



FINAL AGENDA

**Fire Brigades Union
89th Conference, Blackpool
11th, 12th and 13th May 2016**



FINAL AGENDA

FIRE BRIGADES UNION

Bradley House
68 Coombe Road
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey, KT2 7AE

The Standing Orders by which Conference is governed
are printed in full at the back of this booklet

PAY AND CONDITIONS

1. PROTECTING GREY BOOK PAY RATES – RETAINING FEES

This Conference demands that all Brigade Officials adhere to the minimum standards as laid out in the Grey Book when dealing with retaining fee proposals with management. Under no circumstances should retaining fees below the Grey Book minimum be negotiated or agreed by FBU Officials. This does not preclude negotiations in the reduction of available hours or of banded hours of availability, providing that the minimum Grey Book retaining fees are maintained.

NATIONAL RETAINED COMMITTEE

2. NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL WORKSTREAMS

Conference notes that discussions exploring the viability of the Fire and Rescue Service workforce taking on additional work remain ongoing within a number of National Joint Council workstreams.

The Executive Council has previously committed to seeking improvements in pay in return for any agreement to extend the responsibilities, skills and competencies of FBU Members.

Conference reaffirms that the demand for appropriate remuneration for additional work remains a core part of the Union's negotiating strategy in these discussions.

Further, Conference instructs the Executive Council:

- not to ratify any proposed agreement on new responsibilities in the absence of associated pay improvements.
- to undertake the fullest consultation with Members on any proposed new responsibilities and associated pay framework resulting from the workstream discussions.

LONDON

3. EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE-FINANCIAL RECOMPENSE

This Conference insists that any future financial recompense that is negotiated and agreed by the Members of the Fire Brigades Union, in return for Emergency Medical Response work, must be backdated to the start of any individual trial periods where said trial periods are currently in place.

CLEVELAND

4. EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE

This Conference insists that all FBU Members absolutely cease all Emergency Medical Response Trials that are currently in place, on 30th June 2016, and that following any consequent evaluation of said trials that the Executive Council fully consult all Members via FBU Branch Structures in order that no future Emergency Medical Response work will be carried out until democratic agreement with Fire Brigades Union Members, via Branch Structures, is gained.

CLEVELAND

5. EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE

Conference applauds the pragmatism shown by FBU Members currently involved in Emergency Medical Response (EMR) trials. It is clear that participation in EMR trials in certain Fire and Rescue Services is unpopular with many FBU Members. Conference commends those Members strength of purpose and unity in abiding by the Conference 2015 decision to undertake EMR trials despite those Members having their own personal reservations.

The circular NJC/13/15 'Pay, Terms and Conditions Workstreams: Emergency Medical Response Workstream Trials' informs that the trial period will conclude by the end of June 2016 and that approved trials will be reviewed between April and the end of June 2016 to assess progress.

Conference notes that the key aims of the current EMR trials are to:

- Secure additional funds for the Fire and Rescue Service
- Protect the Fire and Rescue Service from further financial attacks by the Government
- Prevent further station closures and job losses

This review period is therefore crucial when measuring whether the key aims of the trial have been secured and also as to the decision whether EMR will be permanently included as part of the Fire and Rescue Service Role Maps.

If following the review the decision taken is that EMR will be permanently included as part of the Fire and Rescue Service Role Maps, Conference instructs the Executive Council to have achieved, during the review period, an agreed National Joint Council (NJC) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ambulance Service unions and take the appropriate measures to ensure that all Brigade Committees adhere to the stipulations contained within. Where Brigade Committees and individual Members are found to be undertaking EMR outside of the agreed MoU, Conference instructs the Executive Council to take immediate steps to rectify the situation.

The NJC MoU must be specific in addressing:

- An NJC agreed training provision
- Welfare support
- Capability issues resulting from EMR
- Core Pay and/or Additional Responsibility Allowance payments
- Disclosure and Barring Service checks
- A voluntary aspect to undertaking EMR duties, which should be incorporated into any alteration to Fire and Rescue Service Role Maps

Conference instructs the Executive Council to produce a full report addressing the above to be circulated to All Members within one month of the conclusion of the trial period, 30th June 2016.

MERSEYSIDE

AMENDMENT 1

In third paragraph, **add** a fourth bullet point: 'Secure pay improvements for FBU members'.

LONDON

AMENDMENT 2

In sixth paragraph, **add** the following bullet points:

- Mobilising procedure
- Fire Cover Provisions

SHROPSHIRE

6. FLEXIBLE WORKING

Conference notes the content of circular NJC/01/15 dealing with amendments to the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) arising from legislative change.

The Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA) has been amended by the Children and Families Act 2014. The new law dispenses with the statutory procedure for consideration of flexible working requests, replacing it with a duty on employers to deal with requests in a 'reasonable' manner.

The amended legislation does not give employees the right to work flexibly. Instead it provides a right to 'request' flexible working. If the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) rejects the request it must be for one of eight business reasons and an explanation of these reasons, including how they apply to the application, must be given to the employee.

These business reasons include amongst others:

- Additional costs
- Planned structural change
- Inability to recruit new staff
- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff

Conference notes that in reality and due to the cuts agenda adopted by the Government that any FRS would be able to refuse a request for flexible working by utilising one of the above business reasons.

Conference further notes that due to the fact that nationally the majority of childcare is still undertaken by women (Labour Market Statistics) that this is an issue that disproportionately affects women and that whilst concerns over recruitment of women into the FRS have, and are, being addressed the inability to have flexible working arrangements agreed with some FRSs moves the problem towards that of retention of women within the FRS.

Due to many FRSs changing current Duty Shift Systems to those that solely suit the employer's business case the employees work life balance needs become secondary. Therefore Conference instructs the Executive Council to undertake immediate discussion through the National Joint Council to pursue a flexible working agreement that reflects the unique work life balance issues that arise due to FRS personnel having to provide 24/7 emergency response cover. An Executive Council report is also to be produced after investigation of the potential scale of this problem, this report is to be provided to Conference 2017.

