Regional Officials to take on the Education role. Head Office recently provided training for Officials involved with organising and planning regional education programmes and this was successful.

It is of great benefit to the Union to have Regional education plans, with procedures for monitoring and review, for at least a year in length. Some Regions now report a preference for a two or three year planning cycle. There is some merit in this as it may not be necessary to run the same courses in each year but more preferable to build in progression, for example offering an introduction to Engaging with Politics in year 1 of a cycle and then offering a follow-on course during the next year etc.

5.4 Regional Education Programme – Recent Experience

Most Regions offered a Regional Education Programme during 2008 and 2009 and although a small number of regions reported a lapse in this activity the same regions had recently elected new Regional Education Officers and were positive about efforts to rebuild their programmes. It is encouraging to note that those regions with successful programmes, supported by tried and tested course materials and resources, have, with Head Office support, provided advice and guidance to assist with this.

The Officials targeted for participation in regional programmes are in the main, as would be expected, Branch Officials and Brigade Officials. With a view to developing

the next generation of Officials some Regions offer courses aimed at both new Officials and also Branch Activists. Some regions have also reported on specific initiatives to ensure inclusion of Reps from all the Sections, and this should be encouraged.

A clear lesson for the future is that where Regions plan their education to fit in with the annual union diary (both Regional and National) then they are more likely to have a thriving programme; at least on an annual basis or over a longer cycle – some up to three years.

With regard to participation in regional programmes there needs to be a process in place to prevent individuals attending courses, schools or seminars on an annual or repetitive basis if they do not contribute further to the wider scope of the FBU.

This list summarises the range of courses offered by Regions over the past two or three years, in most cases regions would not expect to offer more than three or four courses in year:

- **Introductory Branch Officials**
- **Handling Members' Problems**
- **Union Benefits & Services**
- **Handling Discipline & Grievance/Handling Casework**
- **National & Local Negotiation & Consultation Procedures**
- **Handling Change at Work – Shifts etc.**
- **Introductory Health & Safety Reps**
- **Employment Law Update**
- **Health & Safety Update**
- **Handling Internal (ADAE) Investigations**
- **Dealing with Accidents, Injuries & Claims**
- **Engaging with Politics & Campaigning – Introduction**
- **Conference Skills/Public Speaking**
- **Discussion Leaders & Education Methods**
- **Promoting Union Learning**
- **Pensions Briefing – Update**
- **Time Management**
- **Handling Medical Appeals**
- **Developing Representative's Skills**

Regions were asked what their top three priorities for regional courses during 2009. The major responses included the following:

- **Introductory Branch Officials**
- **Handling Members' Problems**
- **Handling Discipline & Grievance**
- **Introductory Fairness at Work**
- **Understanding Equality Impact Assessments**
- **Handling Internal (ADAE) Investigations**
- **Dealing with Accidents, Injuries & Claims**

- **Engaging with Politics & Campaigning – Introduction**
- **Countering the Far Right**
- **Time Management**
- **Conference Skills/Public Speaking**
- **Using the Media**
- **Handling Medical Appeals**

The above list is therefore a useful starting point when planning future programmes and Regional Committees are encouraged to consider this. All the above courses can be supported by written learning materials and resources available from Head Office or the TUC Education Service Centres. Regions should aim to offer a balanced programme that introduces new Officials, reps and activists to pathways of FBU and TUC education and also offers further opportunities for development accessing courses such as Engaging with Politics; Handling Discipline & Grievance etc.

Head Office will provide appropriate assistance and support for regional courses and programmes should include a contribution from the General Secretary, President or substitute to be arranged by the Head Office National Officer with the Education remit.

Recent reports of Regional education activity and discussion at the National Education Committee have highlighted that there is a deficit in respect of access to the following courses within Regions:

- **Introductory Fairness at Work**
- **Tackling Bullying & Harassment**

The National programme will therefore address the need for Introductory Fairness at Work training in 2010 but Regions should consider programming these courses into their future plans as soon as possible.

Preferred modes of delivery for regional courses were:

- Block release Residential
- Block release Non-residential

Education and Training facilities used when running courses included:

- TUC Education Centers'
- Hotel & Conference Centers'
- Regional Offices
- Fire Service/Local Authority

6. Sectional Education

Each of the Equality Sections has in recent years arranged an annual School with approval and support from Head Office. These are described respectively as:

- **The B&EMM School**
- **The LGBT School**
- **The Women's School**

In addition the ONC have an annual seminar that is tutor led with TUC Education input and the CSNC has had courses tailored to meet specific needs in recent times – for example updates on Employment Law; Handling Change at Work etc. Most of these events, except the Women's School have been held during the fourth quarter of the year and close to the National School. This may discourage or disadvantage people from attending that event, especially during times of restricted trade union leave. It would therefore be useful if the Sectional Schools could be timetabled during the first quarter of the year, in consultation with Head Office when planning the national programme from 2011 at the earliest. The B&EMM School is traditionally held in October, the month that Black History is celebrated. Any change to this longstanding arrangement should be subject to full consultation with the B&EMM National Committee.

It is important that all the principles associated with good trade union education practice mentioned earlier in this report are utilised to the benefit of Sectional students in attendance at these Schools to ensure that they have access to effective trade union education development opportunities. Sections have a good deal of experience of working with both Head Office and TUC Education tutors on the development of programmes for their Schools. A common factor associated with the success of these events is the involvement of TUC tutors and the Director of Education at the earliest stage of the planning process and ensuring that Schools have a good balance of tutor led activity and guest speakers. Arrangements for all Schools should ensure that members attending feel that they are in a safe and comfortable environment.

FBU education at the sectional schools should be pertinent to the constituent members and also include education on current FBU campaigns and issues. Head Office will provide appropriate assistance and support with resources for Section Schools and programmes should include a contribution from the General Secretary, President or substitute to be arranged by the Head Office National Officer with the Education remit.

All Schools and seminars should have a direction, be accredited, have clear aims and be designed to produce and develop Officials for the union.

Recent experience has shown that on occasion not all Sections have always been successful in encouraging participants in their Sectional education to progress to other educational opportunities available within the wider Union. Where trade union education is a key theme within Sectional education events then signposting participants to the Union's mainstream education courses, either nationally or regionally, should be easier to facilitate.

As has been said with regard to participation in the national or regional programmes there needs to be a process in place to prevent individuals attending courses, schools or seminars on an annual or repetitive basis if they do not contribute further to the wider scope of the FBU. Other Union education opportunities should be accessed via the Regional or National programmes as appropriate.

All invitations to guests should be facilitated through Head Office via the National Officer with the remit for Education to ensure that all protocols are adhered to.

7. Education Governance

Responsibility for the governance of FBU education rests with the Executive Council.

The Executive Council is currently assisted by two bodies:

- A National Education Committee which acts as an advisory group to the Executive Council – this Committee determines the direction of education programmes; planning events etc and then presents these proposals for the consideration of the Executive Council.
- A meeting of Regional Education Officers which consist of a twice yearly meeting of all the Regional and Sectional Education Officers where regional education requirements and proposals are discussed.

It is proposed to simplify the governance of Education by having a single “National Education Committee” which will replace the current two bodies above and bring the organisation of Education Governance in line with other FBU committees and structures.

The constitution of the proposed new National Education Committee shall be made up of the following:

- Vice president (Chair)
- General Secretary
- National Officer (Secretary)
- Director of Education
- 3 members of the Executive Council
- The Regional Education & Learning Organiser from each Region and the Official with the remit for Education from the CSNC, NWC, ONC, B&EMM, NRC and G&L committees
- Union Learning Fund Project Manager

In the absence of the Vice President the role of the chair will be taken by one of the 3 Executive Council members.

The National Officer, Director of Education and the Union Learning Fund project manager will attend in an advisory capacity.

The National Education Committee will meet twice yearly to maintain the link between the national education programme and the regional/sectional education programmes. It is an opportunity to discuss and plan the current courses that are available and to allow the introduction of new ideas following their piloting on the national education programme. These meetings should also be used for Regional Education & Learning Organisers to discuss what education they will be delivering in their respective regions and to discuss with Head Office what support will be required. Regional Education & Learning Organisers will be able to discuss what ‘off the shelf’ courses they intend to utilise and where, if anywhere, they feel regional amendments may be required. An example of this may be where an ‘off the shelf’ course is constructed to be delivered over three days but a Region may wish to concentrate the theme into a single day event to ease time off requirements and the necessity of limiting residential expense.

Head Office will hold a library of available courses accessible through the Director of Education for use in Regions.

