



**FIRE BRIGADES UNION**  
SERVICE ★ STRUGGLE ★ SOLIDARITY

**Matt Wrack** General Secretary

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**TO: ALL MEMBERS**

**16 December 2015**

Dear Brother/Sister

**REDUCTION IN INCIDENT RESPONSE UNITS (IRUs) - MASS DECONTAMINATION**

Head Office has recently been notified that DCLG/CFOA have made a joint announcement that, following a review that they have been conducting, the number of Incident Response Units (IRUs) in England will be reduced from 65 to 43. The reduction will be implemented on 31 December 2015. Our understanding is that the review has been underway for some little while and is based upon planning assumptions which assume reduced casualty rates.

The FBU has **not** been a part of this review and therefore is not aware of how it can be concluded that the risks to the public (and fire crews) have reduced since the introduction of New Dimensions equipment, appliances and procedures. There are very clear safety matters affecting the public and affecting firefighters and we are concerned that such decisions would be made without adequate discussion or consultation, including through local health and safety structures.

It is unknown at this time whether there are similar plans in other parts of the UK. We are concerned that this decision has been slipped out without any professional, public or parliamentary scrutiny.

The 22 IRUs will be taken off the run from 1 January 2016 and then held by Fire and Rescue Services. Details of the planned changes are appended to this circular.

Local FBU officials have been advised of questions which need to be addressed to the services affected by this decision and further information will be issued when available.

Best wishes

Yours fraternally

**MATT WRACK**  
**GENERAL SECRETARY**

Att.

MW/sll