MERSEYSIDE

7. REDUCTION IN THE WORKING WEEK

Conference instructs the Executive Council to explore a reduction in the working week of firefighters from the current 42 hours. Conference agreed Resolution 7 'Working Hours' in 2009 and the Executive Council was asked to report back to a future Conference.

Firefighters work a basic week of 42 hours, well in excess of the national average for full-time employees. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) reported that in 2013 over 90% of full-time employees worked less than 42 hours per week. The median figure was 37.5 hours and the average was 38 hours.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to raise the matter at the next meeting of the NJC and to open discussions on ways to reduce the working hours of firefighters without impacting on the current compressed working shift system.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to report back to Conference 2017.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

8. AN INCREASED RATE FOR UNSOCIABLE HOURS

It is clear from the new contract offered to Junior Doctors that the Government recognises that our fellow public sector workers will work certain hours of the week that are deemed to be unsociable working hours, and therefore deserving of an enhanced rate of pay.

We believe it is time for the firefighters who regularly work through these hours to be given their due reward and paid an enhanced rate when working at these times.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to urgently raise this issue with the employers.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

AMENDMENT

Final paragraph **delete** all after 'Conference instructs the Executive Council to' and **insert** 'make unsociable working hours and an enhanced rate of pay for those hours part of any future pay negotiations.'

MERSEYSIDE

9. PAY

This Conference is of the opinion that the pay increases received over the last 10 years, when offset against inflation increases over the same period, has left FBU Members in a worse financial position and, as such, has worsened their living standards.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to initiate consultation with Members with a recommendation for industrial action, up to and including strike action, if negotiations following the conclusion of the workstream evaluations fail to deliver an acceptable offer on pay.

NORTHERN IRELAND

AMENDMENT

In second line of second paragraph, **delete** “with a recommendation for”
replace with “to consider”

SHROPSHIRE

10. WATCH COMMANDER 'B'

Conference notes the decision made by Conference 2009 in respect of Resolution 5 on Pay (as moved by Shropshire, amended by Strathclyde) and Conference 2010 in respect of Resolution 4 on pay (as moved by Northern Ireland).

Conference re-affirms its decision that the “A” pay scale should be removed and personnel on the “A” pay scale should be re-designated 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 Conference 2017 is required.

NORTHERN IRELAND

AMENDMENT

Final paragraph, final line: **delete** ‘to Conference 2017 is required.’ **insert** ‘on progress is circulated to all officials within 3 months.’

MERSEYSIDE

PENSIONS

11. SAME SEX SURVIVOR PENSIONS

Conference notes with disappointment the outcome of the Court of Appeal in its ruling in the appeal of Walker v Innospec.

The appeal related to the accrual rights of survivor pension benefits prior to 2005. Currently some pension schemes fail to recognise survivor benefits accrued prior to the introduction of legal recognition of same sex partnerships in 2005.

Conference calls on our Officials responsible for negotiating pensions to continue to raise the issue of inequality in pension provision with government and press for survivor benefits to relate to the length of membership of schemes as opposed to introduction of legal recognition of same sex partnership.

LGBT NATIONAL COMMITTEE

OPERATIONS, HEALTH AND SAFETY

12. OICs DRIVING FIRE APPLIANCES TO INCIDENTS ON BLUE LIGHTS

This Conference condemns the unsafe practice adopted by some Fire and Rescue Services in the UK which allows Watch and Crew Managers to drive fire appliances to incidents on blue lights whilst being Officer in Charge of that appliance.

Driving fire appliances to incidents on blue lights whilst in charge is not included in a Watch or Crew Managers role map.

This practice allows Fire and Rescue Services to reduce numbers on stations ultimately cutting front line posts and puts our Members in situations where there is not enough resources to deal with incidents safely.

Conference agrees that this dangerous practice has the potential to cause serious injury or worse to our Members and members of the public because of wrong decisions which may be made due to the complexity of carrying out two separate roles simultaneously.

Therefore this Conference instructs the Executive Council to;

- Send out a Fire Brigades Union circular to all Members explaining the dangers involved in adopting this practice.
- Commission the Fire Brigades Union Health and Safety Committee to draft a Safety Critical notice which can be used by Brigade Committees to challenge this practice where it is happening.
- Raise this issue at the National Joint Council with a view to stopping this unsafe and dangerous way of working.

This work to be completed by the end of January 2017.

DURHAM

13. HEALTH AND SAFETY HANDBOOK

Conference demands that The Fire Brigades Union Health and Safety Handbook is revised, re-issued and brought up to date to provide Fire Brigades Union Representatives current information fit for purpose. This work should be carried out no later than Conference 2017.

STAFFORDSHIRE

AMENDMENT

Delete “revised, re-issued and brought up to date” and **replace with** “revised and re-issued”

SHROPSHIRE

14. OPERATIONAL DISCRETION

Conference calls on the Executive Council to provide a policy document on “Operational Discretion” the document is to provide an FBU explanation of how and when Operational Discretion is to be used. This is required to provide assistance and clarity to our Members and Brigade Officials. This policy document should be provided to Conference no later than Conference 2017 to ensure that we can provide the best protection for our Members.

STAFFORDSHIRE

15. FIREFIGHTER SAFETY – DUTY SYSTEMS

Conference is concerned about the growing utilisation of Day Crewing Plus/Close Proximity Crewing or any of its hybrids which results in firefighters working excessive hours. Conference views such shift systems as a risk to firefighter safety, as potentially unlawful and could have a ruinous effect on our pension schemes through the cap and share policy foisted on us by the Tory led coalition.

Conference seeks that the Executive Council continues to resist these dangerous duty systems by all means necessary and continues to provide support for Brigade Officials having to deal with such proposals.