Business of the National Education Committee

To enable the efficient working of the committee it will receive written reports from all Regions and Sections. Head Office and the Director of Education will also provide written reports to the National Education Committee. Reports shall be provided to Head Office for circulation no later than 14 days before the meeting.

The National Education Committee will receive all evaluation reports from education events and propose future education programmes for the consideration of the Executive Council.

8. Summary

Education Review 2009

A review of current trade union education policy and practice within the Union

This review has focused on the requirements of the 2008 Executive Council Statement to annual Conference and has recognised and responded to the current challenges facing local Officials of the Union.

The review offers manageable, realistic and appropriate ways that the education programme can assist with local, regional and national requirements intended to develop and encourage new and existing officials.

The review is designed to reflect the recognition that all sections of the union should have an opportunity to contribute to the direction that FBU education is taking and this is reflected in the inclusiveness of the proposed new National Education Committee.

In conclusion the 2009 review provides an opportunity for the Union's education programme to further develop officials, ensuring that they have access to accredited, consistent, educational opportunities with involvement in the on going evaluation of the programmes being delivered.

Conference endorses the findings and recommendations of this review.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STATEMENT TO CONFERENCE FINANCE

Annual Conference 2001 established standardised national rates for various allowances and expenses within the Fire Brigades Union (the Red Book). In 2007, Annual Conference further amended various aspects of financial reimbursement for officials.

During 2009 and 2010 the Union has reviewed all of these payments in consultation with our advisors and following various discussions with HM Revenue and Customs. These discussions have addressed the issue of the taxation of various payment made to officials for activity on behalf of the FBU. Subsistence payments have been covered by a Dispensation agreement with HMRC which requires renewal each year. The tax liability on other payments has previously been met by means of a PAYE Settlement Agreement (PSA). However, there will be no PSA for 2009/2010 onwards. This has required the Union to take a number of steps to address the issue of the taxation of allowances and other payments.

In doing so, the Executive Council has attempted to ensure that reimbursement of officials reflects the costs born by officials as a result of activity. Addressing these matters has resulted in additional expenditure for the Union and this will be monitored carefully.

The allowances rates agreed in 2007 were as follows:

Car allowance

Executive Council Members	Regional Officials	Brigade Secretaries and Chairs
£6,000	£4,500	£1,100

Honoraria

Brigade Membership Secretaries	President
£500	£1,500

These payments will in future be subject to full taxation and National Insurance contributions as appropriate. It is therefore proposed that payments be increased as outlined below.

Officials Allowance

This allowance shall be paid to officials of the Fire Brigades union to cover the costs related to activity as an official of the union. These include the costs of purchasing, maintaining and running a vehicle; the costs of maintaining office facilities at home; the costs of providing other equipment or resources not provided by the Union.

	Executive Council Members	Regional Officials	Brigade Sec's & Chairs	Brigades Mem'ship Sec's	President	Vice President	National Treasurer
Gross	£7,784	£5,625	£1,375	£625	£9,784	£8,784	£8,784
Net	£6,000	£4,500	£1,100	£500	£7,380	£6,690	£6,690

N.B. The existing policy of providing a car to the President shall cease on the introduction of this policy.

These rates are recommended to take account of the changed situation in relation to taxation. They include **no increase** in the **net** amount for EC members, regional, sectional or brigade officials. The arrangements for the President will change with the introduction of an officials' allowance to **replace** the honoraria and provision of a car. The new allowances are increased for the Vice President and National Treasurer. This is recommended so as to take account of the national responsibilities involved in these two roles.

Subject to administrative issues being addressed, these allowances may be paid in monthly or quarterly installments from 2011. This shall be determined by the Executive Council.

Taxation and tax relief

It is the view of the Executive Council that much of these payments should not be subject to taxation since they reflect activity necessarily undertaken on behalf of the Union. However, HMRC require any claims for tax relief on such expenditure to be made by individuals and there will no longer be any PSA between HMRC and the Union.

The Union will therefore provide assistance and training so as to assist officials in making a claim for a reduction of tax in relation to these payments. Once the Executive Council has been able to assess the impact of such tax relief on officials, the above allowances may be reduced to take account of the reduced taxation on individual officials.

Subsistence

Subsistence payments made by the Union have previously been covered by a Dispensation agreement from HMRC. This agreement is subject to periodic review.

It is not proposed to amend subsistence payments at present but this may be necessary subsequently.

Guidance on allowances, expenses and taxation matters will be issued by the Executive Council after further professional advice has been sought.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STATEMENT TO CONFERENCE AS AMENDED BY BLACK & ETHNIC MINORITY MEMBERS PENSION ABATEMENT AND RE-EMPLOYMENT IN THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Introduction

Pension abatement is the term used for the practice of reducing the pension of someone who (i) has retired with an immediate entitlement to a pension and (ii) is then re-employed. At the point of retirement, their commutation lump sum is paid. When they are re-employed they receive the usual income for the job that they are doing, but their pension is reduced or stopped.

When they retire a second time the pension is brought back into payment. If they have been a member of a pension scheme during the period of their re-employment their second pension comes into payment as well.

In the Fire and Rescue Service, abatement is usually applied where a Firefighter retires with a pension under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). They receive their commutation lump sum and then after a short period they are re-engaged and admitted to membership of the New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS); they cannot rejoin the FPS because their pension has at least nominally come into payment and they have received their lump sum. They then retire again at a later age and their FPS pension comes back into payment. Their NFPS pension is also paid, and so is their NFPS lump sum.

This arrangement is usually applied where the Firefighter is entitled to retire at the age of 50 because they have built up 25 years' service in the FPS. It could equally apply if a member retires between the ages of 50 and 55.

It can also apply in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). For some LGPS members the retirement age is 60, for others it is now 65. The rules permit members to retire and return with an abated pension in the same way described above. In the LGPS there are arrangements for flexible early retirement whereby an employee retires in part, meaning that they draw part of their pension and move to part-time work. Re-employment with abatement is less common.

Points to note

- Abatement is discretionary: Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) are legally permitted to allow Firefighters and other employees to return to work and receive their full pension as well as their salary. CLG is not able to make them do so but strongly advises Authorities to do so.
- In the FPS, abatement only applies if the Firefighter concerned is re-employed as a regular Firefighter. In the NFPS it applies if he or she returns as an FRA employee (Grey or Green Book). In the LGPS it applies if the employee returns on Green Book terms. Communities and Local Government

(CLG) wants to change this so that it applies in all cases if the employee returns as an FRA employee. The Treasury want to take it still wider so that it applies if he or she returns to any public sector employment.

- On re-employment, a Firefighter can only be admitted to the NFPS if they are employed in a role that involves or might involve active Firefighting. If a returning Firefighter is re-employed in a role that cannot involve firefighting (such as community fire safety or driver training) then he or she should be admitted to the LGPS and not the NFPS
- Currently abatement applies until the person concerned retires again. Under the CLG proposal it will only apply until he or she reaches age 55 (FPS) or 60 (NFPS).
- Until 6 April 2010 there is no minimum period of “waiting time” between finishing the first employment and starting the second. According to CLG, after 6 April 2010 there will be a minimum period of one month. That is a dubious interpretation of the tax law provisions but it is the employer’s risk and CLG has told them not to run it.
- When the employee concerned returns to work, it is as a new recruit. Some FRAs require them to go through competitive application and induction processes. In practice however, re-employment with abatement is usually used as a method of keeping favoured staff on and no medicals etc are required.

Legal issues

In 2007 the FBU investigated whether the abatement of pensions for returning Firefighters is unlawful age discrimination: any other applicant competing for the same post would not lose part or all of another source of income as a condition of being accepted. The answer we received is that the practice might be discriminatory but it was not discriminatory on the grounds of age: it discriminated against Firefighter pensioners, not all pensioners.

Conversely, re-employing retired Firefighters might discriminate against other applicants for the same job on the grounds of age. Like any other post in the Fire and Rescue Service, if there is a vacancy to be filled it should be filled by open competition. FRAs that have a policy of filling posts by open competition and allowing retired Firefighters to apply run no risk but FRAs that re-employ Firefighters as “new” recruits might be breaching their own equality standards and the law.

Policy

Resolution 83 (Kent) was carried at the 2007 Conference is current FBU policy:

Conference demands that the Executive Council makes every effort to have any rule within:

- ***The Firefighters Pension Scheme***
- ***The New Firefighters Pension Scheme***
- ***The Local Government Pension Scheme***

Which allows abatement of our members pension payments, removed or amended to stop this practice.

Conference instructs the Executive Council that if this cannot be done by negotiation then legal action should be considered.

