

# **PAY PROTECTION: ACAS MEETS NEXT WEEK**



## **Brigades urged not to reach local agreement on this issue**

A meeting of ACAS has been set for May 3 over the issue of pay protection.

The meeting follows a request from FBU General Secretary Andy Gilchrist to ACAS formally requesting conciliation -and if necessary arbitration - over the issue of pay protection for FBU members under the move to rank to role.

Since no national agreement has been reached on the substantive move from rank to role, Brigade Committees are urged not to reach any agreement at a local level on this issue. Nor should they participate in processes set up to implement the role-based pay structure.

Implementation should only take place once guidance on pay issues relating to assessment of

competence for each role in the integrated personal development


system (IPDS) pay structure and the assessment of job size for some of the roles has been agreed by both sides but this has not happened.

## **Union opens dedicated National IRMP facility**

The Union's national Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) department has been beefed up with the opening of a dedicated centre in Bridgend, near Cardiff, today.

The new centre will add to the current national IRMP training programme and also act as a general education and meeting facility for the Union. This means that for the very first time, the FBU will have its own training facility, and branch official's training will begin at the new centre in the summer of 2005.

Since August 2003 the Union has run seminars for FBU officials across the UK. The seminars focused on



explaining the IRMP process; examining the new approach in detail, but have also looked at what the Unions' strategy and tactics at brigade and station level should be to deliver the optimum mix of prevention, detection and emergency intervention.

During 2004, the FBU developed the initial training with a series of extended Regional Committee training seminars for regional and brigade officials. The seminars looked in detail at the research, which underpins a risk-based approach to fire and rescue service emergency response planning.

Key to the FBU strategy has been equipping officials with the knowledge and expertise to challenge and present alternatives to brigade plans.

One of the main roles of the FBU's national IRMP department has been to assist officials across the country in exposing the flaws and weaknesses in local IRMPs, particularly their failure to use robust and risk-based data to evidence IRMP proposals. In far too many cases brigades have seen an opportunity to use the "IRMP-tag" to attempt to force through a local cuts agenda, which has little to do with effective community risk reduction.

The Union's national IRMP department also played a key role in a parliamentary seminar in February this year, involving key UK fire and rescue service stakeholders. The seminar in the House of Commons stimulated debate on the Union's demand for risk-

based response planning which supports risk-based preventative and protective activity against a nationally agreed standard.

*For more information on the national IRMP department, visit [www.fbu.org.uk](http://www.fbu.org.uk).*

### **Five shift duty system meeting at Head Office**

FBU officials in brigades negotiating five shift duty systems with local employers met at head office.


Brigade officials from GMC, Cheshire, South Yorkshire, Notts and Surrey attended the meeting along with regional officials Bob Blackburn (Region 4) and Dave Keating (Region 12). National Officer John McGhee and Assistant General Secretary Mike Fordham also attended.

The Union nationally pledged to provide as much support as possible, including bringing in external consultants to gather the necessary information. Also, a meeting with the Union's legal advisors to look at the issues will be held at Annual Conference.

### **Northern Ireland joins FBU national ULF**

FBU Northern Ireland has successfully bid for one-year's funding worth £30,000 under the Union Learning Fund.

Raising the profile of lifelong learning throughout the NI Fire Service, the ULF will meet the needs of Skills for Life learners.



The Northern Ireland ULF is supported by the management of the Northern Ireland fire and rescue service, which will be meeting 50% of the regional co-ordinator's salary.

Agreement has been reached to provide ICT taster courses.

The Northern Ireland ULF is inclusive to all members of the Fire Service in Northern Ireland.

*Lynda Rowan-O'Neill is project co-ordinator in NI. Email her on [ULF02@fbu.org.uk](mailto:ULF02@fbu.org.uk) for further information.*

Members in the rest of the UK - bar Wales - already have access to lifelong learning through the ULF.

*For more information visit [www.fbu.org.uk](http://www.fbu.org.uk) and look for Lifelong Learning under Member Services.*

## **London overtime dispute**

London FBU has been offered a new form of words by the LFEPa on overtime. The region has gone back to local management seeking changes to the form of words.

London members put their overtime ban on hold earlier in the month after agreement was reached to open talks with brigade management over a new overtime policy. Both sides agreed to involve ACAS if the talks fail.

FBU London Region have made clear that if there is no deal which members can agree to that the industrial action will be put back

on. The talks move followed the start of an overtime ban which saw between 40 and over 60 pumps going off the run in London.

Management responded by threatening to dock the pay of members implementing the ban, claiming it breached their contracts of employment. The issue is complicated in London because of brigade order 91 which is based on an overtime agreement reached over 30 years ago.

This allows management to order members to remain at work for up to one hour after the end of shift, amounting to compulsory overtime. London members want any new overtime agreement to be in line with the June 2003 Agreement: voluntary and not used to make up any planned shortfall in staff.

They also want the end of a link between individual sickness levels and the ability to perform pre-arranged overtime. Currently management want to bar any members from undertaking pre-arranged overtime if they have had a written warning for sickness or who have had 21 or more duty days sick in a rolling 3 year period.

The union is also seeking to negotiate double time payments for overtime at weekends.

## **Membership Survey - Let us know your views!**

Members should have all received a questionnaire along with the latest edition of Firefighter magazine (April 2005). All members are urged to complete it and return it in the

freepost envelope provided as soon as possible. Help inform the Union's review of its structures, and "way of doing things."

## **General Secretary Election**

Members are reminded that the ballot closes on Friday May 6 at 2.00pm - you must return your ballot paper by then if your vote is to be counted.

This election is for the most senior position in the FBU and therefore will have an important impact on all members' future, the future of the Union and the future of the UK fire and rescue service.

Use Your Vote!

## **Subscribe to the e-bulletin**

To receive the e-bulletin, other FBU campaign news, information on Union services direct into your email inbox subscribe to our emailing list.

Go to [www.fbu.org.uk](http://www.fbu.org.uk), type in your email address and click on the "Sign Up" button. That's all it takes.

*For disciplinary and employment-related queries contact your local FBU rep.*

## **FBU's Confidential Freephone Stress and Support Line**

**0800 783 4778**

Stressed?

Bullied?

Get help from the Union!

## **On the Move?**

Members are reminded to advise their brigade membership secretary of any change of address. Head Office should be advised of any changes of next of kin or nominations for benefits.

## **FBU freephone legal advice line**

**0808 100 6061**

For advice on personal injury, family law, wills conveyancing, personal finance and consumer issues.