CUMBRIA

AMENDMENT

In second paragraph, **delete** “and continues to provide support” **replace with** “including the production of a guidance document”

SHROPSHIRE

16. MINIMUM SAFE CREWING

Conference instructs the Executive Council to develop a strategy to oppose and reverse the dangerous trend of Brigades proposing to crew pumps without adequate recognition of the numbers needed to perform the role safely and efficiently. Such practices will put our Members at an unacceptable risk and place them under immense moral pressure to act when intentionally placed at incidents without adequate resources. We refer to previous FBU policy on crewing in support of this resolution.

NATIONAL RETAINED COMMITTEE

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

17. STAFFING LEVELS IN CONTROL ROOMS

Conference recognises the central role of emergency control staff in the Fire and Rescue Service. Staff in control rooms represent the first line of intervention for members of the public needing assistance. Too often, our control Members are taken for granted by Fire and Rescue Service bosses and politicians.

Conference remains deeply concerned at reductions in staffing levels across control rooms. As well as presenting a danger to the public, staffing shortages lead to excessive workloads, increased stress and fatigue among control Members.

These problems have been exacerbated in some Fire and Rescue Authorities by the introduction of new mobilising systems beset with technical problems and without adequate training having been provided to all staff.

As the foremost organisation representing emergency control staff, the Fire Brigades Union vehemently opposes any attempt to compromise their welfare or professionalism.

To this end, Conference instructs the Executive Council to redouble its efforts in the campaign to oppose reductions in staffing levels in control rooms, and to take every opportunity to highlight the risks that staffing shortages pose to control Members and the public.

LONDON

18. CREWING LEVELS

Conference instructs the Executive Council to communicate to the national employers that crewing front line fire appliances with three or less members of personnel is unacceptable. This places crews under intolerable pressure to undertake their role at any incident safely either for themselves or the public they are trying to protect.

With more Brigades looking to introduce reduced crewing on appliances we believe that this issue must be tackled at a national level with the employers.

We oppose this reduction in the service provided to our local communities and the increased pressure placed on our Members.

Whilst paying full cognisance to Union policy relating to crewing levels of frontline fire appliances being staffed with five riders, we note that it appears to be common practice in most Fire and Rescue Services to staff appliances riding 4 and 4 as the norm.

If this wasn't concern enough, it appears a number of Fire and Rescue Services are endeavouring to mobilise fire appliances with less than four riders and introduce further reduced crewing levels on appliances with the justification being to maintain availability of fire appliances. This practice is totally unacceptable and will only lead to endanger the lives of the public and firefighters alike.

Whilst we will do everything within our power to prevent this happening on fire stations across the UK, we call on the Executive Council to conduct a survey across all UK Fire and Rescue Services to ascertain where such proposals are being mooted and once we have this information develop a campaign that will assist Officials in all Brigades to stave off such attacks.

NORTHUMBERLAND

AMENDMENT

First paragraph, second line: **delete** 'three' **insert** 'four'

Fifth paragraph, fifth line: **delete** 'only lead to'

MERSEYSIDE

19. INTRODUCTION OF NEW MOBILISING SYSTEMS

Conference is outraged at the continuing practice by Fire and Rescue Services of implementing new mobilising systems before full and thorough testing has taken place and therefore placing our Members and the general public at risk.

A number of Services have recently introduced new or upgraded mobilising systems which have not been fit for purpose.

On numerous occasions control Members have had to resort to taking emergency calls using pen and paper, and alerting stations by mobile telephones.

The stress levels for our control Members, along with the obvious dangers to operational firefighters and the public are intolerable.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council, following consultation with the Control Staff National Committee, to raise this issue at all relevant forums to highlight the risks and prevent this dangerous and unacceptable practice from being repeated.

Conference further requests that the Executive Council report back to Conference 2017 any progress made in this matter.

CONTROL STAFF NATIONAL COMMITTEE

20. SUPERVISORY LEVELS IN FIRE CONTROLS

Conference notes with concern the increasing tendency by Fire and Rescue Services to downgrade and/or reduce the levels of supervision within Fire Controls.

In many cases Fire and Rescue Services are using restructuring and staffing reviews to reduce the role of the Officer in Charge of Control in cost cutting efforts. This is leading to increased stress and pressure on control Members at all levels. It can also jeopardise the successful outcome of operational incidents.

Fire Control Supervisors are required to undertake an increasing workload in ensuring that staff can work efficiently and effectively within appropriate service procedures for the successful resolution of incidents and day to day issues.

Examples of reduced supervision include:

- Staffing reviews which downgrade Watch Manager posts to Crew Manager or reduce numbers of Crew Managers.
- Changes in work routines which place supervisory responsibilities on non-supervisors.
- Use of flexi-duty managers to provide remote supervision.
- Attempts to create work roles outwith the Grey Book terms and conditions.

Conference calls upon Members, Brigade and Regional Officials to resist such attacks on supervisory levels within Fire Controls, by working within existing agreed Role Maps, by robustly challenging all proposals to reduce levels of supervision and ensuring that the importance of adequate supervision is clearly understood by Fire Services, Fire Authorities and Fire Boards.

CONTROL STAFF NATIONAL COMMITTEE

AMENDMENT

Final paragraph: **Delete** 'Officials' and **replace with** 'Committees'.

LONDON

GOVERNMENT POLICY AND LEGISLATION

21. NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MARAUDING TERRORIST FIREARMS ATTACK (MTFA) FOR TRAINING, EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES FOR ALL FIREFIGHTERS

Conference notes that people living within the British Isles are at a greater risk of terrorism in all its brutal forms like the atrocities that we witnessed in Paris. It is accepted that early recognition could come directly from first responders attending what appeared to be a more routine incident prior to a full MTFA incident being declared. With this in mind, Conference instructs the Executive Council to campaign for an appropriate mechanism of support for Fire and Rescue Authorities including funding from DCLG which would allow Fire and Rescue Services to provide a minimum national standard of training, equipment and procedures for all operational personnel who have the likelihood to attend one of these incidents.