FBU representatives have raised the whole issue of abatement repeatedly with the CLG at every opportunity in line with this policy and as mentioned above have sought the advice of Thompsons and a QC as to the lawfulness of abatement. CLG and the Treasury, however, have indicated that they intend to apply the principle of abatement still more widely.

Resolution 35 (Northern Ireland) was carried at the 2009 Conference:

Conference notes with concern the increasing trend whereby members are availing of 'Pension Abatement'. It is clear that this practice:

- ***Is detrimental to establishment levels***
- ***Is outwith best practice with regard to recruitment and selection procedures.***
- ***Will undermine our ability to defend current retirement ages as outlined in the pension schemes applicable to Fire Service personnel.***

Therefore, Conference instructs the Executive Council to initiate a report to evaluate the continued merits of current policy, in the form of Resolution 83 from Annual Conference 2007.

This report, including recommendations, to be made to Conference 2010.

Arguments in favour of current policy

- If a Firefighter who is a member of the FPS wants to carry on at work after they have accrued a full 40/60ths pension, they will carry on paying 11% of pensionable pay for little purpose. They will be covered for ill-health benefits and they will maintain a salary link to their final pensionable pay but they will not build up any more pension. The only way they can do so is to retire and join the NFPS.
- If they apply for re-employment in a vacant post the practice of abatement means that the FRA will get the post filled on the cheap if they re-employ a Firefighter with abatement. If they appointed another candidate they would have to pay the full rate for the job and also the Firefighter's pension. If the Firefighter applicant is appointed the FRA has to pay the salary but does not pay the pension. The Firefighter feels cheated out of his or her pension.
- Abatement applies only in the public sector. In the private sector it would be against tax law if a pension is reduced or stopped because the pensioner is re-employed. This disparity of treatment is unfair.
- Abatement gives preferential treatment for returning Firefighters: it is cheaper to employ them than an external candidate. As a result re-employment with an abated pension is a useful means of enabling a Firefighter to gradually reduce their work as they approach retirement. Some FRAs allow returning Firefighters to job-share meaning that the Firefighter can move from full-time to part-time work as they approach retirement.

Arguments against current policy

- When the NFPS was created, it was against the background of pressure from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and Treasury to increase the normal retirement age for all Firefighters. The normal retirement age for the FPS should be raised to 60. The practice of an increasing number of Fire and Rescue Authorities of re-employing Firefighters after retirement age can only strengthen the hand of those who wish to make further attacks on the retirement rights of FPS members.
- Some FRAs allow returning Firefighters to return to non-operational duties on Green Book terms. This practice means that uniformed Grey Book posts are being lost. In the current economic and political climate when our jobs and Service are under attack all across the UK this can only serve to undermine the Union's campaigns in defence of current establishment levels.
- By definition, a returning Firefighter or Control Room employee is beyond retirement age. That means that vacancies are filled by older employees at the expense of potential younger recruits. The establishment as a whole gets older. The opportunities for young people to find a career in the Fire and Rescue Service are undermined by the practice of re-employment.
- This process of re-employment has rarely been subjected to a full Equality Impact Assessment, and could therefore be a policy which has an adverse impact on the under represented groups in the Fire and Rescue Service which would be a further barrier in employing a more diverse workforce.
- Returning Firefighters are sometimes assigned to non-operational duties. That means that non-operational roles that could otherwise be filled by injured Firefighters are less likely to be available.
- The spread of the practice of re-employment assists the agenda of creating a smaller and more 'flexible' and increasingly casualised workforce.
- Some of the issues above could be dealt with more sensibly by facing them head-on. Members could pay reduced contributions after they have accrued maximum pension. Flexible retirement options should be permitted in the FPS and NFPS as they already are in the LGPS, so members can move to part-time work and draw part of their pension.

Conclusion

The current policy has a potentially detrimental impact on establishment levels.

On examination it has been demonstrated that in many instances it is contrary to best practice with regard to recruitment and selection procedures.

There is a concern that government will use this to attack the current ability of some FPS members to be able to retire with an unreduced pension from the age of 55 years.

In addition there are dangers that some opportunities to redeploy injured Firefighters will be lost.

The Executive Council concludes that the spread of the practice of re-employment is

contrary to the long-term interests of the Fire and Rescue Service and increases the threat to the pension rights of the majority of FBU members. Therefore, where possible, FBU officials should oppose such policies. The Executive Council does not encourage members to seek re-employment within the service after retirement.

The Executive Council re-affirms its decision that any re-employment constitutes a break in FBU membership and that therefore any official who retires from the service shall have terminated their term of office as an official even if they are subsequently re-employed within the fire and rescue service.

Officials of the Union should ensure that proposals to utilise re-employment within FRs are scrutinised in regard to the impact on Grey Book jobs and the potential undermining of fair and non-discriminatory recruitment practice. This should include the demand that all such proposals are subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment.

The Executive Council recognises that the abatement of public sector pensions is a matter determined by Central Government (with some discretion on the part of employers) and that such pressures are likely to increase as public sector pensions come under greater scrutiny and attack. Therefore the FBU will not pursue the ending of current rules on abatement. Our priority in such debates will be to protect the pension rights of the vast majority of our members.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STATEMENT TO CONFERENCE AS AMENDED BY BLACK & ETHNIC MINORITY MEMBERS REORGANISATION OF THE UNION'S STRUCTURES

Over the past six years the central debate within the Fire and Rescue Service and the FBU has been about 'modernisation' and its impact on our Service. The experience of Firefighters has been that the real agenda has been one of cuts, job losses and fragmentation.

Key challenges which have emerged over this period include:

- An attack on the number of wholetime uniformed Firefighter jobs;
- A trend towards removing uniformed posts in order to replace them with non-uniformed posts;
- Increased pressure on officials at many levels but especially on brigade level officials due to the increase in local bargaining arising from the 2003 settlement.

Each of these challenges, in turn create further test for the Union in terms of the demands for education, resources, finances, research, publications and other communications. The Union needs to ensure that the structures of our organisation are adequate to provide sufficient support to officials and service to members.

The Union's Re-organisation Committee has continued to review these areas since 2005 and has initiated a number of policies and Rule Changes as part of this process. In December 2009, the Executive Council instructed the Committee to re-examine all areas of organisation in the light of changed circumstances.

This review will assess all current structures against the following criteria:

- Improving our service to members
- Improving support to officials
- Ensuring cost effectiveness

Areas to be reviewed include:

- Branch level structures
- Brigade level structures
- Regional Structures
- Sectional structures
- Head Office and central functions
- Executive Council and Committee structure
- Annual Conference

Although a thorough review of all these areas will be necessary and should not be pre-judged there are clearly issues which will need to be addressed as a part of this discussion.

- **Branch level structures:** The workplace branch is a key aspect of the organisation of the Fire Brigades Union. The review should examine the function of the Branch under current management regimes and the support and training which Branch Officials need.
- **Brigade level structures:** The increase in local bargaining since 2003 has significantly changed the role of Brigade Officials. At the same time we have experienced a huge expansion of Human Resources departments within Fire and Rescue Services. We have much anecdotal evidence that the pressures created by this regime have increased workload in relation to bargaining, discipline and various other demands created by management. The review will need to consider whether Brigade Committees need additional support. It will also need to consider whether different types of Brigade need differing levels of support/resources.
- **Regional Structures:** The last review of organisation concluded that all Regions should be treated in the same manner and that structures should be the same in all Regions. Since then we have experienced much change within the Fire and Rescue Service as well as other political change such as devolution. Three FBU Regions now deal with devolved administrations in terms of Fire and Rescue policy. Two Regions are single Brigade Regions, a number of Regions are very considerable in terms of geography. The review will need to consider whether 'one-size-fits-all' remains valid. The review will need to consider issues such as the support provided centrally to regions and the number and role of officials.

