



The Fire Brigades Union

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Circular: 2015HOC0017MW

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TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

LETTERS TO FRA CHAIRS IN ENGLAND AND WALES - URGENT REQUEST FOR CLARITY REGARDING FIREFIGHTER PENSIONS

I have this week written to all Fire Authority Chairs in England and Wales asking them for clarity in relation to firefighter pensions. This followed the House of Commons debate that took place on 15 December 2014 in which DCLG Fire Minister, Penny Mordaunt gave a clear guarantee that should a firefighter fail a fitness test through no fault of his or her own, the Fire Authority should consider suitable alternative employment, and if that is not possible and the employee is at least age 55, commence an Authority-initiated retirement and pay an unreduced pension. This was also confirmed by the Minister to me in writing shortly afterwards.

In addition the Secretary of State, Eric Pickles, confirmed to the Communities and Local Government Committee on 16 December 2014 that that a *decision* had been made as a result of the debate and vote in Parliament and that this *decision* was that a firefighter in the circumstances described "*will get a full pension*".

The task at hand is to clarify if the guarantee given by the DCLG Fire Minister and the Secretary of State is going to be implemented in Fire Authorities, which is where the decision will be taken.

My letter to FRA Chairs asks a simple question in relation to this guarantee.

A covering note is also being prepared to MPs which will include this letter. It is extremely important that MPs are included in this process because there is no doubt that a number of them were convinced to vote with the Government in the debate as a result of the promise of a guarantee on No Job No Pension.

Head Office has also prepared a model letter so that unprotected firefighters in England and Wales who will be transferred into the 2015 scheme can ask the same question of their FRA Chair.

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This letter is attached to the circular and can also be found on the FBU website, see details below.

It is also very important that you send a copy of this letter to your MP for the reason outlined earlier.

Please visit the FBU website where the process for writing to your FRA Chair and your MP is simplified.

The simple two-stage process can be done in minutes:

1. Print off, sign and send the model letter from the FBU website (<http://www.fbu.org.uk/resources/letter-fra-chair-firefighter-pension-entitlement/>) to your FRA Chair, the address is normally FRA Chair c/o your Brigade HQ.
2. Enter your postcode in the find your MP tool provided (<http://www.fbu.org.uk/mp-finder/>) click on the "Clarify my pension scheme" option and email the model letter outlining what you have sent to your FRA Chair.

Please ensure that your Brigade Officials are kept informed of the response you receive.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Wrack', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

Att.

MW/sll