TYNE & WEAR

22. FLOODING – A STATUTORY DUTY

Conference notes the devastating effect the floods in December 2015 in many areas of the UK and the vital role that fire service personnel carried out in all affected parts of the country both carrying out rescues and post incident mitigation. With all fire services in the UK now under immense pressure to cut budgets they cannot be expected to continue to resource training, equipment and responding without receiving the funding required to carry out this role.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to raise the issue of funding in the British Fire Service for flooding with all employers and Governments in the UK.

Conference notes with concern the extent and severity of floods experienced at the end of 2015 and start of 2016 across different regions of the UK. It is alarming that whilst Government Ministers claim these are once in a lifetime episodes, it is apparent that this is not the case and FBU Members are responding on greater regularity to severe incidents of flooding despite the fire service having no statutory duty to do so within England.

Whilst we note there is a continuing FBU campaign that has been running for some time calling for the statutory duty to be given to the Fire and Rescue Service, we call on the Executive Council to examine what else as part of this campaign we can do and to reinvigorate the campaign in light of our concerns based on the severity and regularity of such incidents and the drain on finances and resources these incidents have on hard pressed fire service budgets.

NORTHUMBERLAND

AMENDMENT 1

In first sentence, **insert** 'of' between 'effect' and 'the'.

In second paragraph, **delete** 'British'.

In third paragraph, after 'England' **insert** 'or Wales'.

LONDON

AMENDMENT 2

First paragraph, first line: after 'effect' **insert** 'of'

MERSEYSIDE

TRADE UNION AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

23. PROTECTING WORKERS RIGHTS, DEFENDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Conference deplores this Tory Governments plans to repeal the Human Rights Act. The Act has been a cornerstone in providing protection of the rights and safety of workers. It has also set the benchmark for the promotion of LGBT equality both for existing and new member states joining the European Union.

Conference calls on the Executive Council to work with the TUC and its affiliate trades unions to campaign against the Government's attacks on the Human Rights Act.

LGBT NATIONAL COMMITTEE

24. WORKING CLASS HISTORY

Conference acknowledges the fundamental importance of education and information distribution within the working class movement.

Education is vital to the continuance of the trade union movement's struggle for working class equality, fairness and liberty. It is through the provision of education, formerly withheld from working class people through both economic and class oppression, which has empowered the movement to achieve its many huge successes.

As important as succeeding in securing these achievements for all working people, is ensuring that the origins and history are not forgotten and that the many people who fought so hard to achieve them are not either. This is the history of our people and our class and we should proudly celebrate and remember it. We must also uphold our responsibility to inspire and educate the next generation how many of the liberties we enjoy today were achieved; through struggle, adversity and bravery. This is our history.

Therefore Conference instructs our Executive Council to present at the next TUC National Conference a resolution on behalf of the Fire Brigades Union to initiate a coordinated, UK-wide project to implement a "Working Class History Week". It will be a week of remembrance, education and celebration of the rich and varied history of the working class, its Trade Union movement and its great achievements. A week of TV documentaries, online videos, news articles and more utilising all communication mediums to tell the stories that so often to not achieve the reverence they deserve. It will be a week that shows our unified oppression through the collective sharing of the history of all working class struggle, which continues to this day. The week will align with the current May Day Celebrations and bank holiday.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

AMENDMENT

In final paragraph, seventh line, delete second 'to' and replace with 'do'.

LONDON

25. UNITE THE RESISTANCE AFFILIATION

Conference notes that the Tories continue with their ideological austerity agenda.

If the Government is not resisted and beaten we face years of continued attacks on our pay and conditions and a continued assault on our public services.

At the forefront of the Tory agenda is the Trade Union Bill, an attempt to further weaken trade unions' ability to organise and to strike.

The Bill represents the most determined attack on the FBU and other trade unions for a generation, and the trade union movement must be prepared to take on and defy these new laws.

The TUC has policy to consider "generalised strikes" against the bill and to defend unions that find themselves "outside the law".

Jeremy Corbyn has argued that a Labour government will repeal the bill and bring in new legislation to defend workers' rights.

The FBU alongside other unions in the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group, and campaigns such as Unite the Resistance, the National Shop Stewards Network and the People's Assembly are at the forefront of opposition to the bill, continuing our attempts to defeat anti-trade union legislation.

To further assist in our aims to oppose austerity and the anti-trade union legislation, Conference instructs that the FBU affiliates to Unite the Resistance.

ESSEX

26. THE TRADE UNION BILL

Conference applauds the Trade Union Congress composite resolution C18 'The Trade Union Bill and building a campaign to stop government attacks' moved by Unite at TUC 2015, seconded by CWU and supported amongst others by the FBU.

That resolution emphatically rejected the introduction of the Trade Union Bill.

The resolution stated that:

'This proposed law must be seen as a malicious attempt by the Government to constrain democratic industrial and political opposition to its austerity programme. The Bill is an uncompromising and unnecessary assault on the rights and freedoms of British workers and is politically motivated, the work of a vindictive Tory Party using the levers of Government for its own political ends, seeking to outlaw legitimate protest, stifle free speech and choke off the resources of political opponents.'

Conference fully endorses and supports that statement and also the strategy contained within the resolution to develop a comprehensive strategy through the TUC which includes the following:

1. Giving maximum possible political and industrial support and finance to trade unions that may find themselves outside of the law this programme should include calls on other workers and campaigners not in unions to join our action and not merely the calling of token protests and should set out to build a mass movement with the clear aim of defeating these attacks
2. A programme of ongoing action
3. Preparation for supporting workers taking joint/co-ordinated industrial action
4. The development of a Workers' Charter setting out agreed aims on key issues, to be pursued by unions as part of a co-ordinated approach to collective bargaining
5. Organising committees, based on local unions, trades councils and existing anti-austerity campaigns to co-ordinate local activity, with meetings, days of action and rallies in every region across the UK
6. A co-ordinated national day of action across the UK and a further programme of ongoing action
7. Action to defend any union attacked under anti-union laws.