- **Sectional structures:** All of our Sections have been through various phases of development and it is appropriate to include the participation of all the relevant Sections and look again to examine whether they provide the best mechanism to support members and to develop advice and policy for the Union as a whole. The review will need to consider issues such as the support provided centrally to Sections and the number and role of officials.
- **Head Office and central functions:** The demands on the Union centrally have significantly changed in recent years as a result of significant changes within our Service. This has produced, for example, an increased demand for specialist FBU-based training and education. The scale of change at a national level and the absence of central policy structures within the Service have increased the need for FBU research documents on a range of issues. The huge changes in communications have significantly increased the speed with which members can be kept informed of developments but have also significantly increased demands on staff resources and time. Likewise, the demands placed on Head Office by an expanded IT role will need to be considered and addressed.
- **Executive Council and Committee structure:** the review will consider whether the current structure of the Executive Council provides the best representation for members. It will also consider whether the current system of EC Sub-Committees and other National Committees provide the best mechanisms for addressing issues facing the Union. This will include consideration of the size, frequency and duration of meetings and the possible use of alternatives such as video conferencing.
- **Annual Conference:** The Union's Conference is the most important event in the Fire Service year. It is where delegates set the agenda for the coming year and where the Executive Council and National Officials are held to account. It is important that this key role be reviewed to ensure that it remains effective. For example, in recent years, there have been numerous occasions where delegates have been absent or have had to leave Conference as a result of reduced trade union leave. The TUC has recently consulted on alternating between a full Congress and a smaller London-based Congress. Many other Unions have moved to Conferences every two years. The review of Conference should consider:
 - Frequency
 - Delegation size
 - Organisational matters such as the number of resolutions.

Every area of the Union's activity and structure will need to be reviewed as part of this process. It is likely that challenging and testing questions will emerge from this. But the Union has evolved over the past 90 years to take account of changing circumstances and that needs to continue to address the changes of the 21st Century.

Conference agrees that a full report on all these matters will be produced for Annual Conference 2011.

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Resolution 1 – PAY FORMULA

It is apparent that the pay and conditions of public sector workers shall be attacked following the general election of 2010 regardless of the political party in power. This is as a direct result of the reckless greed of deregulated financial capitalism in pursuing and maximising short term profit, incentivised by unwarranted bonuses that has virtually bankrupted our economy and led to the unprecedented multi billion pound bail out by the Government, funded with public money.

Therefore Conference instructs the Executive Council to negotiate the introduction of an agreed annual pay formula that shall ensure firefighters pay shall rise in line with percentage increases in the pay of an appropriate comparator group of skilled workers/professionals. This agreed formula to be provided without detriment to existing conditions of service and not be subject to any public sector pay restraint measures introduced as a result of the financial crisis. Progress on this matter is to be reported to FBU members as soon as is practicably possible.

STRATHCLYDE

Resolution 4 – PAY

Conference notes the decision made by Conference in 2009 in respect of Resolution 5 on Pay (as moved by Shropshire, amended by Strathclyde).

Conference re-affirms its decision that the “A” pay scale should be removed and personnel on the “A” pay scale should be redesignated to the “B” pay scale.

Conference notes the lack of progress on this matter and insists the Executive Council seeks to progress this as a matter of urgency and as a minimum, a report to Annual Conference 2011 is required.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Resolution 5 – EQUAL PAY – ROLE REDUCTION

Conference calls upon the Executive Council to investigate the imbalance and downgrading of Emergency Fire Control managerial posts resulting from the substantive move from rank to role.

It is apparent that the role given to control managers in these areas do not reflect the correct level of responsibilities and professionalism shown by the realities of the job done.

As Emergency Fire Controls are staffed by a majority of women, we call on the Executive Council to conduct an Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value study, using an appropriate expert and model into the cross roles from different parts of the Fire Service, with a view of putting Emergency Fire Control managers onto higher rates of pay and into the correct roles.

A report of this investigation to be produced as soon as possible or by Annual Conference 2011.

CONTROL STAFF NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Resolution 6 – CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

This Conference demands that the Executive Council commences negotiations with the National Employers to ensure that Continual Professional Development (CPD) payments form an integral part of core pay.

NORTHERN IRELAND AS AMENDED BY STRATHCLYDE

Resolution 7 – CPD PAYMENTS

Conference is appalled by any fire and rescue authority who considers removing CPD payments from FBU members for contemplating or undertaking industrial action and views this as being outwith the national CPD procedures agreed within the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to raise the matter as one of the utmost importance at the next NJC meeting with a view to reaching agreement within the Council, that the nationally agreed CPD procedures do not provide for the removal of CPD for the contemplation or undertaking of industrial action alone, and such actions by local employers are in breach of the procedures.

MERSEYSIDE

Resolution 8 – LESS FAVOURABLE TREATMENT

This Conference demands that the Executive Council enter into talks at the NJC with a view to obtaining agreement for a joint secretaries circular to be released that instructs all Fire & Rescue Services of the requirement to treat RDS firefighters no less favourably than firefighters who work full time duty systems and that this statement highlight that this is a legal requirement following our success at the employment tribunal in the Matthews Case.

**NATIONAL RETAINED COMMITTEE
NORTH WALES**

Resolution 12 – MATERNITY PAY BUSINESS CASE

This Conference is appalled that many Fire & Rescue Services (FRSs) are still only paying the minimum amount of money when it comes to maternity pay. We applaud those FRSs who have adopted the FBU's "Best Practice Maternity Document" and have progressed the issue of maternity pay for our women members.

In order to assist Brigade Officials with negotiations on maternity pay, we call upon the Executive Council to develop and produce a standard business case template.

This template is to be completed and sent out to all Brigade Officials and Regional Women Reps within 3 months of Annual Conference 2010.

STAFFORDSHIRE

Resolution 13 – DISABILITY LEAVE

Conference instructs the Executive Council to raise the issue of 'Disability Leave' at the NJC as a matter for discussion, with the aim of having such leave incorporated into the 'Grey Book'.

The implementation of Disability Leave as defined within the TUC publication, Sickness Absence and Disability Discrimination into the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Sixth Edition 2004 – Revised 2009), would require all UK FRSs to ensure that where an FBU member is registered disabled, that any sickness directly attributable to that disability should be disregarded in the calculation of sickness absence monitoring.

TYNE & WEAR

Resolution 15 – SPECIALIST SKILLS

This Conference instructs the Executive Council, with the FBU Workforce Development Group, to survey every brigade to investigate what specialist skills or roles, as identified by local IRMPs/RRPs, are being carried out and if these roles are agreed locally as being inside or outside of NJC agreed rolemaps and if they attract an Additional Responsibility Allowance and if so the value of that allowance.

This information should be circulated to brigade officials in the form of guidance to assist in local consultation and negotiation of specialist skills or roles.

This guidance is to be produced and sent to brigade officials by Conference 2011.

SUFFOLK AS AMENDED BY STRATHCLYDE

Resolution 20 – DISMISSAL AND RE-ENGAGEMENT

This Conference condemns the use of the dismissal and re-engagement process in FRSs in the UK in order to implement contractual change on FBU members.

Conference demands that this issue is raised at the National Joint Council, with a view to seeking a national agreement that no UK FRS will implement a dismissal and re-engagement process in order to implement contractual change.

Should there be no agreement reached at the National Joint Council, then any future dismissal and re-engagement procedures implemented by any UK FRS to make contractual changes to any FBU member, is met with the strongest opposition possible, including an immediate recall of conference with a view to mounting a national campaign.

HUMBERSIDE AS AMENDED BY HUMBERSIDE

Resolution 21 – INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Conference condemns the refusal of certain FRSs to abide by the nationally agreed 'Joint Protocol for Good Industrial Relations in the Fire & Rescue Service'. FBU officials are continually having their requests for external assistance from the NJC Joint Secretaries or other organisations refused by management teams who prefer to impose policies without sufficient consultation or negotiation.

Conference therefore demands that the FBU national negotiators raise this issue at the earliest opportunity at the National Joint Council with a view to amending the 'Joint Protocol for Good Industrial Relations in the Fire & Rescue Service' to ensure Fire & Rescue Service managers adhere to the amended protocol and cannot refuse a reasonable request for external assistance.

HUMBERSIDE

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

Resolution 22 – CHANGE IN LAW FOR FRS EMPLOYEES AND BNP MEMBERSHIP

This FBU Annual Conference acknowledges that it is incompatible for an employee of any Fire and Rescue Service to also be a member of a fascist extremist organisation such as Combat 18 and the British National Party.

It is forbidden by legislation for an employee of the Police Service or Prison Service to be a member of the BNP, and this conference believes it is time for a change in the law to bring Fire and Rescue Services into line with those services.

The fact that Fire and Rescue Services are public institutions funded and accountable to the communities that we serve, means that we should now campaign for a change in UK Fire Service laws to reflect that those who are employed by Fire and Rescue Services cannot also be members of any fascist, racist organisation or group.

This Conference demands that the FBU continue to raise this issue with UK and devolved Governments, and campaigns for legislative change to bring the Fire Services in line with Police and Prison services.

