



The Fire Brigades Union

General Secretary: Matt Wrack

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Dear Brother/Sister,

RETIRED AND OUT OF TRADE MEMBERS ASKED TO STAND WITH THEIR COLLEAGUES AND PROTEST AGAINST THE WAY GOVERNMENT IS TREATING FIREFIGHTERS

I am sure you will have been following the ongoing pension dispute in the fire service.

Recently we managed to force a debate in the House of Commons where the DCLG fire minister Penny Mordaunt gave clear guarantees in Parliament that firefighters aged 55 who failed a fitness test through no fault of their own would receive a full, unreduced pension or a redeployed role. This guarantee was subsequently confirmed by Secretary of State Eric Pickles.

Since the debate the national employers and numerous employers have written to us clearly stating that they **do not accept that any such guarantee exists**.

In fact, the London Fire Brigade confirmed that they had legal advice which showed why they could not implement the guarantee. They also confirmed that they had informed the minister of this **before she gave the guarantee** to Parliament

There is no doubt that the minister used the promise of a guarantee to influence the Parliamentary vote knowing full well that the assurance was worthless. In order to win the vote to pass the flawed firefighters' pension regulations the government misled firefighters and Parliament. Since the debate and subsequent guarantee by the Secretary of State Eric Pickles, we have repeatedly asked for a meeting with the minister but she has so far refused our request.

We have also released a short film showing exactly what Penny Mordaunt said in Parliament in one of her guarantee responses (it was repeated more than once during the debate) and what the national employers confirmed in a letter back to us. This film can be viewed via the FBU website www.fbu.org.uk

Firefighters in England are and have every right to be angry with the disgraceful actions of this government. They still face the choice of either being sacked or receiving a severely reduced pension if they fail fitness tests as a result of naturally declining fitness through age. Exactly the opposite of what the minister told Parliament

We have managed to get improvements elsewhere and are still discussing areas of concern but in England, DCLG continue to bury their heads in the sand.

We have issued a further call for strike action for firefighters in England for 24 hours from 7am on 25 February.

FBU rally and demonstration

FBU members are attending a demonstration and protest which will coincide with the 24 hour strike. This rally and protest will be held in Westminster, assembling from noon at Methodist Central Hall, Storeys Gate, London SW1 9NH.

As a retired and out of trade (ROOT) member of the FBU I am sure you appreciate the work that the FBU has been doing in relation to protecting the pension benefits of our ROOT members.

For example;

- We are continuing to press with our fairer commutation campaign which is still attempting to get the backdated lump sum payments for almost 6000 members.
- We are also trying to ensure that if members who joined between the ages of 18-20 were subject to age discrimination that they received compensation for this.
- We are also providing advice to ROOT members in relation to pension appeals and medical reviews.

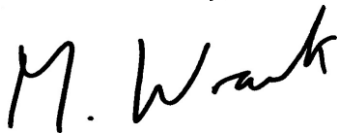
We cannot allow government to treat us in this manner if we are to remain effective in our representation for any FBU member.

ROOT members are asked to attend the rally and demonstration and stand shoulder to shoulder with their colleagues who are fighting for their pensions and for future firefighters.

Please make every effort to attend the rally and protest. Contact your local and brigade officials for more details.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Wrack', written in a cursive style.

MATT WRACK
General Secretary