Conference recognises the inordinate amount of work already undertaken by Executive Council Members, National Officials and Regional Officials and therefore instructs the Executive Council to convene an organising committee consisting of one Brigade Official per Region to be selected by Regional Committee delegates at their next Regional Committee meeting. This organising committee, once convened, will meet quarterly to report their Regions progress on all seven points contained within the TUC strategy. The Executive Council will appoint a Chair for this Committee who will report progress to the Executive Council.

MERSEYSIDE

27. CONDEMN HYPOCRITICAL PROPAGANDA

Conference condemns the hypocrisy of UK, US and other politicians, who condemn countries refusing to submit to US-NATO hegemony (e.g. Russia, China, Cuba, Venezuela) whilst ignoring, condoning and supporting 'friendly' states (e.g. themselves, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and others) that blatantly abuse human rights, inflict and incite violence and even acts of terrorism, whether state or individual.

Conference believes such propaganda is deliberate, and, as always, used by ruling classes as a means to further imperial aims, secure wealth for profiteers, and control domestic populations. However, for working people these also bring wars, poverty, and restrictions of real freedoms, through devastation, divisions, and despair, so must be opposed if we are to avoid conflicts both now and in the future.

DEVON & SOMERSET

AMENDMENT

At end of resolution, **add** new paragraph:

"Therefore Conference instructs the Executive Council to ensure that such issues are highlighted in the Firefighter magazine to inform and educate our members on international issues and how they affect working people."

SHROPSHIRE

28. LABOUR COUNCILLORS

As the FBU now affiliates to the national Labour Party in England and Wales, this Conference instructs the Executive Council to engage with the Labour Party leadership (at the earliest opportunity) to insist that they instruct its councillors and MPs to highlight the cuts to the fire service at every opportunity. Conference notes that councillors are publically celebrating the opening of new stations which represent amalgamations, cuts and extended working hours of our Members.

WEST YORKSHIRE

AMENDMENT

In first line, **delete** 'national' and 'in England and Wales'.

LONDON

29. ABORTION RIGHTS

Conference notes that abortion is still not legally available to all women in the UK on request. Any woman taking this difficult and emotional decision must still receive the consent of two doctors in order to proceed. Conference notes that the British Medical Association supports removing the requirement for two doctors' signatures to approve the procedure.

Conference believes that the Abortion Rights Act 1967 needs updating to give women the right to make this decision as with any medical procedure.

We therefore call upon the Executive Council to:

- i) Work with trade unions and other interested organisations to campaign for change in the law, giving women the 'right to choose'
- ii) Actively lobby all political parties to raise access concerns and ensure that future progressive changes in the existing 1967 Act are fully enforced
- iii) Support raising of public awareness, change the culture of stigma and discrimination
- iv) Campaign for the implementation of abortion provision up to the legal limit
- v) Promote affiliation and active participation in local Abortion Rights groups across the UK and campaign for activities to mark the 50th anniversary of the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS AT WORK

30. ACCESSING LGBT MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT

Conference recognises the advances that our LGBT Members and Officials have achieved since their establishment within our Union.

Conference is concerned about reports of LGBT Members, particularly gay, trans and bisexual who identify as male, withdrawing from union activities and events. Conference calls on the Executive Council to initiate a survey aimed at known gay, trans and bisexual Members who identify as male, with the intent to establish and identify obstacles discouraging engagement. The survey should be created in conjunction with the LGBT Committee.

LGBT NATIONAL COMMITTEE

31. BME WOMEN MEMBERS

The UK Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) continues to fail to recruit the majority gender in our society – women. Despite historical commitments from politicians and principal management, the number of women in the FRS is still pitifully low. The number of BME women barely registers on the FRS employment statistics and there are currently less than a 100 operational black women. This cannot be acceptable to our Union.

Black women are still the less likely group to even consider a fire service career and of those who are recruited the vast majority do not attempt any career progression. There are less than 20 black women junior or middle managers in the FRS.

This Conference demands that:

- Research is carried out at NJC level into the FRS experience of current black women operational staff
- The UK FRS needs a national programme of positive action aimed at and to encourage black women to consider an FRS career
- The Executive Council consult with the B&EMM National Committee the possibility of a reserved seat on the B&EMM National Committee for a BME Woman Member.

B&EMM NATIONAL COMMITTEE

32. FBU EQUALITY EDUCATION

It is vitally important that our Union continues to be fully aware of the different issues that our minority Members still face in Fire and Rescue Service workplaces. Past decisions on equality structures and representation may give the impression that the challenges faced by minority Members are no longer a priority for our Union.

In order for all FBU Representatives to have an understanding and empathy with the issues faced by minority Members it is important that there is the appropriate level of knowledge on equality issues. Representatives and Officials with very little experience of discriminatory and unfair treatment of minority Members are at a disadvantage when representing them.

This Conference demands that the Executive Council:

- Ensures that all FBU Representatives and Officials are given the appropriate knowledge and skills to fully represent our minority Members
- That an equality and diversity course is added to the 2017 FBU Education programme
- That the course is organised by the appropriate National Officer and the National FAW Committee

This Conference believes that this will be an important step in ensuring our Officials recognise unfair practices, appreciate and value cultural differences in the fight against the discriminatory behaviour that still exists in our workplaces and communities.

BGEMM NATIONAL COMMITTEE

AMENDMENT

First bullet point, second line: **delete** 'our minority' **insert** 'all our'

MERSEYSIDE

33. GENDER SPECIFIC ILL MENTAL HEALTH

Conference is disappointed at the lack of support our women Members are receiving in respect of ill mental health in the UK Fire and Rescue Service.