BLACK & ETHNIC MINORITY MEMBERS AS AMENDED BY STRATHCLYDE

Resolution 25 – WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE

This Conference calls upon the Executive Council to oppose any amendments to the Working Time Directive which would threaten the Retained Duty System. This opposition should be in the form of a National Campaign which should include an explanation of the dire consequences for the United Kingdom (UK) Fire Service should detrimental amendments to the Working Time Directive be tabled.

NATIONAL RETAINED COMMITTEE

Resolution 26 – WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE

This Conference notes with concern the introduction of flexible working methods such as Central Resource Pools within Brigade's Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs), which have resulted in significant reductions in Brigade establishments. These IRMP changes frequently create increased prospects for employees to work pre arranged overtime shifts or carry out wholetime/retained duties, with the result that many employers regard this as an opportunity to work to encourage members of their workforce to individually resign their rights under the working time directive to derive even more flexibility and savings.

It is clear that as a result of the combination of current, and forecast, poor economic climate and its associated likelihood of low percentage pay rises, the lack of a nationally accepted standard of fire cover and the current mis-use by some brigades of the IRMP process to implement cuts agendas, that this situation will become increasingly common within the British Fire Service as mounting numbers of the FBU's members will be offered growing incentives to spend increasingly more time at work than ever before.

This Conference therefore calls upon the Executive Council to immediately and urgently implement the following action:

- To redouble its efforts to campaign to highlight the social and health and safety hazards of being at work for long periods of time, as agreed at Conference previously.
- To implement a working group to investigate the extent of, and identify the areas where members are, or are likely in the future to be, exercising their right as individuals to voluntarily withdraw from the Working Time Directive to report back to the Executive Council within 6 months of commencement.
- That the findings of the working group be made available to Brigade Committees as soon as possible after this to assist them in identifying "at risk" groups and focussing their efforts regarding this issue.
- That campaign materials be made expeditiously available to Brigade Committees on the issues surrounding the hazards and impact of individuals voluntarily withdrawing from the Working Time Directive for circulation to these identified groups (this material to include a form which enables the member to give the Employer notice that they intend to re enact their rights under the Working Time Directive).

WEST YORKSHIRE

Resolution 28 – DELIBERATE REMOVAL OF BAECO FROM FIRST LINE APPLIANCES

Conference notes with great concern the continued deliberate removal of the safety critical role of BAECO from first line appliances by some FRSs. This practice appears to be on the increase by FRSs with various reasons being given for doing so, including removing firefighters from fire appliances to ride vans and deliver CFS activities when they are on duty.

FBU members are facing greater risks when dealing with fires and this risk is increased when rapid deployment procedures are routinely used as a means monitoring committed BA teams and is contrary to the guidance given in TB 1/97.

Conference therefore calls upon the FBU to immediately raise this issue at a national level to bring about the necessary guidance being reiterated to FRSs in order for them to cease this dangerous and unnecessary practice.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

Resolution 30 – FIRE SERVICE FUNDING

Since the 'Government Grant Settlement' formula was reviewed in 2004, the accumulative increase to the funding has varied considerably between Fire Authorities.

The lowest accumulative increase has been 12.2% and the highest increase has been 36.5% over the same period.

Conference believes that the different levels of funding has resulted in some Fire Authorities implementing greater operational cuts than others, which in turn, has resulted in inconsistencies in the levels of operational capability from one Brigade to another.

Prior to IRMP, all Brigades adhered to the national standards of fire cover which ensured a consistency between Brigades. However, since IRMP, the number of fire appliances mobilised to an incident, the attendance times and the number of firefighters crewing fire appliances, is now a postcode lottery.

Conference calls on the Executive Council to instigate a review of the current funding arrangements, with a view to lobbying the Government for adequate funding to all Fire Authorities throughout the UK, reporting back progress to the 2011 Annual Conference.

LANCASHIRE

Resolution 31 – FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY BUDGETS

Conference notes with interest a number of national reports and ministers parliamentary answers which records significant savings made by fire and rescue authorities over the last number of years. Conference further notes that some of the same fire and rescue authorities then seek to make significant staffing cuts due to so called budgetary constraints in those particular authorities.

Conference therefore demands that the Executive Council compiles a report detailing savings made by individual fire and rescue authorities in the last 5 years, including budget shortfalls declared by the same authorities along with associated staffing and/or service cuts proposed or achieved; such a report to be ready for FBU Annual Conference 2011.

MERSEYSIDE

Resolution 32 – GOVERNMENT REGIONAL CONTROL CENTRES PROJECT

Conference recognises the continued failure of the Government to deliver the FiReControl project.

Conference demands that if, for any reason, the Government withdraw from the national implementation of the FiReControl project in England, the FBU will continue to oppose any attempt by FRAs, LACCs or Government to adopt Regional Control Centres in any other guise or within individual Regions.

The FBU will continue to mount a vigorous campaign against any form of regionalisation of Fire Control Centres.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Resolution 33 – REAFFIRMATION OF RESOLUTION 53 (1997)

Conference reaffirms its policy with regard to Resolution 53 (1997) in that it demands that to assist in the neutrality of United Kingdom Fire and Rescue Services (UKFRSs), that Fire Authorities create and maintain an up to date register of all Freemasons and personnel affiliated to other secret organisations employed within all UKFRS, and that such registers be open for scrutiny by members of the public.

HEREFORD & WORCESTER

Resolution 34 – RECORDING OF TRAINING

This Conference acknowledges that training and the recording of training activities must be rigorously controlled and that all training undertaken must be recorded accurately and audited centrally.

Conference notes with concern that some FRSs allow entirely inadequate ad hoc local arrangements for the delivery and recording of training undertaken by their staff.

We therefore call upon the Executive Council, aided by local officials, to carry out a review of the training delivery standards in each FRS to identify these standards and produce a report with their findings back to Annual Conference 2011.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

Resolution 37 – TRANSFERABILITY

This Annual Conference fully supports the victory of the FBU in obtaining part time worker rights for all Retained Duty System (RDS) firefighters.

One of the significant advantages of these rights is that it gives RDS firefighters the right to apply for wholetime posts without being treated less favourably than their wholetime counterparts.

However, this Conference condemns any Fire Authority who misuses this legislation by ring fencing wholetime posts exclusively for RDS transferees and in doing so reinforcing inequality between duty systems. This practice further undermines the equality agenda which was set in order to ensure that applicants into the Fire and Rescue Service were taken from the widest possible pool of people.

Therefore, we call upon the Executive Council to immediately carry out a review of Fire and Rescue Services regarding this issue with a view to developing clear policy and guidelines for brigade officials to follow.

DORSET

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

Resolution 38 – FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE APPAREL

This Conference remains committed to ensuring that Women's Health, Safety and Welfare is never compromised at work, particularly in relation to work-wear and specifically PPE.

One of the ongoing concerns the NWC have however, is that women wearing men's kit at work are exposed to a higher level of risk than those with properly fitting, gender specific personal protective equipment. This safety issue aside, the additional discomfort and restriction that ill fitting kit brings to any employee can be debilitating and is itself unacceptable.

Although individually tailored kit would be the ultimate precaution and comfort, the Integrated Clothing Project (ICP) has researched, advised and provided a method for Fire and Rescue Authorities to ensure that many concerns are addressed in relation to PPE. Yet we are fully aware that take-up of the project has been piecemeal to date.

In order to properly map the gap in good, gender specific provision of kit and properly address the deficiencies, this Conference demands that the Executive Council:

- Carry out a national audit to establish a picture of where Women's Health, Safety and Welfare is still being compromised.
- Raise these concerns as a matter of urgency at all relevant national forums, to achieve take-up of the ICP nationally as a minimum provision.
- Provide information and support to all officials to ensure that this issue becomes a local priority Health and Safety agenda item.

We call upon the Executive Council to report back progress to the NWC within 12 months of this Conference.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Resolution 39 – MENOPAUSE

This Conference is concerned that there is no real evidence based information on how the menopause can affect women when carrying out their duties in the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS).

We therefore call upon the Executive Council to set up a Sub Committee of the National Health and Safety Committee, to include a member of the NWC, to investigate further and produce a report on the effects that the menopause may have on women working in the FRS.

The findings of this report are to be included in an information leaflet on the menopause which is to be distributed to all Brigade Officials and Women Reps before Annual Conference 2011.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Resolution 40 – CCTV

Conference calls upon the Executive Council to raise the issue with Fire & Rescue Service Employers the use of CCTV monitors in Emergency Fire Control Rooms. Such Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) monitors have already been installed into Lothian and Borders Fire Control.

The monitors have been installed under the guise of providing firefighter safety in terms of violence against crews. They have been opposed locally, however the CSNC believe there are national implications.