Conference will note last year's resolution on ill mental health which asked for guidance to be produced from the FBU and for our Fire and Rescue Services to be encouraged to support our Members. Many services remain poorly informed with managers ill equipped to identify or deal with issues of ill mental health. Often Members are made to feel that they must suffer in silence, rather than speak up, leaving them isolated and vulnerable. Members feel that they are seen as being weak or troublesome if they admit to having ill mental health or asking for help.

Women in these circumstances are often labelled as dramatic or emotional, rather than being taken seriously and offered the correct support. Women may also experience different symptoms possibly connected to menopause. Ill mental health, when associated with other health needs, can be complex and difficult to diagnose.

Conference therefore ask that the Executive Council includes in the best practice document requested in last year's resolution on ill mental health, gender specific guidance. This information is to be made available to all Fire and Rescue Services to raise awareness and understanding of ill mental health problems including recognising signs and symptoms. This is to ensure our Members are supported. We ask that this work is started immediately and is integrated into the ongoing work on ill mental health the FBU is currently involved in.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

34. POSITIVE ACTION DAYS

Conference is concerned about the lack of firefighter recruitment over a sustained period of time. This is due to reductions in establishments and the practice of carrying vacancies when staff retire. There has been very little wholetime recruitment for several years.

Of the few Fire and Rescue Services recruiting, some are branding their positive action days as 'Have a go Days', in a bid to attract people from under-represented groups.

We feel this is sometimes implemented in a way which demeans or misrepresents the skills and qualities that women and other under-represented groups can bring to the role of a firefighter.

We call on this Conference that the Executive Council, in consultation with the NWC, B&EMM and LGBT committees, create a best practice guidance to assist Fire and Rescue Services with positive action and that this be completed by the end of October 2016.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

ORGANISING AND MEMBERSHIP

35. REBUILDING AND DEVELOPING SECTIONAL INTEREST IN THE FBU

This Conference notes the difficulty in establishing fully populated committees at Regional and National level. This Conference demands that the Executive Council and respective National Officers with the responsibility for the Sections consult with the Sectional Committees and draw up a plan to address this shortfall, to facilitate and sustain sectional interest and participation in the business of the FBU.

NATIONAL RETAINED COMMITTEE

36. RECRUITMENT

At Recall Conference November 2015, the Executive Council resolution to remove Executive Council Members from the Trade Sections was carried.

Conference was told that this was necessary due to the potential financial hardship the Union faces. In the Executive Council Policy Statement on Membership, Recruitment and Organising, which was carried at last year's May Conference, it was discussed in detail the need to recruit from other roles within the Fire Service.

Now without any Sectional Executive Council Members, now is not perhaps the easiest time to recruit from other staff groups, but given the financial threat to us continuing as a Union, as noted by the Executive Council at Recall Conference last year, Conference instructs the Executive Council to recruit new Members as they proposed.

OFFICERS NATIONAL COMMITTEE

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

37. FIRE BRIGADES UNION CARBON FOOTPRINT

This Conference instructs the Executive Council to conduct a review in to the communication methods that Head Office employ when keeping Members up to date in terms of postal circulars and publications. The purpose of this review is to identify alternative ways of communication methods with the aim to reduce the Fire Brigades Union's carbon footprint.

TYNE & WEAR

AMENDMENT

In second line, after "Members" **add** "and Officials"

SHROPSHIRE

38. FBU ONLINE SHOP

Conference welcomes the improvements and development shown in the latest FBU national website. It is of importance that we utilise technological advancements to improve our communications and interactions both with our membership and wider interested parties. The worldwide web offers a number of opportunities which we are still yet to explore as a Union.

One such opportunity is to provide access to an online FBU shop. During the pension campaign and before there has been widespread demand for FBU branded items, which in the absence of an online shop, has made it difficult to coordinate purchases of such items through Brigade Officials.

Conference therefore instructs our Executive Council to put to tender, negotiate and agree a contract for a national FBU shop to include production, distribution and margins. To also simultaneously begin the process of making a capital expenditure to design and implement a website that incorporates a national online shop by which FBU Members and other interested parties can purchase a wide range of FBU branded products that will be delivered to their desired address. With the upcoming FBU centenary anniversary this would prove a helpful resource to coordinate and distribute any specially produced items. We instruct that the FBU online shop should be implemented and running by no later than Conference 2017.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

39. RESOLUTIONS TO CONFERENCE

Conference instructs the Executive Council to produce separate Standing Orders specifically for Recall and Special Conferences. This should include orders to ensure that all resolutions that are submitted, with the exception of emergency resolutions, are distributed prior to the commencement of the Conference in question. This will ensure that all Brigade Committees will have the opportunity to debate and discuss all available options and resolutions to resolve or progress any issue. These Standing Orders should then be brought to Conference 2017 for final agreement and acceptance into The Fire Brigades Union as the formal Standing Orders for these type of Conferences.

DERBYSHIRE

40. 'ALL DIFFERENT, ALL EQUAL'

The Fire Brigades Union has a proud tradition of championing fairness at work. Through our long campaigning, we have been instrumental in changing the culture of the Fire and Rescue Service, and forcing politicians and managers to properly address the problems of bullying and harassment. We hold that all FBU Members are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace.

However, Conference also recognises that the Union's 'All Different, All Equal' policy has proved to be controversial and problematic.

The policy can often place a heavy workload on local Officials, particularly where investigations are complex. At a time when, more than ever, we are engaged in local battles to defend our jobs and service, this workload is disproportionate and unjustifiable.

The policy compels Regional Committees to deny representation to a Member where no 'arguable defence' exists. Rarely is that straightforward. Yet the consequences of denying representation may be extremely serious, perhaps career-ending. Given also that many Members consider it a basic principle of justice that an individual accused of even the most grievous misconduct is afforded the right to be represented, Regional Committees are placed in a potentially invidious position when being forced to make decisions of such magnitude.

Conference believes the time has come to acknowledge that 'All Different, All Equal' has proved unpopular and divisive, and to affirm our belief in the fundamental principles of the presumption of innocence and the right to a defence.

Conference therefore rescinds 'All Different, All Equal' with immediate effect and, save for where Union rules or policies may otherwise prohibit it, determines that representation henceforth be granted automatically upon request to all accused Members subjected to an employer's disciplinary process.

LONDON

41. SUPPORT FOR OFFICER MEMBERS

Conference demands that the Executive Council pledges its on-going and continued support for the Officers National Committee.

In light of the Executive Council's further projected losses in FBU Members, there has never been a more important time to have a strong Officers National Committee in order to both maintain and ensure that Officer Members stay with the FBU and are supported throughout their careers.

The Officers National Committee has a unique and special part to play in the continued independence of the Fire Brigades Union and we call upon Conference to support the Executive Council and Officers National Committee to promote officer membership and to have Representatives in all of its Brigade and Regional Committees.

OFFICERS NATIONAL COMMITTEE

42. RESOLUTION PROGRESS REPORTING

Conference demands that all resolutions passed at Conference, which require any work to be undertaken, have six monthly updates provided to all Officials on work carried out, or still outstanding work with action plans for completion.

This is to ensure a greater degree of transparency and accountability, and to demonstrate progress against such resolutions.

OFFICERS NATIONAL COMMITTEE

43. FIREFIGHTER MAGAZINE

Conference notes the discussion and debate had during Recall Conference November 2015 on the subject of "Organising FBU Structures and Finances to Address the Challenges of Austerity", the basis of which was to give consideration on the future financial implications to the Union.

Looking at the need to reduce expenditure, Conference proposes a reduction in the number of issues on a permanent basis, to start in January 2017, of Firefighter Magazine from 8 issues to 6, with an ability to produce the occasional special edition if the political or campaigning climate should dictate, with authority for this being sought through the Executive Council.

DURHAM

AMENDMENT

Second paragraph, first line: **delete** 'proposes' **insert** 'agrees'

MERSEYSIDE

44. RESOLUTION AMENDMENT

Conference notes that, following the submission of resolution proposals for inclusion in Conference preliminary agenda, when proposed resolutions are ruled out of order by Standing Orders Committee, no opportunity is afforded to Brigade Committees and Sections to change or amend their proposal so that it may be approved for inclusion.

Conference calls upon the Executive Council to review this matter and compose the required proposed amendments to Standing Orders which provide the facility to allow resolutions which are ruled out of order to be amended in a timely manner for reconsideration.

The Executive Council proposed amendments to Standing Orders must be prepared and submitted to Standing Orders Committee in time for their inclusion in the agenda for Conference in 2017.

WEST MIDLANDS

45. REPRESENTATION OF CONTROL MEMBERS

This Conference recognises the current challenges faced by the FBU in relation to the recruitment, retention, and organisation of our Members particularly within Emergency Fire Controls, and calls upon the Executive Council to implement within three months of Conference 2016 the following measures to ensure that the removal of the position of Executive Council Member for Control does not impact adversely on the representation of our Control Members:

- Each Regional Committee shall nominate one Regional Official to take on the remit of responsibility for overseeing Control issues.
- The nominated Regional Official will work in a supporting capacity with the elected/appointed Regional Control Staff National Committee Representative on Control matters within their Region. This should include developing “sector specific” knowledge and understanding of Control roles where the nominated Regional Official does not have a Control background.
- In those Regions where a Control Staff National Committee Representative has not been elected/appointed to the Regional Committee, the nominated Regional Official will work in co-ordination with the National Officials of the Control Staff National Committee to liaise with Brigade Officials in arranging local Control Branch meetings, in order to re-start the Control structure within their Region.
- A brief written report from each Region will be submitted to each meeting of the Control Staff National Committee by the Regional Control Staff National Committee Representative, or by the nominated Regional Official in those Regions where a Control Staff National Committee Representative is not yet in place.

CONTROL STAFF NATIONAL COMMITTEE

AMENDMENT

Final bullet point, second line: after ‘of the’ **insert** ‘Regional Committee and the’

MERSEYSIDE

46. BRIGADE ORGANISER TOOLKIT

The role of Brigade Organiser within the FBU has been identified as having an overall responsibility for developing an effective and efficient Union, with a range of key responsibilities given to that role.

However, Brigade Organisers who are new to the role are given little guidance from the Union on how to carry out this important role and the responsibilities it entails. Instead, the handover of responsibilities is left to the existing Brigade Organiser, who themselves will have received no guidance on how best to hand over the responsibilities.

The FBU stated its intention to develop an Organiser pack/handbook in a draft Brigade Organiser Role Description, dated 20th July 2012. We are still waiting for this to be produced.

Conference instructs that this toolkit is completed and sent out to all Regions within the next 12 months, with Brigade Organisers being consulted on what they believe the toolkit should contain.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