These proposals are outside of the national rolemaps, do not assist in firefighter safety and are a dangerous move towards changing the function and role of Emergency Fire Controls to include surveillance.

Conference calls upon the Executive Council, Brigade and local officials to oppose the implementation and use of this type of equipment and do all in their power to prevent its introduction and remove it where it has been installed.

CONTROL STAFF NATIONAL COMMITTEE AS AMENDED BY STRATHCLYDE

Resolution 41 – STRESS SURVEY – FBU OFFICIALS

Conference instructs the Executive Council to instigate a full and thorough survey of all officials and those that have recently retired from the FBU regarding stress.

This survey should be used to highlight those areas where officials perceive themselves to be subject to additional stress associated solely with their trade union activities. The purpose of the survey being that if common areas of concern are identified by officials, then arrangements, policies or procedures can be adopted to minimise or remove the problems identified.

TYNE & WEAR AS AMENDED BY STRATHCLYDE

Resolution 42 – WATER INCIDENTS

Conference notes the increasing number of waterside incidents that FBU members are attending. These incidents include; responding to incidents at lochs, lakes, reservoirs, canals, harbours, estuaries, rivers and flood water.

Conference is concerned at the inconsistencies in safe operating procedures, equipment and training between different Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to instigate a review of current Fire and Rescue Authorities capabilities in relation to responding to waterside incidents. This is with a view to producing guidance containing a national standard that will assist FBU Officials.

LANCASHIRE AS AMENDED BY STRATHCLYDE

Resolution 43 – TOXIN LEVELS IN FIREFIGHTERS

Conference applauds the work already carried out in relation to toxin levels found in firefighters.

Research data and statistics show that firefighters have a higher than industry average for certain diseases and cancers. Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to build on the work already carried out, to further investigate ways to include toxin testing as part of a firefighters' medical examination and ways of reducing toxin levels.

A full report with recommendations will be presented to the 2011 Annual Conference.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Resolution 44 – HEALTH AND SAFETY

Following the rise in firefighter deaths and the "Safer Firefighters" campaign, Conference demands that the Executive Council with the assistance of local officials carry out the following actions:

Ensure that there is a FBU Health and Safety Representative in every branch;

Train its FBU Health and Safety reps to at least TUC Health and Safety Stage 2 level;

Actively promote the role of Health and Safety representatives within the workplace;

Ensure that all representatives have access to resources to enable them to carry out their functions effectively;

Negotiate to ensure that representatives have adequate time off work for training, meetings and to carry out effective investigations, following accidents or near misses;

Publish a Health and Safety "Firefighter magazine" supplement, highlighting fire service successes, campaign areas, accident reviews and dispelling Health and Safety myths.

DORSET AS AMENDED BY STRATHCLYDE

Resolution 45 – INCIDENT GROUND FACILITIES

This Annual Conference notes with concern that there are still no appropriate facilities on the incident ground for firefighters in Lothian & Borders even though the Fire Brigades Union developed and circulated a best practice document on minimum workplace facilities some time ago for information and negotiation at local level.

This policy outlines the standards we must seek to achieve for all members and in particular provide minimum welfare facilities for personnel, including dignified toilet, washing and sanitary provision and disposal facilities at operational incidents and training events.

As a consequence of these issues not being addressed, this Annual Conference calls upon the Executive Council to immediately initiate discussions at National Joint Council level in order to achieve national implementation of requirements as laid out in the FBU policy within the earliest possible timeframe and give a report back to Annual Conference 2011.

LOTHIAN & BORDERS AS AMENDED BY GRAMPIAN

Resolution 46 – PAID TIME OFF FOR HEALTH SCREENING

Conference acknowledges the continued endeavours of the Fire Brigades Union to strive for improvements in both physical and mental health and well being within the Fire and Rescue Services.

With the above in mind, Conference calls upon the Executive Council to enter into negotiations at the National Joint Council with a view to agreeing improvements to the Occupational Health arrangements currently contained within the Grey Book.

These improvements should include the provision of paid time off for employees to attend screening or counselling appointments to ensure that employees who are diagnosed with any illness or medical condition are fully supported during their treatment.

CLEVELAND

Resolution 47 – HEALTH AND FITNESS ASSESSMENTS

Conference demands that the Executive Council enter into negotiations with our national employers to ensure all health and fitness standards that all uniformed employees with an operational commitment are required to attain are appropriate and measured consistently to ensure:

- Fitness standards demanded of operational firefighters are appropriate and realistic and all Fire Service personnel with an operational commitment are required to achieve them;
- Standards are appropriately graded to acknowledge the differing physiology of males and females;
- Standards are appropriately graded to take account of the natural decline in aerobic capacity as a result of ageing;
- A moratorium of a minimum period of 12 months from introduction of fitness testing to being required to achieve the agreed desired standard;
- An agreement to provide one hour each working day as part of the work routine devoted to physical fitness training for wholetime personnel with an operational commitment on any duty system worked and appropriate arrangements for personnel working in the RDS;
- An agreement to provide and maintain appropriate fitness equipment at Fire Service work places with appropriate access arrangements for RDS personnel;
- Any agreed interim fitness standard that a failure to achieve would necessitate removal from operational duty is appropriate and realistic and takes account of age and sex differences;
- Outcomes are as reliable and as accurate as possible and that aerobic testing using gas analysis is provided. This to ensure the reliability and accuracy of aerobic capacity tests that may indicate a failure to achieve the desired interim or desired final standard;
- An agreed range of appropriate methods of creating the necessary physical exertion for fitness testing and measuring to be carried out be incorporated in the policy.

STRATHCLYDE AS AMENDED BY WEST YORKSHIRE

Resolution 50 – INCIDENT RESPONSE UNITS

Conference instructs the Executive Council to conduct a survey of the training that has been provided in each Fire & Rescue Authority for mass decontamination at CBRN incidents. A report should be produced, highlighting any best practices and also any areas of serious concern over training and procedures. This report to be circulated to Brigade Officials within six months after the close of Conference 2010.

NORTHUMBERLAND

TRADE UNION, LABOUR MOVEMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Resolution 51 – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

This Annual Conference views with profound concern the continuing high incidence of domestic violence, which accounts for one fifth of all violent crime reported in the UK and that domestic violence has a higher rate of repeat victimisation than any other type of crime.

It is a gross failing in a modern society which blights the lives of tens of thousands of women and their children and tears apart both families and social fabric.

This Conference recognises that Trade Unions have a role to play in combating this violence, of which women are overwhelmingly the victims. Through information and awareness campaigns, practical support and provisions under rule for victims and perpetrators and support in the workplace such as; adjusting hours of work, ensuring that counselling is available and where necessary, signposting members to help agencies, to name but a few.

It calls upon the Executive Council to:

- Urge the UK Governments to work with the TUC and affiliates to ensure awareness, reduction and ultimately elimination of domestic violence.
- Campaign for employers to provide the necessary support to employees suffering from domestic violence.
- Urge employers to provide comprehensive domestic violence policies and guidelines within their respective FRS.

Finally, this Annual Conference implores the Executive Council to consult with the TUC General Council regarding ways in which the Domestic Violence Bill might be made more effective in practice by:

- Demanding that local authorities develop long-term and stable funding streams for local provision of domestic violence services for women.
- Developing a challenging attitude campaign across the UK in order to reduce the level of tolerance of violence against women.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Resolution 53 – CENSUS – EXCLUSION OF THE QUESTION OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION 2011

Gay and Lesbian members of the FBU note with concern the Office of National Statistics entrenched stance of refusing to include any question compulsory or non-compulsory relating to sexual orientation in the 2011 Census.

Gay and Lesbian members believe the Census should include the question relating to sexual orientation giving members of our community the opportunity to be counted. Our members also acknowledge that the requirements from the Census to answer this question must be on a voluntary basis with the option not to state.

Traditionally, sexual orientation has been seen as a private matter, but without clearer evidence on where lesbian, gay and bisexual people live, where they work, what their experiences and needs of public services are, we are missing a vital piece of the jigsaw. Evidence is the key to making services reflect everyone's experiences and meet their needs. However, if sexual orientation remains a private issue the needs of LGB people will remain marginalised and ignored.

Conference calls for the Executive Council and General Secretary to immediately commence a campaign to encourage all officials and members to write to the Government Equality Minister and to the Office of National Statistics to demand that the 2011 Census includes the question of sexual orientation affording LGB people the right to be recognised.

LESBIAN, GAY, BI-SEXUAL AND TRANS MEMBERS

Resolution 54 – POLITICAL FUND AWARENESS

In order to encourage an increase in the membership of the Political Fund this Conference instructs the Executive Council to provide members with a greater awareness of the benefits and uses of this fund.

HAMPSHIRE

Resolution 55 – PARAMEDIC STAFFING DEFICIENCIES

This Conference views with great concern the number of incidents attended by both our members and members of the ambulance service, where the ambulance crew consists of various staffing combinations which do not include fully trained paramedics. Conference believes this places both firefighters and non paramedic qualified ambulance personnel as well as members of the public, in an unacceptable position.

With this in mind Conference agrees to seek the assistance of other trade unions and organisations in order to campaign for the compulsory inclusion of at least one fully trained paramedic per ambulance vehicle crew.

TYNE & WEAR

Resolution 56 – ANTI TRADE UNION LEGISLATION

Conference is deeply concerned at recent legal cases brought against trade unions who were pursuing, or contemplating pursuing, industrial action, in particular the growing trend of employers using the unfairly stringent anti trade union legislation in relation to the trade unions obligations regarding membership details and the effect that even minor discrepancies have on the legality on the successful outcome of industrial ballots.

Conference opposes such practices in the strongest terms possible and as such calls on the Executive Council to lobby the TUC, the FBU Parliamentary Group and all other relevant bodies with a view to redressing this notoriously unfair practice by any and all means possible.

MERSEYSIDE

Resolution 57 – INTERNATIONAL LGBT CAMPAIGNING

The Fire Brigades Union has a proud tradition of campaigning on international issues, the LGBT Section have emulated this by regularly taking international issues to the TUC LGBT Conference, whilst campaigning and raising awareness of such issues with sectional members.

We recognise there remains over 70 countries with legislation in place that criminalises homosexuality and a small percentage having the death penalty, we also acknowledge that many countries have made positive steps forward with regards issues covering homosexuality and LGBT people, this is welcomed.

Whilst there is so much positivity in the area of sexual orientation it is disappointing that in 2009 we did witness a small number of countries introducing or strengthening anti-LGBT legislation.

Of particular note is Uganda, with the introduction of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill going through their political system, such legislation will be in violation of human rights and would detrimentally affect and put in place major barriers of the effective work of HIV/Aids prevention efforts.

As a member of the Commonwealth, we call on the Executive Council to work with the TUC and affiliates to register our disappointment in the strongest possible terms and launch a campaign that includes gaining support of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to apply whatever political pressure possible to ensure that Uganda complies with its international human rights obligations.

This to be done within 6 months of Conference, with a report on progress to be provided to Conference 2011.

LESBIAN, GAY, BI-SEXUAL AND TRANS MEMBERS

Resolution 58 – SUPPORT FOR PALESTINE

Conference notes the FBU's recent involvement in supporting the Palestinian people. In particular, Conference applauds the initiative that enabled eight Nablus firefighters to visit Scotland and North West England to undertake Fire Service based training, and the TUC resolution that led to the boycott of Israeli goods produced in the occupied territories.

Following several visits to the West Bank by FBU members over recent years, it is recognised that we now have good contacts with the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) and firefighters from the Nablus Fire Department, and it is important that these links are maintained.

To this end, the Executive Council should continue to promote through the International Committee:

- Solidarity visits to the region by members with a view to encouraging new active supporters to the Palestinian cause.
- Collaboration with other organisations such as the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and the International Solidarity Movement (ISM).
- Initiatives that aim to provide PPE and firefighting equipment to the West Bank and Gaza.
- Training initiatives for Palestinian firefighters.

LANCASHIRE

Resolution 60 – BECAUSE I AM A GIRL

This Conference supports Plan's "Because I am a Girl" campaign, believing that the appalling discrimination faced by many girls must be urgently addressed.

Plan, a child centered community development organisation working across Africa, Asia and Latin America, has launched a campaign to ensure the rights of girls are realised and respected.

This Conference is concerned that in 2009, girls are still less likely to go to school than boys and two thirds of the children of primary school age out of school are girls. Girls are more likely to be subjected to violence, have less access to health care and less basic nutrition than their brothers.

This Conference therefore resolves to support Plan's campaign by calling on the Executive Council to:

1. Lobby the UK government to support all initiatives that improve the rights and opportunities of girls; in particular by supporting programmes that enable girls to access education;
2. Promote the "Because I am a Girl" campaign;
3. Raise awareness of the double discrimination faced by girls because of their age and because of their gender.

STAFFORDSHIRE

Resolution 61 – GLOBAL ALLIANCE

This Conference welcomes the news that the FBU has joined with Unions representing firefighters in 12 countries to form the International Firefighters Unions Alliance (IFUA).

Conference further welcomes that our General Secretary has been elected onto the steering committee which will oversee the development of the Alliance.

Conference agrees with the following interim constitution:

- Independent trade unionism and full trade union rights for the firefighting profession;
- The best levels of remuneration, working conditions and retirement pension provision;
- The highest standards of firefighting professionalism in order to achieve the highest level of community safety;
- The highest standards of safety for firefighters;
- Would seek to ensure that the firefighting profession and consequently firefighter unions is representative of the communities that they serve, vigorously opposing discrimination on grounds of religion, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, disability, age or trade union activity.

Having the ability to learn from each other's experiences and particularly from each other's successes is of great importance, as is an international trade union voice for the firefighting profession. The alliance should also be in a position to promote and help develop independent trade unionism for firefighters in those countries where there are significant barriers to its development, particularly in the developing world.

This Conference therefore supports the view that the aims and ethos of the Global Alliance must be included in all FBU political courses, both nationally and locally.

SUFFOLK

EDUCATION

Resolution 63 – THE PEOPLE'S CHARTER

This Conference endorses the previous position that the FBU has taken nationally regarding The People's Charter.

With this in mind we feel that encouraging officials and members to sign the Charter is a start but not enough. We demand that the Executive Council establish a training package to deliver to members/officials at local, regional and national level, this could be delivered through the national education programme. We believe this will not only promote The People's Charter but also assist in giving members and officials the necessary skills to forward the FBU's political agenda.

Many of us know there is a lack of real political choice on offer but by using The People's Charter we may have a vehicle to start the drive for change this will not only help the FBU and its members but will also help to improve the overall work and life chances for working people throughout the country.

SUFFOLK AS AMENDED BY DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

LEGAL

Resolution 64 – SUPPORT FOR FBU REPRESENTATIVES

This FBU Annual Conference recognises that there has been an increase in the number of FBU Representatives who have been targeted for disciplinary action or investigation by management, for carrying out what is their normal trade union duties and activities.

To demonstrate to management that FBU Representatives have the full support of their trade union nationally and from their National Officials – if any representative of the FBU is under attack, management must be informed that, we consider this as a direct attack against the union itself and this will be met with the full force and resource of the union.

This demonstration of support should take the form of a National Officer being appointed with the responsibility for organising:

- Support for the FBU representative that is going through the discipline procedure in their respective Brigade, including welfare provisions.
- Direct liaisons and guidance to the FBU legal services providers to vigorously defend the FBU Representative against the Brigade discipline process.
- Where appropriate a national statement of support issued condemning these type of tactics from Fire and Rescue Service Managers.

These actions to be taken as soon as the FBU become aware of a Representative being disciplined.

BLACK & ETHNIC MINORITY MEMBERS AS AMENDED BY CLEVELAND

INTERNAL

Resolution 69 – MEMBERSHIP SECRETARIES DUTIES

This Conference notes with concern the decline in FBU membership and believe that this is mainly due to the reduction in uniformed posts by the majority of UK Fire & Rescue Services.

Conference therefore calls for the Executive Council to carry out a review of the responsibilities and duties carried out by Brigade Membership Secretaries throughout the union.

Following this review, guidance issued to Membership Secretaries, including where necessary the appropriate rule changes brought, to ensure maximising FBU membership within UK Fire & Rescue Services, by promoting the organising and recruitment of FBU members. Should the review identify an increase in workload for the position of Brigade Membership Secretary, then the annual financial recompense should also be reviewed to more align it with that of the other FBU Brigade Officials.

HUMBERSIDE

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS CARRIED ...

Emergency Resolution No. 1

DEFEND COMMUNITY SAFETY, PUBLIC SERVICES AND JOBS

Conference notes the outcome of the recent General Election and the formation of the Tory/Liberal Democrat coalition Government.

Conference notes with concern that one of the central areas of policy agreement between the Government parties is to rapidly reduce the public sector deficit, primarily through drastic reductions in public expenditure. This will affect working people throughout the UK directly and through the subsequent impact on funding allocations for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Such an approach is likely to exacerbate the cuts already faced in the Fire and Rescue Service and other public services. In the Fire and Rescue Service this will lead to further reductions in emergency cover, station closures and job losses. In turn these will lead to increased risks to the safety of communities, businesses and firefighters. Such an approach is completely unacceptable to the Fire Brigades Union.