CONFERENCE STANDING ORDERS

CONFERENCE STANDING ORDERS

1. The Executive Council shall decide the venue and date (or dates) on which the Conference will be held.
2. The Standing Orders Committee as established under Rule C2 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.
3. The Standing Orders Committee shall issue a preliminary agenda containing the resolutions received from the Brigade/National Sectional Committees which have been accepted for inclusion by the Standing Orders Committee acting in accordance with Standing Order No. 5 not later than six weeks before Conference is about to be held. Policy statements from the Executive Council shall also be issued not later than six weeks before conference is about to be held. A Brigade/National Sectional Committee shall have the opportunity to submit amendments to Executive Policy Statements prior to Conference.
4. The Standing Orders Committee shall issue to the Secretary of each Brigade/National Sectional Committee and delegates a Final Agenda containing all motions and amendments, together with amendments to rules, accepted for inclusion by the Standing Orders Committee in accordance with Standing Order No. 5. These documents, together with delegates' names shall be issued not less than 14 days before Conference is due to commence. Any resolution which has been rejected by the Standing Orders Committee shall be circulated to each Brigade and National Sectional delegation, prior to Conference, with the Standing Orders Committee's reason for rejection.
5. Resolutions, amendments, amendments to rules and other business for Conference must be returned electronically by the Chair or Secretary of the Brigade/National Sectional Committee by whom they are submitted. Resolutions must deal with one subject only and not be of omnibus nature.
6. The order in which the resolutions are to be discussed shall be decided by the Executive Council in consultation with the Standing Orders Committee.
7. Brigade/National Sectional Committees shall not be allowed to submit more than three resolutions. Similarly the Executive Council shall not be allowed to submit more than three resolutions.
8. Notwithstanding the provision of the above rule, the Executive Council or any Brigade/National Sectional Committee shall, subject to the approval of the Standing Orders Committee, be permitted to submit emergency resolutions for the consideration of the delegates' to Conference.
9. Brigade/National Sectional Committees are required to co-operate with the Standing Orders Committee in order that resolutions and amendments of a similar nature shall be composited. Any Brigade/National Sectional Committee which ignores a written request from the Standing Orders Committee, to consider a pre-conference compositing proposal, shall have its resolution removed from the Conference Agenda.
10. The Standing Orders Committee will circulate to the delegates attending Conference copies of the composite motions they have approved.
11. The Standing Orders Committee shall submit to the President of Conference a programme of all resolutions and amendments approved by them as being in accordance with the rules and Standing Orders, together with all suggestions for the proper conduct of the business of Conference. They shall also provide all delegates to Conference with a programme of Conference business no later than the night before the opening morning of Conference.
12. The Standing Orders Committee will report to the Executive Council any violation of the rules or Standing Orders that may be brought to their notice with any recommendations agreed upon.
13. The Executive Council shall nominate two Tellers and two ballot Scrutineers from the names of delegates attending Conference. Names shall be submitted to the Conference delegates for approval.
14. The method of voting at each Conference shall be voice or show of hands, at the discretion of the President. Where, however, a division is challenged by delegates to Conference, voting shall be by card. Before Conference commences the leader of each Brigade Committee delegation shall be supplied with a list showing the voting figures to be used for Trade votes, Political Fund votes and for Accident and Injury Fund votes. Such figures shall record a vote equal to the membership figure of each Brigade as shown on FBU Membership records at 31st December each year. The leader of each Brigade Committee delegation shall be supplied with a voting card, indicating the name of the Brigade which shall be recorded by tellers. When a card vote is to be taken a warning device will be operated and sufficient time will be allowed for delegates to return to the Conference hall. The voting figures will be recorded and tallied by computer. The President will receive a record of the total of the votes in favour, votes against and votes not cast.
15. The voting on a challenge to the President's ruling decision shall be taken by the Vice-President (or someone approved by Conference in his/her absence) and shall in the first instance be by a show of hands. Where the result is unclear and/or in doubt the Vice-President or delegates may call for a numerical count of standing delegates by tellers. Standing delegates must clearly show their delegates credential cards as identification of their rights to vote. On the day (or days) on which Conference is held, the President shall inform Conference of the number of delegates in attendance and entitled to vote, and support for a challenge must be by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the stated number.

16. On the day (or days) on which 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.
17. The Executive Council shall be responsible for the production of a daily Record of Decisions of Conference which shall be distributed to Delegates as soon as possible after each session has concluded. The Executive Council shall be responsible for the production of a booklet containing the detail of the Record of Decisions of Conference which shall be distributed to all members as soon as possible after the Conference has concluded and in any case no later than 4 weeks after Conference has concluded.
18. At each Conference, the agenda compiled by the Executive Council shall be taken as the first business of Conference immediately following the Executive Council and auditor's reports.
19. The Chair will be taken by the President or in his/her absence by the Vice-President. In the absence of the President and Vice-President, the delegates shall elect a Chairperson from among their members.
20. After the opening of Conference the Executive Council shall present their report for the past year which shall be laid on the table for discussion. The items on the report shall be discussed seriatim and not as a whole. Delegates may move the reference back of the whole or any part thereof. Each speaker limited to five minutes.
21. Such reports shall be given precedence over all other business provided that where a resolution on the Agenda bears directly upon any part of the report, such resolution may at the discretion of the President be taken in conjunction with such part of the report.
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.
23. Facilities will be made available to enable any speaker to address Conference. If the President rises to call a delegate to order or any other purpose connected with the proceedings, the member speaking shall thereupon, resume his or her seat and no other delegate shall arise until the President authorises the discussion to proceed.
24. Should any delegate cause a disturbance at any session of Conference, and refuse to obey the President when called to order, he/she shall be named by the President and shall be expelled from the hall for the remainder of the session, and shall not be allowed to take part in Conference proceedings without the consent of the Conference delegates.
25. Previous question, next business, or the closure may be moved and seconded by delegates only who have not previously spoken in the debate and there shall be no speeches on such motions. Should the closure be carried, the mover of the original motion shall have the right to reply.
26. Should the President consider there is no direct difference of opinion among the delegates, he/she shall have the power to stop the discussion and submit the proposition to the vote of the Conference.
27. Members not being delegates and organisers may attend the Conference as visitors only and shall not be allowed to speak.
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.
29. These Standing Orders may be suspended, if such suspension is agreed by at least two thirds of the votes cast by the delegates attending Conference.
30. Alterations to the Standing Orders of Conference may be submitted by Brigade/National Sectional Committees or the Executive Council, not later than the closing date for resolutions and are to be circulated to all Branches not later than six weeks before Conference is to be held. Changes to Conference Standing Orders must receive at least two-thirds of the votes cast by the delegates to Conference.