Conference notes that the current economic difficulties facing the UK and other economies arose from a crisis sparked by a de-regulated banking system. Public services and those who work within them have played no role in causing current economic difficulties. Conference therefore rejects the argument that public service workers should pay the price for the bail-out of the banks through job losses, pay cuts and attacks on pension rights. Conference rejects the argument that working people in general should pay the price for the crisis and for the bail-out of the banks through poorer services and increased taxation.

Conference pledges to oppose all cuts in the Fire and Rescue Service, to oppose attempts to freeze pay and to oppose further attacks on firefighters' pension rights, if necessary by national strike action. Conference agrees to coordinate our campaigning on these issues with other trade unions as closely as possible including the initiation of coordinated industrial action if appropriate.

Conference notes that these attacks will affect millions of working people in the UK and pledges to support campaigns through the TUC, STUC, Wales TUC, ICTU and the Trade Union Coordinating Group to oppose the cuts agenda and to support all those campaigning to defend jobs and public services. To be successful, such a campaign will need to unite trade unionists, local communities and progressive political forces to present an alternative agenda which puts people before the needs of profit.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Emergency Resolution No. 3

HAITI

Conference welcomes the TUC Black Workers Conference decision in April 2010 to send the FBU motion entitled “Haiti” to Congress 2010. The motion calls for the TUC and its affiliates to take action in response to the devastating earthquake which struck the Haitian capital Port Au Prince on the 12th January 2010.

The FBU have already supported the humanitarian, political and financial responses. Many of our members have been involved personally through their life saving Fire & Rescue Service roles, but much more needs to be done in order to reconstruct and develop Haitian society, infrastructure and economy.

Conference therefore requests:

- Local, regional and national support for the TUC Congress Motion – “Haiti”.
- The FBU support and develop links with our sister trade unions in Haiti.
- We seek ongoing dialogue between Haitian Trade Unions and the FBU International Committee.
- Brigade Committees establish relationships with their Fire and Rescue Services in order to provide training, equipment and financial aid for Haiti.
- Full FBU support for the B&EMM National Committee to co-ordinate ongoing trade union initiatives with our Haitian comrades as agreed by the Executive Council.

BLACK & ETHNIC MINORITY MEMBERS

Emergency Resolution No. 4

RESPIRATORS RPE

Imminent publication of CFRA guidance for RPE, has highlighted a gap in firefighter safety. Conference believes that the current policy held with regards to RPE has saved many lives of our members over the years.

However with further advances in technology, this brigade believes that the use of respirators, in certain circumstances and not in an oxygen deficient atmosphere where active monitoring is in use, will enhance fire-fighter safety. Therefore conference instructs the executive Council to develop best practice for the controlled use of RPE respirators into an FBU policy.

LONDON

MOTIONS REMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ...

Resolution 23 – NATIONAL PROMOTION STANDARDS

This Conference demands that the Executive Council begin negotiations with the Employers to agree National Standards for promotion within the UK Fire and Rescue Service. This should include testing of operational competence.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Resolution 35 – ADC PROCESS

Conference notes with concern the continued failings of the ITOP and ADC process, as it does not address the issue of firefighting capabilities.

Conference demands that the Executive Council carries out further research into ITOPs and ADCs, with a view to negotiating a national process of promotion that includes the recognition that firefighting capabilities must be included in the ITOP/ADC process.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Resolution 36 – RECRUIT TRAINING

Conference condemns the current trend in some Fire Authorities toward initial training courses and believes this has a detrimental effect on the Health and Safety of our members.

Conference demands that recruit courses should be for a minimum of 3 months for all firefighters, and should cover all aspects of firefighting and Health and Safety.

HEREFORD & WORCESTER

MOTIONS DEFEATED ...

Resolution 52	– LABOUR PARTY RE-AFFILIATION	NORTHUMBERLAND
Resolution 59	– ACTION FOR PALESTINE	DEVON & SOMERSET
Resolution 65	– ALL DIFFERENT ALL EQUAL	FIFE
Resolution 70	– INTERNAL UNION DISCIPLINE 1	NORTH WALES
Resolution 71	– INTERNAL UNION DISCIPLINE 2	NORTH WALES

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE RULES OF THE UNION MOVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

<i>RULE 3</i>	OBJECTS OF THE UNION	CARRIED
<i>RULE 20(3)(g)</i>	REGIONAL COMMITTEES	CARRIED
<i>RULE 20(3)(g)(3)</i>	REGIONAL COMMITTEES	CARRIED
<i>RULE 22(iii)</i>	NATIONAL SECTIONAL COMMITTEES	CARRIED
<i>RULE 26(1)(h)</i>	INTERNAL UNION DISCIPLINE	CARRIED
<i>RULE 27</i>	FINANCE	CARRIED
<i>RULE 30</i>	ACCIDENT INJURY AND DEATH BENEFIT FUND	CARRIED
<i>RULE 6(3)(iii)</i>	CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION	CARRIED AS A CONSEQUENTIAL
<i>RULE 8(1)</i>	CONSTITUTION AND POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL	CARRIED AS A CONSEQUENTIAL
<i>RULE 19(3)(g)</i>	NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS	CARRIED AS A CONSEQUENTIAL
<i>RULE 20(2)(b)</i>	REGIONAL COMMITTEES	CARRIED AS A CONSEQUENTIAL
<i>RULE 21(2)(d)</i>	BRIGADE COMMITTEES	CARRIED AS A CONSEQUENTIAL
<i>RULE 26A(2)(e)</i>	MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE	CARRIED AS A CONSEQUENTIAL

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE STANDING ORDERS OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Standing Order 2 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CARRIED

Standing Order 2

The Standing Orders Committee as established under Rule 7 will issue a preliminary notice to all Branches at least 20 weeks before the Conference is due to be held; such preliminary notice to inform Branches of closing date for the receipts of resolutions, amendments, amendments to rules and delegates' names.

Standing Order 8 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL LOST

Standing Order 16 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CARRIED

Standing Order 16

On the day (or days) on which Annual Conference is held, delegates shall assemble at 09.30hrs prompt, adjourn at 12.45hrs, re-assemble at 14.00hrs and adjourn at 17.15hrs. Comfort breaks will be 11.00hrs to 11.15hrs and 15.30hrs to 15.45hrs.

Standing Order 22 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CARRIED

Standing Order 22

The mover of the resolution shall be allowed seven minutes, the seconder five minutes and any or each subsequent speaker, three minutes. The mover of an amendment shall be allowed five minutes and the seconder three minutes. No person shall speak more than once on a question, except the mover of the original resolution, who alone shall have the right to reply. Should the proposed mover of a composite resolution through no fault of his/her own, be absent from the Conference hall when he/she is called, any other delegate representing a Brigade/National Sectional Committee involved in the composite shall be allowed to move the resolution.

Standing Order 28 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CARRIED

Standing Order 28

In the case of Special Conferences, the above Orders shall be adhered to as closely as possible. The Standing Orders Committee shall be in session from the outset of any Special Conference in order to allow resolutions to be submitted from Brigade/National Sectional Committees. Neither the Executive Council by decision nor the President by his/her ruling shall have the power to deviate from this Standing Order at any Special Conference.

Final Appeals Committee

REGION/SECTION	NAME
Region 1	Gavin Barrie
Region 2	Brian Stanfield
Region 3	Pete Wilcox
Region 4	Graham Wilkinson
Region 5	Neil Thompson
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
NG&L	Pat Carberry
NRC	Harry Cotter
B&EMM	
ONC	Pete Moss
CSNC	Sue Offland

Firefighter Representatives

REGION/SECTION	NAME
Region 1	John Duffy
Region 2	Dermot Rooney
Region 3	Paul Reames
Region 4	Ian Watkins
Region 5	Steve Harman
Region 6	Dave Limer
Region 7	Pete Goulden
Region 8	Chris Burns
Region 9	Kevin Napier
Region 10	Paul Embery
Region 11	Danielle Armstrong
Region 12	Allison Burrows
Region 13	Val Hampshire
NWC	Sam Rye
NG&L	Pat Carberry
NRC	Harry Cotter
B&EMM	
ONC	Dave Beverley
CSNC	Sharon Thorndyke

Election of Standing Orders Committee

Re-elected

Brother Steve Shelton (Greater Manchester) for 4 Annual Conferences



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